

**KITTITAS COUNTY
BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
BOCC AUDITORIUM ROOM, 205 WEST 5TH ROOM 215 - ELLENSBURG**

Monday	10:00AM	November 13, 2023
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Board members present: Cory Wright, Brett Wachsmith, Laura Osiadacz

Staff: Brian Carlson, Bryan Elliot, Zack DeHaven, Reid Burbank, Andrew Yoder, Sarah Keith, Todd Davis, Amy Cziske, Lisa Murray, Barb Demory, Patti Stacy, Elishia Harvill, Greg Zempel

Upper County Senior Center: Lori Nevin, Patty Nelson, Dorothy Wagsholm

- 1. Call to order: 10:01 AM**
- 2. Citizen Comments (1 min. time limit):** None

3. 2024 Preliminary Budget Update

Mr. Carlson updated the board on the current status of the General Fund deficit. Current General Fund deficit projection is \$5.9 MM with 60% of the “Bake Sale” complete. Chairman Wright asked if the current projected General Fund deficit included a non bargained COLA percentage and if so at what percent. The percentage reflected in the update was confirmed to be 3%.

4. 2024 COLA for Exempt Staff

Mr. Carlson presented a methodology for standardizing the Exempt COLA not only for the 2024 budget but also for future budgets. A multi-year averaging of percentage change of both the Western States CPI and County’s selected revenue profile. The exercise is focused on generating an equitable, sustainable, and easily repeatable process for standardizing COLA considerations. Auditor Elliot took a moment to recognize staff for the quality of analysis and highlighted that this methodology was aimed at solving this issue not just for 2024 but beyond. Prosecutor Zempel stressed the lack of steps for exempt employees and how this causes their compensation to fall behind bargained positions. Chairman Wright reminded the room that steps for Exempt staff are also

currently under review and should be treated as a separate topic deserving of its own analysis.

The Board announced unanimous support for a 3% COLA for the 2024 budget and would like to see an update to the analysis at the January Finance study session.

5. 2024 Personnel Request – Treasurer’s Office

Removed from meeting agenda minutes prior.

6. 2024 Preliminary Budget Update (Stand Alone Topics)

An addition to the “Stand Alone Topics” discussion is the Ellensburg Sleep Center. This center would address the growing concern surrounding the rise in unhoused population. Discussion was had about potential partnerships and funding sources, but the inclusion of the topic was primarily to initiate the discussion rather than start identifying solutions. Chairman Wright expressed a desire to see a complete analysis of the County’s Homelessness fund.

7. Other Business – Upper County Senior Center

Ms. Nevin presented the changes that the senior center has recently undergone in staffing, programming, and evaluation. The County has contributed \$19,900 annually to the Upper County Senior Center without an increase since 2009. Ms. Nevin after detailing the Center’s expenses and revenues asked that the county raise its 2024 contribution level to \$40 K.

The Board unanimously approved the request.

8. Concluded: 11:12 AM



Brian Carlson

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Cory Wright, Chairman