

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

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

NOVEMBER 7, 2023

Board members present: Chairman Cory Wright and Vice-Chairman Brett Wachsmith, Commissioner Laura Osiadacz.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Mandy Buchholz, Office Administrator; Mark Cook, Public Works/CDS Director; Brian Carlson, Budget & Finance Director; and 6 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING

CREATING A PUBLIC SERVICES DEPT

PUBLIC WORKS

At 2:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** opened a Public Hearing continued from October 17, 2023, to consider amending Kittitas County Code to reflect the formation of a Public Services Department. He noted the record was open.

MARK COOK, PUBLIC WORKS/CDS DIRECTOR, reviewed a Staff Report and said the red-lined version of the Code was uploaded onto the County website following the October 17th Public Hearing.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: EMILY SMITH testified against the proposal, stating that it would be an unreasonable task for one person to effectively run the Public Works Department, Community Development Services, and Airport. She felt the merger would eventually result in separating the divisions when the current Director retires. **PAT DENEEN** disagreed and said he'd been dealing with the Public Works Department and Community Development Services when working on projects, and it's always difficult to coordinate between the two. They have similar goals and by having one person would cut down on both indecisions and timing. **TERRY LaRUE** felt that by consolidating the three positions it would dilute control of one person. He said there was no mention of the Airport Director and yet the current posting and job description, 9 of the 25 items relate to the Airport. He said there was no public visibility when the Airport Department was abolished, and urged the Board to sit down with the taxpayers and put together what their need is because most people do not understand what they are trying to accomplish. **THERE BEING NO OTHERS REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

VICE-CHAIRMAN WACHSMITH moved to deny the request, as presented. **COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ** seconded.

VICE-CHAIRMAN WACHSMITH felt things have been working well, and there was no need to change the County Code at this time, and

continue on the path with the hiring process for Director Cook's replacement. **COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ** said Director Cook has been working very well between the Public Works Department and Community Development Services, but feared not everyone was going to be able to continue what he's been doing. She felt there needed to be more discussion from her standpoint.

Director Cook said if there was interest in separating out the positions, the upcoming holidays may be difficult to attract candidates, and recommended suspending advertising and do it again after the New Year.

CHAIRMAN WRIGHT said the Board didn't have to solve everything today and recommended remanding it back to Staff.

VICE-CHAIRMAN WACHSMITH moved to amend the motion to remand it back to Staff. **COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Amended motion to deny the request and remand it back to Staff was approved 3-0.

The meeting concluded at 2:18 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD


Julie Kjorsvik

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**


Chairman Cory Wright