

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

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

MAY 20, 2025

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

Others: Shelise Smithgall, Administrative Assistant; Stephanie Hartung, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor; Josh Fredrickson, Public Works Director; Nancy Shaff, Chief Administrative Deputy Sheriff; Chelsey Loeffers, Public Health Director; Cameron Curtis, County Engineer; Darren Higashiyama, Chief Deputy; and 19 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING

TITLE III FUNDS SAR

SHERIFF

At 2:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** opened a Public Hearing for the use of Title III funds to improve/update Kittitas County Search and Rescue equipment.

CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ stated that the Agenda items would be considered in a different order than advertised, so that the item that was anticipated to have the longest discussion could be heard last.

DARREN HIGASHIYAMA, CHIEF DEPUTY, reviewed a Staff Report regarding the Title III funds the Sheriff's office had received from the US Forest Service through Washington State. He stated that the Title III funds may be used to reimburse counties for Search and Rescue and other emergency response activities. He stated that one of the criteria regarding the Title III funds is that the Search and Rescue funds need to be used for Forest Service lands and that the majority of Search and Rescue operations are conducted on Forest Service lands, therefore it would be appropriate to use these funds for Search and Rescue.

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

VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT moved to approve the request to use Title III funds to improve/update Search and Rescue equipment. **COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH** seconded. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** asked the Board if they had any discussion regarding the matter. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** voiced his support of using the Title III funds to update Search and Rescue equipment. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** stated that she agreed with **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT**. Motion carried 3-0.

APPROVED

6-3-25

At 2:05 p.m. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** opened a Public Hearing to consider a lease with Redline Powder & Metal Design for property located at the Kittitas County Airport, Bowers Field.

JOSH FREDRICKSON, PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR, reviewed a Staff Report and stated that Redline Powder & Metal Design requested a land lease at Bowers Field within the industrial area. He stated that this request would be for property outside the aeronautical fenced area, on land which is intended for industrial and business development, for which he gave the coordinates. **MR. FREDRICKSON** explained that the proposed lease would be for a 40-year term with the option of one 10-year extension, which is different than what is listed in the packet. He went over the requirements of the lease and what the cost would be for the lease holder.

THOSE PRESENT & REQUESTING TO TESTIFY: RYAN SHILLEY, owner of Redline Powder & Metal Design, thanked the Board for the proposed lease & stated that the price was favorable. He stated that this lease would provide an opportunity for their business to grow at a commercial and industrial level. He stated that this lease would get them through his son's lifetime regarding running the business. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** asked Mr. Shilley if he had any employees besides his son. Mr. Shilley stated that he has 3 employees and will soon have 4-5.

THERE BEING NO OTHER PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT moved to approve the request for a lease with Redline Powder & Metal Design for property located at the Kittitas County Airport, Bowers Field. **COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH** seconded. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** asked the Board if they had any discussion regarding the matter. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** thanked Josh Fredrickson, Public Works Director, for his flexibility with this lease. Motion carried 3-0.

At 2:09 p.m. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** opened a Public Hearing to consider a speed decrease on Umptanum Road and amend Kittitas County Code Chapter 10.08.020 Speed Limits.

CAMERON CURTIS, COUNTY ENGINEER, reviewed a Staff Report and stated that Public Works received a request to conduct a speed study and consider a decrease in speed on Umptanum Road from 50 mph to 35 mph and that he was here to present the findings for consideration. He gave background information on how speed studies have been conducted in the past. He mentioned that in January of this year, the FHWA

published a handbook with new guidelines given regarding the context of setting speed limits. Mr. Curtis verified that the request for a speed study met the speed study requirements, therefore they went forward with the study. He explained what the study involved and went over the new guideline recommendations and how they pertained to this study. After presenting all the information, Mr. Curtis stated that the Department of Public Work's recommendation was to lower the speed limit. In response to **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT's** request, **STEPHANIE HARTUNG**, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor, answered his questions regarding whether the FHWA's updated language changes the risk expectation for legal action towards the county. She noted that they are recommendations, not requirements, and that the county is weighing the criteria recommended against their situation with multiple factors.

THOSE PRESENT & REQUESTING TO TESTIFY: TIM LAWLESS commented that he is an Ellensburg resident and the Superintendent of the Damman School District. He mentioned the need to make sure every child at Damman is safe. He stated there are 5 businesses along this route and that all those leaders have said they'd like to reduce the speed. **VICTORIA ANAYA** commented that she lives along this route and her daughter attends Damman school. She mentioned that she almost did not move there due to the speed limit. She said their dog was hit and killed by a car on that road and she feels something should be changed so that a child is not killed. **MELISSA SCHUMAIER** commented that she is the mom of a Damman student. She mentioned that when trying to pull out of the driveways along this road, you cannot see who is coming. She commented that the speed limit changes several times along this road. She asked that the Board please consider reducing the speed limit and thanked them for their consideration. **JOHN BOITANO** commented that he lives farther up Umptanum Road. He mentioned there is an incredible amount of truck traffic. He said that this road is an old stagecoach road without a good base. He mentioned there are 4 permitted rock quarries along that road. He mentioned the volume and speed of loaded trucks and trailers and that they accelerate and begin going faster across from his property. He said the loaded trucks make 300-400 trips per day. He said he is concerned about what will happen in the future since there are 3 more permitted lots in addition to the 4 already there. **JENNIFER NELSON** commented that her driveway is on the curve and that she has had several near misses over the years when trying to pull out. She mentioned that there are a lot of deer killed, and that this road is not safe for animals and people in cars. She stated that she is in support of lowering the speed limit. **MIKE MILLIGAN** commented that he lives on Susan Road, so he travels this road a lot. He mentioned he is the School Board Director for Damman School and that he wants to protect the kids. He mentioned that kids go to the Young Life building along this road 2-3 times per week, which includes new teenage drivers. He mentioned that the kids attending Young Life play with balls in the parking lot which sometimes go in

the street. He stated he has hit both a deer and a dog along this road and that he is in favor of lowering the speed limit. **PAT KELLEHER** commented that he lives on Wilson Creek Road. He stated that the county roads should be 50 mph and signs should be posted. He stated that if you want lower speed limits, you should move into the UGA. He stated there are no records of studies in the public for people to review. He commented that if people who own property don't want their dog to get hit, then the dog should stay on their 60 acres. He suggested getting a camera for the school zone that gives tickets. He stated that if you reduce the speed to 35 mph, you open the road up to UTV traffic. **SUSAN FERRELL** commented that she has lived on Umptanum Road for 12 years and that it is different now. She said the speed is one element, but a good first start. She mentioned that both she and her husband's windshields have been broken by trucks coming in the opposite direction, which could have injured a person walking or on a bike. She suggested the Sheriffs need to monitor farther down the road. **MARILYN THOMPSON** commented that she has lived on Umptanum Road since 1977. She stated that her children attended Damman and that she has been on the school board. She said she is used to large farm equipment on the roads, but that the new traffic has increased so much that she is depressed and cannot work in her yard and have conversations outside. She said the trucks go fast and that they have recently started at 7:00 a.m., but before that they were starting at 5:30 a.m. She mentioned that she understands the need to have industry and businesses, but that this area is zoned AG 20 for farms and cattle. She stated that people's health and property values have been damaged. She mentioned that the vibrations are not good for her 100-year-old house. **JESSICA KARRAKER** commented that she is a resident on Manastash Road. She stated that she is against lowering the speed limit from 50 mph to 35 mph. She stated that this proposal is a band-aid solution to a road deteriorating that the county cannot afford to replace. She suggested that restrictions should be put on commercial trucks, not general traffic. She mentioned that this speed reduction would add a total of 2 minutes to her daily commute, which equals 10 hours per year. **MIKE KARRAKER** commented that he lives on Manastash Road. He stated that he thinks the lower speed limit will cause drivers to be more careless. He suggested that weight limits and speeds should be decided in accordance with the size of the trucks. He stated that laws in school zones need to be enforced. He suggested adding animal crossing signs where needed and more signage and warnings rather than changing the speed limit to get more speeding ticket revenues.

THERE BEING NO OTHER PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

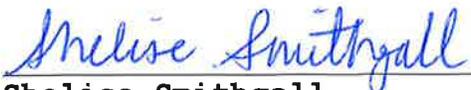
ORDINANCE NO. 2025-005 SPEED ZONE & SIGNAGE UMPTANUM RD PUBLIC WORKS

VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT moved to approve Ordinance NO. 2025-005, Establishment of a Speed Zone and the Placement of Speed Limit Signs

on Umptanum Road and Amending Section 10.08.020 Speed Limits of the Kittitas County Code. **COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH** seconded. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** asked the Board if they had any discussion regarding the matter. **COMMISSIONER WACHSMITH** stated that he was prepared to deny the request to lower the speed limit, but after reviewing the documents and hearing the public's testimony, he changed his mind to vote for the change. **VICE-CHAIRMAN WRIGHT** commented that he appreciated both sides of the issue for showing up to discuss it. He stated that growth in this area is inevitable. He mentioned that the Board denied a speed reduction in this area 5-6 years ago based on data, and that they are going to continue to follow data and consider FHWA guidelines. He stated that there has been a gravel pit and truck traffic up there for over 25 years. He mentioned that he went up there and talked to them regarding this issue and that he supports what is going on out there. He stated that these issues are a by-product of growth in an area where the economy is dependent on resources. He mentioned that the permits for the gravel pits are DNR administered and that the county does not control those permits. He mentioned that the truck drivers are local people, and we need to find the balance between making sure the businesses can survive and that there are jobs for people in the county. He stated that he doesn't think reducing the speed to 35 mph is a huge burden for people. He mentioned he hopes that the trucks will abide by the rule and that our law enforcement must enforce it. He stated that the 10-Year Periodic Update is the appropriate place to discuss the process of who regulates different factors in the county and asked that the public participate in the county's comprehensive land use process. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** commented that she did not have a position on this issue before the Hearing today. She stated that she believes in the public process and that she votes for no taxes that do not benefit the taxpayers. She stated that she is going to support this process, but that she has concerns with it as the Commissioner of the Umptanum area. She mentioned that it is hard to get people to comply with lowered speed limits and that she does not want people to expect that this will fix all the problems. She hopes that this process will show people that the Board is listening and values the voices of the people that live there. She mentioned that there are only so many deputies in the Sheriff's office, and that life-threatening issues will take precedence over speed limits. She said that she appreciates everyone's testimony on both sides. She stated that due to the testimony during this hearing, along with all the email communications regarding this issue over the past few months, she will support lowering the speed limit. The motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was concluded at 3:04 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



Shelise Smithgall

KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Laura Osiadacz, Chairman