

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

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

MARCH 18, 2025

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

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Mandy Buchholz, Office Administrator; Chad Bala, CDS Director; Josh Fredrickson, Public Works Director; Stephanie Hartung, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor; Patricia Todd, Deputy Prosecutor III; Jeremy Johnston, Long Range Planner; and 11 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING

CHEYENNE AIR LLC

PUBLIC WORKS

At 2:00 p.m. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** opened a Public Hearing continued from February 18, 2025, to consider a Lease with Cheyenne Air LLC for property located at the Kittitas County Airport, Bowers Field. He noted the record was open.

JOHSH FREDRICKSON, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR, provided a Staff Report and recommended approval of a Lease Agreement with Cheyenne Air, LLC.

THERE BEING NO ONE REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

LEASE AGREEMENT

CHEYENNE AIR LLC

PUBLIC WORKS

COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH moved to approve an Airport Hangar Ground Lease between Kittitas County and Cheyenne Air, LLC. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** seconded. Motion carried 2-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

COMP PLAN DOCKET PROCESS

CDS

At 2:04 p.m. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** opened a Public Hearing continued from March 4, 2025, to consider Suspension of the Annual Comprehensive Plan Docket Process for the 2025 and 2026 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycles. He noted the record was open.

CHAD BALA, CDS DIRECTOR, provided a Staff Report. He said they've conducted additional research since the previous hearing and noticed other jurisdictions have adopted similar processes and what they are recommending. He encouraged the Board to approve the proposed Resolution.

APPROVED
4-1-25

THERE BEING NO ONE REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

RESOLUTION 2025-058

COMP PLAN DOCKET PROCESS

CDS

COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-058, Authorizing the Suspension of the Annual Comprehensive Plan Docket Process for the 2025 and 2026 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycles Until the Completion of the County's Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** seconded. Motion carried 2-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

SB 5290 EXPEDITE TIMELINES

CDS

At 2:06 p.m. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** opened a Public Hearing to consider implementation of New Code Language per Senate Bill 5290 to Modernize and Streamline Local Development Project Review.

JEREMY JOHNSON, LONG RANGE PLANNER, reviewed a Staff Report and said the State Legislature approved SB 5290 back in 2023. The bill was designed to increase predictability and reduce timelines associated with local project permit review. He said the proposed Ordinance was drafted with regulations to ensure compliance and recommended approval.

THERE BEING NO ONE REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

ORDINANCE 2025-003

SB 5290 EXPEDITE TIMELINES

CDS

COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH moved to approve Ordinance No. 2025-003, Amending Kittitas County Code Title 15A for the Purpose of Compliance with Senate Bill 5290 with the Intent of Expediting Timelines and Predictability of Local Project Review. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** seconded. Motion carried 2-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

SEPA APPEAL DOCKET #2024-0001

CDS

At 2:10 p.m. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** opened a Public Hearing to consider a SEPA Appeal of the 2024 Kittitas County Annual Docket of Comprehensive Plan Docket Item #2024-00001.

JAMEY AYLING, PLANNING MANAGER, reviewed the history of the Lewington Comp Plan Amendment Non-Project Rezone SEPA Appeal. He reviewed the requested action, location, site characteristic, access, Zoning and Development Standards, and Environmental Review. He said Community Development Services issued a Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance on September 18, 2024, which was appealed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. He recommended the Board affirm the SEPA Threshold Determination and

proceed with the hearing of the Comprehensive Plan amendment and Non-Project rezone.

MAUREEN MITCHELL, ATTORNEY REPRESENTING MARDEE LAKE, INC. asked the Board to reject the SEPA appeal and approve the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment. She felt the MDNS that was issued by Staff was an appropriate decision under the SEPA guidelines. She said she's never heard of an EIS being required at this stage for a non-project application. She said there were no issues with the critical areas report, as they'd prepared it at the request of Community Development Services.

CONNOR JOHNSON, ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL, REPRESENTING THE APPELLANT, WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE, said the State was not asking for an issuance of an EIS, but they're requesting additional analysis relating to fish and wildlife, due to the potential impacts. He said development needs to be considered if an MDNS is issued because wildlife needs to be appropriately mitigated, and that an EIS would provide a more of an in-depth analysis. They appellants didn't believe all buffers had been taken into account and recommended the Board remand back to Staff. They would like to be more involved and offered to provide Staff with their expertise.

SCOTT DOWNS, WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE, REGIONAL LAND USE LEAD, reviewed a power-point presentation with information on how migration routes work and its importance for the Board of County Commissioners consideration.

COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH moved to affirm Community Development Services SEPA Threshold Determination and to proceed with the hearing of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Non-Project Rezone (CP-24-00001). **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** seconded.

VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT felt there was no reason to not uphold Staff's MDNS, as its non-project rezone, and was pleased both sides supported the critical areas report.

Motion carried 2-0.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT ITEM CP-24-00001

JAMEY AYLING, PLANNING MANAGER, reviewed a Staff Report and the Mardee Lake Non-Project Rezone request (CP-24-00001). He said the request was for a rezone and map amendment to four parcels currently zoned Forest and Range with a Rural Working Land Use, rezoned to Rural Recreation zoning and land use designation. It would allow the current use of the property to be consistent and compatible with the zoning code of rural recreation, as well as allow future

expansion of existing uses. He said the Planning Commission recommended approval subject to Findings of Fact and Conditions.

MAUREEN MITCHELL, REPRESENTING APPLICANT, expressed support for the request.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: JEN SYROWITZ, SENIOR MANAGER, CONSERVATION NORTHWEST, submitted a letter into the record and provided comments on how the Gold Creek Area, including Mardee Lake, acts as a "funnel" for wildlife traveling through the Cascade Crest, and how development at Snoqualmie Pass needs to be focused outside of the critical habitat areas and wildlife movement corridors. **THERE BEING NO OTHERS REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH moved to approve the Mardee Lake Non-Project Rezone (CP-24-00001), including Findings of Fact & Conditions. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** seconded.

VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT said Staff should take up the Department of Fish & Wildlife on their offer on providing expertise should a project be brought forward sometime in the future. He said there was no reason at this time to not approve the application.

Motion carried 2-0.

The meeting concluded at 3:06 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD



Julie Kjosrvik

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Cory Wright, Vice-Chairman