KITTITAS COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HOME ARTS BUILDING, KITTITAS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY 6:00 P.M. JUNE 26, 2006

Board members present: Chairman David Bowen, Vice-Chairman Alan Crankovich & Commissioner Perry Huston.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Jerry Pettit, Auditor; and 7 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING MORGAN MIDDLE SCHOOL OPTION COMMISSIONERS

At approximately 6:00 p.m. CHAIRMAN BOWEN opened a special meeting to consider public testimony on the option of purchasing Morgan Middle School to expand essential County facilities and other Quasi-Governmental operations.

CHAIRMAN BOWEN explained he had been speaking with representatives from the Ellensburg School District on a proposal of possibly purchasing the Morgan Middle School building. He explained that any action would be contingent upon the Ellensburg School District passing a bond issue in September for a new middle school, elementary school and upgrade to Lincoln Elementary School. If it passed, the immediate expense for Kittitas County would be $1.598 million dollars. The Ellensburg School District would then lease back Morgan Middle School for approximately 3-4 years until a new school was completed. They would also continue to lease the performing arts center, band, choir, and art rooms, along with the gymnasium facilities for their Community Schools and Arts programs. The approximate total price in phases would be approximately $6,298.00. The original purchase price and Phase I would be $4,398,000 and would be capitalized through current general fund revenue and General Obligation Bonds dedicating REET, Sales Tax, Grants or using Banked Property Tax Capacity for 10 or 15 years at $490,000/year or $375,000/year respectively. Phase II and III would be paid through the two existing Law & Justice .1% sales tax lines. He reviewed the benefits that would stem from the proposal. He noted that Kittitas County had tried to pass a bond issue for a new jail, and it had failed twice, and the County is still in need of additional jail space, administration office space, and Courtroom space. COMMISSIONER HUSTON said while the jail had been the centerpiece of the past proposals, there were other County problems that still existed including the space in the Morris Sorensen building. He felt the proposal dealt with most issues with the exception of additional beds for the jail, although the proposal may get the County through for a little while longer in that respect. He said the County still owns land adjacent to the Jail and Courthouse for possible expansion in the future if necessary. COMMISSIONER CRANKOVICH felt the old school that had been renovated to the new Ellensburg City Hall was a very good project for the community and felt this proposal was a step in the right direction.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: DON PRICE expressed his appreciation to the County for addressing the issues for Morgan Middle School and the performing arts theatre. He was supportive of building a new middle school, as well as preserving a historic structure and using it in a new way for County offices. BEVERLY HECKER spoke in support of the proposal. She felt the County was trying to overcome problems in the Courthouse and was going to be beneficial for the performing arts center. She questioned what would happen to the meeting rooms that are currently available for use (free of charge) at Morgan Middle School, once the County took the building over. SKIP MYNAR Director of Alcohol Drug Dependency Services
spoke in favor of the proposal and explained that since 1972 his agency has been housed in the Morris Sorensen building. Since 1990 when he became the ADDS Director they were crowded for space back then as well. THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

RESOLUTION 2006-98  MORGAN MIDDLE SCHOOL OPTION  COMMISSIONERS

COMMISSIONER HUSTON moved to approve Resolution No. 2006-98, Concerning Funding to Support the Kittitas County Facilities. COMMISSIONER CRANKOVICH seconded.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON explained what “banked” property tax capacity does, and recognized it was not property tax that’s already been collected, but it means a property tax increase, if County chose to go that route to capitalize the project. CHAIRMAN BOWEN said it was the last place he’d want to go and the County has approximately 3-4 years before needing to make that decision. COMMISSIONER CRANKOVICH thanked Chairman Bowen for the lead he took on project.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON moved to amend Resolution NO. 2006-98, correcting the title of the Resolution, by striking “Corrections Facility” and replacing it with “Facilities”. COMMISSIONER CRANKOVICH seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Motion to approve Resolution 2006-98 carried 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD  KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Julie A. Kjorsvik                  David B. Bowen, Chairman