

Minutes of Meeting
Advisory Board Interview
January 6, 2022
11:00 a.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda item. Also present was Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present were Planning & Zoning Commission Board Chair David Levine and Kootenai County Resident Gene Gertson. Commissioner Brooks and Mr. Gertson were present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business:**

Planning & Zoning Commission Applicant Interview: Gene Gertson (Discussion)

Chairman Fillios explained that there were two current openings on the Planning & Zoning Commission and a third might occur. He stated that the BOCC planned to interview eight candidates for these and would deliver a decision after the final interview, later this week.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan: What skills and experience in group dynamics would you bring to the Planning Commission that would make you an effective Commissioner?

Kootenai County Resident Gene Gertson said he had been in the field of technology for his entire career; he had participated many times in groups cooperating on projects. He stated he later moved into management roles in which he was responsible for policy, process, business development and growth. He said he also had to choose the right people to make up groups that could work together effectively. He concluded that he had to use group dynamics skills constantly.

In response to a follow-up question from Commissioner Duncan, he affirmed that he was comfortable accepting a role as a worker rather than a leader in projects. He said he had worked as a volunteer many times and was happy to play a contributing role in projects.

Chairman Fillios: What do you see is the fundamental role of the Planning Commission?

He said its role was to act as a liaison and advisor to the County Commissioners, to evaluate new plans and make recommendations.

Commissioner Bill Brooks: The ability to conduct research and report to the commission with a critical analysis and suggested course of action is vital. Can you provide an example that demonstrates this ability?

Mr. Gertson replied that this was his primary role in his job: evaluate customer needs and develop a solution as part of a group. He said research and reporting on findings were the central portion of the problem solving process.

Commissioner Duncan: Planning Commissioners are obligated to represent the entire county rather than any particular geographic region or neighborhood area. Can you provide an example that demonstrates your ability to represent the welfare or well-being of the general public?

He remarked that the situation he was experiencing in relation to the Huetter Corridor was an example of this. He said he lived in the area that would be impacted by the project; a number of his neighbors opposed it but he felt it was in the interest of the community that it go forward.

Commissioner Duncan said that he would need to recuse himself when items involving the Huetter Corridor came before the Commission.

He said he had no problem with that.

Chairman Fillios: An effective Planning Commission requires members from all walks of life to ensure that the entire community is well represented. Would you share why you believe your background or experience would be a helpful addition to the Commission?

Mr. Gertson said most of the boards and committees that he had been part of had been made up of diversely talented people. He stated that finding the strength in each individual was key to effective function in any group and he tried to focus on this.

Commissioner Duncan: Effective Planning Commissioners have certain common traits such as the ability to: express oneself clearly and concisely in public; listen to opposing views and still keep a clear focus on where the real public interest lies (objectivity); keep an open mind to new issues; define what's really at issue on any matter; take the long view; and assemble information and use it to make meaningful recommendations. Can you give us an example of a useful trait you would bring to the Commission?

He remarked that he had practice in breaking down a project or an issue into its component parts to allow for comprehension and eventual solution. He added that he was a good listener, a concise communicator and accustomed to assembling documentation relevant to a project.

Commissioner Brooks: Why are you applying for the Planning & Zoning Commission?

Mr. Gertson said he had volunteered his time often in the past and felt he had valuable skills that he would like to use to benefit his community. He described the way he felt he would fit as part of the Commission.

Commissioner Duncan: What are the biggest issues Kootenai County is facing?

He replied that growth was the primary issue and explained his reasoning.

Chairman Fillios: What are your thoughts regarding the balance between growth versus private property rights?

Mr. Gertson stated he believed in property rights but that if one chose to live in a very popular community, one would need to make certain concessions in the interests of the community. He referred again to his response to the Huetter Bypass in his residential area. He stated that, if one lived in certain areas, one had to assume some level of change would come, due to necessary improvements in infrastructure.

Commissioner Brooks: What are your thoughts on the time it currently takes for building permits to be approved? It used to be two to three weeks; now it is about 3 months.

He said he had heard about this issue from many sources and understood both the complaint and the cause. He acknowledged that when there had been a large increase in demand for permits and only a certain number of staff members in the County to process them. He concluded that, if a person were to apply for a permit during a period of heavy growth, slower permit approval should be expected.

Commissioner Duncan: Would you consider limiting the number of building permits issued?

Mr. Gertson replied that he did not know enough about the facts to offer an opinion.

Chairman Fillios: What are your thoughts regarding preservation of open spaces in the community?

He said he was an advocate for this, for public greenspace, parks and recreational areas. He explained that he felt there needed to be a comprehensive approach to it across the whole County.

Bill Brooks: Have you heard of Agenda 2021/2030?

Mr. Gertson indicated that he had heard of it, but did not know the details.

Chairman Fillios asked if Mr. Gertson had any questions for them.

Mr. Gertson asked when a decision would be made on the applicants.

Chairman Fillios informed him that it would be made this afternoon, after the final interview was completed.

Planning & Zoning Commission Chair David Levine asked whether Mr. Gertson was confident that he would have enough time to devote to the group, since he was still employed.

Mr. Gertson stated that he had a very flexible schedule and thought there would be no problem.

- D. **Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.
- E. **Adjournment (Action):** Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 11:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
