

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

FRIDAY

9:00 A.M.

OCTOBER 23, 2020

Board members present via WebEx: Chairman, Brett Wachsmith; Vice-Chairman Laura Osiadacz & Commissioner Cory Wright.

Others via WebEx: Mandy Buchholz, Deputy Clerk of the Board II; Taylor Crouch, Deputy Clerk of the Board I; Stephanie Hartung, Deputy Prosecutor; Jessica Miller, Administrative Assistant and 2 members of the public.

SPECIAL MEETING

OPMA

COMMISSIONERS

At 9:00 a.m. Chairman Wachsmith opened a Special Meeting to discuss with the Prosecutors office the rules regarding the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) during COVID-19.

Commissioner Osiadacz said she asked to have a discussion on if there were any ways to begin holding Commissioner meetings in person. Stephanie Hartung, Deputy Prosecutor provided the background of the Governor's Proclamation No. 20-28, prohibits holding in person meetings with more than 10 people in attendance. She said the prohibition has evolved over the months and there have been multiple revisions since it began due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She said essentially the language in each extension builds off each other, and when there have been questions or clarification needed, she has reached out to the Governor's office to ensure we have the accurate information. The current limit of 10 people who could attend an in person includes the Board members and Staff. She said the Board could potentially have overflow rooms for the public to attend a virtual meeting around areas in the County, but if there were any technical difficulties even in one place, the entire meeting would need to be shut down. Other items discussed included having a dedicated phone line for the public to be able to leave a voicemail with comments for either an Agenda or Public Hearings and maybe a specific email address where they can write their comments as well. Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board noted that there was already a general email address set up (bocc@co.kittitas.wa.us) that Staff checks regularly during business hours and any comments that are received are forwarded to the Board and other appropriate departments, and if it's related to a Public Hearing, then those are placed into the

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record for that specific meeting. There was discussion on having citizens put in their emails on the subject line that they are providing comments for a Public Hearing. Commissioner Wright said he did not want to set precedent on that matter.

Commissioner Osiadacz suggested installing hot spots in areas of the Upper County for residents to use so they can attend the virtual public meetings, due to limited or no internet service available to them. It was noted that they will discuss having hot spots in the Upper County next week during the IT Study Session for further discussion. Commissioner Wright said he would also like to discuss the WebEx shortfalls and expectations with the IT Department as well.

Mandy Buchholz, Deputy Clerk of the Board II indicated CDS has a host tech help line and asked Ms. Miller to provide information about it. Jessica Miller, Administrative Assistant shared that CDS has a host tech help line for Hearing Examiner meetings. Commissioner Osiadacz said she would ask IT about that as well.

Ms. Hartung agreed to draft written information for the Board to provide to the public explaining where we are relating to the limitations of holding in person meetings due to the Governor's current prohibition so they have a better understanding of the reasons why they cannot happen despite the Board wanting to meet in person. Commissioner Osiadacz asked if the Board would like her to draft a letter to the Governor's office expressing their frustrations with not being allowed to hold in person meetings, and if they would consider making changes if guidelines were followed including masking and 6-foot social distancing. The Board did not have any objection to her drafting a letter, but they did not anticipate receiving a response from the Governor's office.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD


Mandy Buchholz

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**


Brett Wachsmith, Chairman