



KITITAS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Mark Cook, Director

STUDY SESSION MINUTES March 27, 2017

THOSE PRESENT:

Laura Osiadacz, Obie O'Brien (BOCC); Mark Cook, Luke Huck, Candie Leader (DPW); Doc Hansen (CDS)

GUESTS:

None

REQUEST TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE DIGITAL SUBMITTAL CERTIFICATION TO THE COUNTY ROAD ADMINISTRATION BOARD:

Mark presented the digital submittal for the annual certification for the County Road Administration Board (CRAB). He stated that all forms have been completed and this is the last step before sending the information to CRAB.

Board Direction:

Commissioner O'Brien made a motion to approve the digital submittal certification as presented. Commissioner Osiadacz seconded the motion. Approved. No discussion.

PUBLIC WORKS ROAD VARIANCE COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

Mark reported that staff is receiving numerous variance requests lately. The committee is made up of staff from Community Development, Fire Marshal, Public Works and (3) three citizens of the county. Mark stated that (2) two of the members that represent the citizens of the county do not attend on a regular basis and when they are in attendance they more often than not have to recuse themselves due to conflict of interest on some requests. Currently, the variance requests that are being submitted are in relation to plats and/or short plats with required improvements. However, developers are selling lots prior to completion of the road/access requirements. This is causing the new property owner to submit a variance from the road/access requirements. With the current configuration of the committee the decision to approve and/or deny a request is majority votes. This overrules any safety concerns that Public Works has in relation to the requests. Public Works is proposing a new system where the request is reviewed by the other departments then to the County Engineer for review and then submitted to the Public Works Director for the final decision.

At that time the decision can be appealed to the Board of County Commissioners. Mark added that he is trying to raise awareness of the dysfunction of the committee in its current state. Commissioner O'Brien inquired as to what other cities and counties do in processing of variance requests. Mark replied that it is different across the state but in his experience the request is given to the County Engineer for review then to the Director. Commissioner O'Brien would like to address the topic sooner rather than later and requests to schedule further discussion at the next study session. Discussion was held.

Board Direction:

Place topic on the next Study Session for further discussion and options.

**FLOOD CONTROL ZONE
DISTRICT PROPOSED
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS:**

Mark stated that in 2012 the County adopted the FCZD, a small county program that levy's about \$420,000 to \$450,000 a year in levy rates. Since 2012 staff has been very successful in leveraging that levy money at about 7:1 to generate additional revenues that we've used to do a host of floodplain management activities and much of the work has resulted in a couple of adopted plans including the Lower Yakima River Reach, Manastash Creek prior to that and currently wrapping up the Naneum, Wilson, Cherry Watershed Assessment. Out of each of these plans comes a host of recommended actions. These actions are typically prioritized by those working groups prior to the completion of the work. The difficulty now is that there is a mature and lengthy list of recommendations all of which cannot be implemented by the District due to fiscal constraints but more importantly staff does not have the frame work defined for us to bring to the BOCC a prioritized project list. Mark is suggesting to the BOCC that rate payer's need to start seeing things built. We spent a couple of years getting our minds around the need, getting the needs assessments done and then build a capital facilities plan for the District. The question now is how we build a system that not only allows the BOCC priorities and interests but also in a way that includes the rate payers. Mark stated that there are two models he has typically seen in County Government with utilities of this type. The first is a strong board model where the Board works directly with the Flood Control Zone District Administrator and staff brings the proposals for action or the alternative model is to look at some sort of a Citizen's Advisory that's primary built from rate payers and that way they get full representation and they

actually own the decisions that come out of that utility. Discussion was held.

Board Direction:

Place topic on the next Study Session for further discussion and more information.

SPARKS LAND ACQUISITION
FLOOD CONTROL ZONE
DISTRICT:

Mark stated that in 2016 based on the Lower Yakima River Reach Analysis that the Board adopted identified the need to recognize the evulsion of the Ringer Loop roadway where the Yakima River has cut through the road and has repeatedly inundated a county resident's parcel on the upstream side of the east/west road segment of Ringer Loop. Knowing that the river is trying to find its way to cut through that ox bow, we had a conversation with the Department of Ecology and the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan staff and told them ideally we could acquire this property that is constantly being flooded and an additional property immediately down river from River Loop. Both properties have been appraised and are in the process of acquisitions and final negotiations are currently being held for the one property and have reached an agreement on the second property. The second property is immediately downstream from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife boat ramp and presume at some point we are going to want to strategically brech that east/west road segment of Ringer Loop. Right now it is essentially acting as a dam. When we strategically brech Ringer Loop there is a potential for a lot of bed load transport to result from that brech. We don't want to see the bed load be deposited onto a county resident's property immediately downstream. That property was prime for acquisition. We have an agreement and while the bulk of the acquisition is funded through the Yakima River Basin Integrated Partnership monies, however, there is an additional amount we believe is appropriate to settle for the property that is not covered by the Department of Ecology grant in the amount of \$20,000. Discussion was held.

Board Direction:

Commissioner O'Brien made a motion to authorize the Flood Control Zone District the additional \$20,000 funding to support the Sparks land acquisition. Commissioner Osiadacz seconded the motion and discussion was held.



Mark Cook, Director of Public Works