

**Minutes of Meeting
Elected Officials
January 20, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan, and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Prosecutor Barry McHugh, Sheriff Bob Norris, Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Coroner Dr. Warren Keene, Assessor Bela Kovacs, Chief Deputy Assessor Joe Johns, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Chief Deputy Treasurer Laurie Thomas, BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones, Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe, and Deputy Clerk Ronnie Davisson.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
- B. Introductions**
- C. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- D. Business (Discussion):**

Welcome Sheriff Bob Norris

Chairman Fillios introduced newly Elected Sheriff Bob Norris and asked for a few words. Sheriff Norris said that he was excited to be here, was looking forward to serving the community and promised they would be an administration of positive change.

Deputy Chief Treasurer Position

Chairman Fillios pointed out that it was Chief Deputy Treasurer Laurie Thomas's last day with the County, as she was retiring after 20 years of service. Treasurer Steve Matheson said that Ms. Thomas would be sorely missed and wish her well on her retirement. He pointed out that the Chief Deputy Treasurer position had been listed and he was currently recruiting for her replacement. He also mentioned that the Treasurer's Office was having an Open House for everyone to be able to say their goodbyes.

Ms. Thomas thanked all present for being part of her life and expressed her excitement for retirement.

Catastrophic Weather Event Policy

Commissioner Leslie Duncan said she wanted to have a debriefing related to the windstorm the week prior and how everyone felt the communication went. She asked for everyone's opinions on how they felt it went and what could be done better.

Treasurer Steve Matheson said that he felt the communication went well and that the mass text notification was helpful, as well as a great resource.

Assessor Bela Kovacs explained that he felt the communication went well but that a policy should be put in place. He said that by the time the notification had gone out to the employees, he already had most of the appraisers in the office and the Post Falls Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) was preparing to open for the day. Mr. Kovacs also expressed his discomfort with having employees taking the day off when they had such a backlog to catch up on. Commissioner Duncan pointed out that since they were Elected Officials, she expected them to make decisions for the betterment of their departments, and mentioned that the reason the building had been closed for the day was because of road conditions.

Sheriff Bob Norris pointed out that the 9-1-1 center had received over 1,000 calls for service that day, which added additional stress to an already stressful day. He suggested that there be some discussion on whether there should be an incident commander to make pertinent decisions.

Ms. Thomas commented that the notification went to all employees and suggested there be a subgroup of Elected Officials and Department Heads that received the notification before the regular employees.

Prosecutor Barry McHugh agreed to Ms. Thomas's point of advance notice but also pointed out that when dealing with the judges and courts, such things are handled differently as there were multiple entities that the closure affected.

Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke commented that they were able to contact their managers early on and those that were able, worked from home and to make sure that the courthouse buildings are excluded from any building closure by Building & Grounds. She explained that the Idaho Supreme Court was the only one that could officially close a building in case of an emergency.

Clerk Jim Brannon explained that not only was he coordinating with Administrative District Judge Christensen, but also coordinating with the managers at the Administration Building. He echoed the same as the others before and expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Duncan for reaching out prior to the closure.

Coroner Dr. Warren Keene said that his office had mastered the ability to work remotely, but had closed the office out of caution.

Chief Deputy Assessor Joe Johns said that one of his concerns was that they had received the notification at approximately 7:30AM that morning, with the sender reading as "weather", rather than "BOCC" or whomever was the one in command, which was unusual. He opined that communication was the key, but earlier notification would have been beneficial.

Mr. McHugh said that from his understanding, the generator at the Administration Building only powered the outlets, but further clarification should be had. He explained that when the power goes out, it would be helpful to know what was working and what was not, so that employees could maybe utilize the meeting rooms as a contingency location to charge their phones or laptops.

BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones explained that the third floor of the Administration Building received power in case of a power outage so that the servers could remain functional, the second floor gets power to outlets only, while the first floor receives no power. Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe added that if there were expectations that employees work from home, their computers need to be turned on at the Administration Building in order for them to remotely access their desktops, but if there was no power, they could not work from home.

Commissioner Bill Brooks pointed out that he had received multiple emails over the course of a few days from a local gun club that provided updates on their operations due to the windstorm. As such, he did not feel as though it would be very difficult to communicate with the employees and allow the Elected Officials to use their judgment.

Chairman Fillios said that he did not have a concern about the way the notifications were handled, but that there may not be a perfect solution since each situation would be different. He opined that the BOCC had to decide whether the building would be open or closed. Further, he said that if an Elected Official wanted to have their employees work even in the event of a building closure, to just keep in mind that the BOCC would be held responsible if anything were to happen.

Commissioner Duncan said that she relied on Mr. Matheson and Building & Grounds, as they were on campus and said that she felt if the Elected Officials were to work on their own individual policies, it would help the BOCC be able to put all the policies together.

Chairman Fillios said that it seemed the general consensus was for the Elected Officials and Department Heads to have advanced notice. Sheriff Norris asked who the ultimate decision maker in event of an emergency was and whether there was a written policy on non-imminent threat events that may notate an incident commander. He suggested that each Elected Official take a turn being incident commander for such emergencies.

There was ample discussion about the COOP (Continuity of Operations Plan) Plan among the attendees and OEM's involvement in emergency situations was also discussed.

- E. **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.

- F. **Adjournment:** Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Ronnie Davisson, Deputy Clerk
