

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
COMMISSIONERS AUDITORIUM
SPECIAL MEETING**

THURSDAY

6:00 P.M.

MARCH 9, 2017

Board members present: Chairman Paul Jewell; Vice-Chairman Laura Osiadacz; and Commissioner Obie O'Brien.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Dan Carlson, CDS Director; Doc Hansen, Planning Official and approximately 30 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING

MORATORIUM MAJOR ENERGY SYSTEMS

CDS

At 6:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN JEWELL** opened a Public Hearing to consider issuing a six-month moratorium on applications for proposed major alternative energy systems until an update on the Comprehensive Plan is approved.

COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN noted the Board had met with representatives from Puget Sound Energy on the technical issues relating to solar farms. **CHAIRMAN JEWELL** noted the matter in front of the Board was a legislative matter and not site specific.

DAN CARLSON, CDS DIRECTOR provided a Staff Report and recommended the Board approve a six-month moratorium until July 10, 2017 to allow for further review as authorized by RCW from January 10, 2017.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: **LEE BATES** said he was in favor of the proposed six-month moratorium. He reviewed wind energy versus solar energy and the amount of electricity that is generated. **HOWARD LYMON** recommended not approving the proposed moratorium. He reviewed reasons why he felt solar and alternative energy was the way of the future, as well as in the best interest of the public. He submitted a petition into the record from Environment Washington, opposing a proposed moratorium. **JEFF BRUNSON** testified against the proposed moratorium. He didn't feel solar farms would hurt the rural character. He thought it was a good alternative for landowners on ways to use their land. **STAN BLAZYNSKI** provided information into the record for the Board's consideration with numbers relating to alternative energy. **MICHAEL BLUE** expressed concerns with continuing the moratorium and the negative economic impacts it could have for landowners. **RICHARD GALLAGHER** said things are changing and spoke of the pollution from vehicles, carbon dioxide and wants the land to prosper. He encouraged saving the planet and save the earth. **EMILY JACOBS** provided information on eco-systems and how diversity is important. She said she was confused by choosing one form of energy over another and use both wind and solar and spoke against the

proposed moratorium. **RYAN WILLIAMS** reviewed Initiative 937 which was approved in November 2006. He said there was nothing in code that prohibits solar farms in Kittitas County. He was against a moratorium and encouraged the Board to abandon the idea. **ERIN ANDERSON** opposed the proposed moratorium and said solar power warrants support in the County. She felt solar power was a benefit to citizens and land owners should be able to utilize their land. She encouraged the Board to look at an overlay zone and identify substations. **DOUG DICKENS** didn't understand why the Board would delay solar farms and felt land owners should be able to put them on their property if they chose. He said solar and wind energy is the future whether people like it or not and didn't feel it should be held up as it's beneficial for the citizens. **PATTY CLERF, REPRESENTING HERSELF AND SAVE OUR FARMS** explained how farmlands are a critical resource which needs to be protected. She encouraged the Board to continue the moratorium for 6-months to allow citizens to come together for a proposed overlay which could be functional for everyone involved. **THERE BEING NO OTHERS REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN moved to set a six-month moratorium on major alternative energy systems in order to develop policy and explore all other issues involved. **COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ** seconded.

COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN expressed concerns relating to making a long term decision and having affects to the rural character. He said the County has gone through a long, expensive process to protect the rural character by GMA and didn't believe there would be any hardship done with the moratorium. **COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ** expressed support of a six month moratorium. She said it does not mean there is no possibility of solar facilities in the future, but she would like to invest in researching locations where they would be beneficial to all stakeholders including businesses, landowners & citizens. She stated agriculture lands were also clean energy farms and there is a need to protect them as well.

DOC HANSEN, PLANNING OFFICIAL AND DAN CARLSON, CDS DIRECTOR provided the review process that they would be going through if the six-month moratorium was approved by the Board of Commissioners. They also reviewed the work that's already been conducted.

CHAIRMAN JEWELL said he has talked with people relating to potential developments and doesn't believe the code contemplated that type of impact. He supports solar energy development but it's a question of where and how it's done. He said he is also concerned with 5 separate developments that have filed with EFSEC and could continue regardless if moratorium or development regulations are in place. He said there were risks however he believed it was important to take a step back and have meaningful discussion with the community on locations and to ensure there are minimal impacts to the rural

character and agriculture lands. He expressed his support of property rights as well and said it was not an easy decision for anyone.

Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD



Julie Kjorsvik

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Paul Jewell, Chairman