



BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting
Work Session

Monday, July 18, 2022, at 9:00 am

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

7/18/2022 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 9:02 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair Amanda McKinney, Commissioner LaDon Linde, Commissioner Ron Anderson, Legal Counsel Don Anderson, Deputy Clerk of the Board Erin Franklin, Department of Assigned Counsel Director Paul Kelley, Public Services Director Lisa Freund, Financial Services Director Craig Warner, and guests.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

3. ASSIGNED COUNSEL UPDATE (45 Minutes)

Paul Kelley explained that recruitment has slowed for DAC over the past few years. He was not able to secure a summer intern from law schools in the region, but he hopes that by starting the process late this fall, he may have more success next summer.

Paul continued that it's also been difficult to get outside contractors to commit to cases in Yakima County, and the budget may need to be increased to keep up with those contractors' costs. Craig Warner shared that past practice has been to keep contracts up-to-date with whatever "step" increases County employees would get; he added that he is already keeping this in mind for next year's budget. There are currently at least two and a half open contracts that would greatly help Superior Court and Juvenile Court.

In answer to Commissioner Linde's question, Paul listed the many regional law schools DAC reaches out to for recruiting, including schools in Washington, Idaho, and Oregon. He noted that many other DAC offices in Washington are having the same issues recruiting. Furthermore, he explained that the recruitment problem extends beyond just attorneys: the American Bar Association is working on a list of best practices, including recommended numbers for investigators, social workers, paralegals, and other support staff critical to legal representation. He does not believe current staff will match up to those numbers. The American Bar Association is also working on an open caseload standard that he believes every jurisdiction in Washington State would struggle to meet. The Commissioners acknowledged it's difficult to find solutions when there doesn't seem to be enough legal professionals in the field to meet the needs of the legal system.

Paul covered ongoing issues such as Blake cases, ITA's, Truancy cases, etc., and trying to ensure there are enough staff to handle those caseloads. He added that he is working with Jeremy Welch and Bill Swan to work on better implementing video visiting capability in the jail. He is also looking at creative use of space at various facilities in case of expanded staffing. Finally, he noted that DAC is excited to be filling open office specialist positions and training new people.

4. PUBLIC SERVICES UPDATE (45 Minutes)

Lisa Freund reported no new updates from Public Services. Commissioner Linde asked how the recruitment process was going for her department, and she responded that two new planners have just started, with a third coming in September. These are recent graduates who show great promise. Building inspectors have been harder to find because of the required experience. She is also looking for engineers for water resources.

5. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners gave updates on individual committee/board assignments for the week of July 11, 2022- July 15, 2022.

Commissioner McKinney brought up the proposed letter to Governor Inslee about rescinding Proclamation 21-14.5, requiring all state employees, including volunteers, to be vaccinated. She asked Commissioner Linde and Commissioner Anderson to forward any comments or changes to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk of the Board to distribute for future discussion at another work session.

Commissioner McKinney also referred to an emailed response from Lance Larsen of Human Services, answering Commissioner Linde's question about Agreement 203-2022 and past funding for the same contract. The Board was satisfied with Lance's response.

6. ADJOURN

Commissioner Anderson MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner Linde SECOND

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 10:11 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