



BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting

Work Session

Monday, January 22, 2024, at 9:00 am

BOCC Conference Room, Room 232, 128 N 2nd Street, Yakima, WA 98901 or Zoom

1/22/2024 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 9:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair Amanda McKinney, Commissioner Kyle Curtis, Legal Counsel Don Anderson, Clerk of the Board Julie Lawrence, Deputy Clerk of the Board Erin Franklin, Josh Weiss (Gordon Thomas Honeywell), Annika Vaughn (Gordon Thomas Honeywell), Facilities Director Brian Griff, Planning Official Thomas "Tommy" Carroll, Financial Services Director Craig Warner, and guests.

EXCUSED: Commissioner LaDon Linde

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment Received.

3. LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATES (30 Minutes)

Josh Weiss and Annika Vaughn were present to discuss relevant legislation and check-in regarding other BOCC priorities. Josh stated that the deadline to get bills out of committee is next Wednesday. He went on to discuss the EFSEC siting bill the County put forward, noting that the Senate version of this bill will also be heard this week, for which Commission McKinney will provide testimony. The Yakama Nation has also put forward a similar bill focused more on the procedural permitting aspects; Josh and Annika have been in communication with their lobbyists. The Chair wants to take a closer look at these bills and will likely hear both after cutoff. Commissioner McKinney also spoke on the agricultural impact study of these green energy facilities, and a resolution she is presenting to NACo's Agricultural Committee.

Josh and Annika are working with staff to get more information about the carbon reduction impact of a new HVAC system (for which funding has been requested. Annika observed that it is likely a lot of funding will go out for these quick, simple projects while it is available. She and Josh are also working with staff on getting funding switched over from the YCCC building to a jail planning study instead. Josh noted that Senate Bill 5780 will likely be the vehicle that will address training and student loan repayment for public defense attorneys and prosecutors in rural communities; Senator Torres has been working on these issues. In response to Commissioner Curtis' question, Josh and Annika also provided an update on the Climate Change Act, its possible repeal, and other alternatives.

Finally, Commissioner McKinney stated that she will be testifying in support of an agritourism bill being heard later this week; John Cooper of Yakima Valley Tourism will also testify. Annika confirmed that she also signed Commissioner McKinney up to testify on a wine tax exemption bill.

4. FACILITIES SERVICES (30 Minutes)

Brian Griff was present to discuss House Bill 1257 regarding energy efficiency legislation for large commercial facilities. He noted that the County Courthouse just barely meets the new energy requirements; however, the jail, the Sundome, the Juvenile Justice Center, and the YCCC building do not. The County could apply for exemptions

for the YCCC and the JJC due to a current occupancy of less than 50% and financial hardship. Commissioner McKinney stated that there is no way for municipalities to afford to bring old buildings into compliance with these new regulations without a funding source, and that municipalities would have strong grounds to sue if the Legislature ever tried to take action against them. Commissioner Curtis and Brian noted that the bill could get repealed or changed to only include new construction. The Commissioners agreed to wait and see if the situation resolves itself, and reassess applying for exemptions in the future as needed.

5. PUBLIC SERVICES (30 Minutes)

Update on Solar/Planning Commission: Tommy Carroll explained that as the Planning Commission was in the process of drafting standards for siting solar energy facilities, they came to the realization that any kind of restriction placed on siting runs the risk of being appealed. Furthermore, a farmer could simply pull their own crops out of production in order to immediately qualify for a solar facility, and companies looking at siting solar facilities through the County could simply opt to go through EFSEC for approval rather than abide by the County's regulations. Thus, the Planning Commission passed a motion to prohibit large-scale solar facilities and only allow smaller facilities associated with other approved uses.

Commissioner McKinney stated that the resolution she's presenting to NACo speaks to this topic. Energy facilities are being placed in direct competition with agriculture for natural resources; however, she asserted that one should not come at the expense of the other, and that there are ways of finding complementary uses. She also suggested that these facilities be sited in locations that have already been disturbed and are unfit for agricultural production. Commissioner Curtis shared concerns that a permanent ban will take away the County's ability to be part of the discussion. The Commissioners agreed to discuss this item further once Commissioner Linde returns to office next Monday.

Tommy also updated the Board that the power lines have currently reached their max capacity near the Black Rock facility. It took 5 or 6 years for Pacific Power to build another power line the last time one was needed, so it's likely that there will be an influx of battery facilities in the meantime. He noted that Yakima County also has a battery storage moratorium discussion coming up for consideration.

6. DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE AND DELIVERABLES (5 Minutes) -
Commissioner Curtis

The Commissioners agreed to table this item to next Monday's Work Session since Commissioner Linde is on the Budget Elect Team.

7. BOCC LETTER EXPRESSING CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING WORKSOURCE
SYSTEM POLICY (5 Minutes) - Commissioner Curtis

The Commissioners agreed to table this item to next Monday's Work Session so that Commissioner Linde would have the opportunity to review and sign the letter. There is a proposed change at the State level to remove the ability for local workforce boards to decide whether to hire a third party to procure youth programs. Commissioner McKinney stated that she is generally supportive of this letter, and asked Julie Lawrence to forward it to her and Commissioner Linde for review in the meantime.

8. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners did not discuss any updates.

9. NEW BUSINESS

No New Business.

10. ADJOURN

Commissioner Curtis MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner McKinney SECOND

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

All work sessions are recorded and will be available to view on the BOCC website at <https://www.yakimacounty.us/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Commissioners-2>.

APPROVED DATE
DATE/Minutes

FEB 20 2024

BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Amanda McKinney

Amanda McKinney, Chair

Kyle Curtis

Kyle Curtis, Commissioner

LaDon Linde

LaDon Linde, Commissioner

*Constituting the Board of County Commissioners
for Yakima County, Washington*

