

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

TUESDAY

2:00 P.M.

NOVEMBER 7, 2017

Board members present: Chairman Paul Jewell; Vice-Chairman Laura Osiadacz; and Commissioner Obie O'Brien.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Lisa Young, HR Director; Chris Horner, Deputy Prosecutor; Neil Caulkins, Deputy Prosecutor; Jerry Pettit, Auditor; and approximately 25 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TRANSPARENCY COMMISSIONERS

At 2:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN JEWELL** opened a Public Hearing to consider allowing for Collective Bargaining Transparency.

LISA YOUNG, HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR provided a Staff Report and explained how the Board of County Commissioners previously received a request from the Freedom Foundation to hold collective bargaining contract negotiations in an open public meeting format. She indicated the Open Public Meetings Act permits collective bargaining negotiations to be exempted from requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). The Board met with key stakeholders on several occasions and at the last meeting they directed Staff to prepare documents necessary to consider an amendment to County Code for their consideration.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: SEAN JEFFRIES, PRESIDENT OF IUOE LOCAL 302 felt the proposal was a bad public policy and questioned if it was even legal. He said they believed it serves as a lack of trust and disrespect on both sides of management and labor. **PETER STARZINSKI, NW ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT** provided reasons why they opposed the Freedom Foundation and submitted an article into the record. **GEORGE VERHEAL** said he was a retired operating engineer who negotiated with public agencies in the past. He spoke against the proposal and felt there was plenty of oversight with how the system is currently working. **MATTHEW HAYWARD, FREEDOM FOUNDATION** indicated they had previously submitted information into the record. He said they conducted an Elway Poll and 79% of Eastern Washington voters are interested in moving forward with the proposal and encouraged the Board to approve the proposed Ordinance. **LINDA HAWK** explained how she had belonged to both public and private unions. She provided reasons why she believed the Board should not approve the proposed Ordinance. **STEVE BRUCKMAN, BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE OF TEAMSTERS LOCAL 760** felt there is nothing that indicates there's a problem and strongly urged the Board to oppose the Ordinance. **BILLY WALLACE** spoke in opposition of the proposal and said the County knows what

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they are doing and to not approve opening negotiations up to the public. **TOM CASH, REPRESENTING AFSCME** said he has been involved for approximately 8 years in contract negotiations and they have had no issues. He said it's been an interactive process and fair. **CARL KELLER, REPRESENTATIVE FOR UNION 760** indicated he's been working with County for 3 years it's gone very well and urged the Board to oppose the proposal from the Freedom Foundation. **THERE BEING NO OTHERS REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

ORDINANCE 2017-010 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TRANSPARENCY HUMAN RESOURCE

COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ moved to approve Ordinance 2017-010, An Ordinance Establishing a New Section of the Kittitas County Code to Increase Collective Bargaining Transparency. **COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN** seconded.


COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ explained how the Board of Commissioners has been looking at opening up union negotiations to the public for some time and she's heard a lot of testimony from both sides. She indicated Kittitas County has been working at being more transparent to the public including live streaming of their Agenda Sessions and she felt it would be another step forward. She said the taxpayers have the right to know how their money is being spent. **COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN** said County government doesn't have an option to be in private meetings other than what's listed in a very small section of the RCW. He didn't think it would harm the Unions and it would be in the best interest of the public so they can stay educated and informed. **CHAIRMAN JEWELL** said some of the County's biggest contracts are with Unions and the public has the right to know what's in them. He said the items relating to wages should be done in public and felt it would be a good balance for everyone involved. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD


Julie Kjorsvik

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**


Paul Jewell, Chairman