

**Minutes of Meeting
Commissioners' Status Update
February 1, 2021
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 items. Also present were Prosecutor Barry McHugh, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Finance Director Dena Darrow, Solid Waste (SW) Director John Phillips, SW Principal Planner Lauren Chaffin, BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones, BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present were Contractor Shawn Riley and Kootenai County Resident Erin Barnard. Mr. Riley was present via teleconference.

A. Call to Order: Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):

Chairman Fillios suggested that the agenda items be taken in reverse order.

No objections were voiced.

C. Business:

Pending Items Status Review – List Attached (Discussion)

Citizen Advisory Committee

Commissioner Bill Brooks said this was still on hold.

County Form of Government Study Committee

Commissioner Brooks reported he was still working on this.

Facilities Expansion

Commissioner Leslie Duncan said that a meeting was planned for February 17 or 18 to further discuss layout and design.

PAC Airport Lease

Commissioner Duncan reported that Wally Jacobson was still working on the details.

1A/1B Audio Upgrade

BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones reported that Legal had approved the current plan and the item would be brought to a Business Meeting soon.

Financial Snapshot

Finance Director Dena Darrow provided the Commissioners with the data as of last Friday from each Elected Official. She said all Elected Officials were currently under the 33.2% benchmark for this time of year, insurance had spent about 30% of its budget, or about \$3.4 million and the County had collected about 37% of its revenue. She noted the total spending at the moment was about 28%.

Ms. Darrow listed the different Fund Balances: after the appropriations were made last week for \$693,000, the Assigned Fund Balance was at \$11.2 million, Unassigned Fund Balance was \$20.3 million and Committed Fund Balance was around \$1.7 million. She stated there had not been much out-of-budget spending, except for the emergency repairs that Snowgroomers had to make to one of its machines.

Ms. Darrow concluded with the fact that pay roll costs were about \$63 million annually, or about \$2.5 million in every two weeks.

Chairman Fillios and Commissioner Brooks both offered their compliments on Ms. Darrow's presentation.

Time Off for Employees to Receive COVID-19 Vaccine (Action)

Commissioner Brooks suggested that the County provide two hours of paid administrative leave time for employees to get COVID-19 immunizations. He commented that, while this was not a budgeted expense, it could cost the County much more in sick leave and shut downs if people didn't get their vaccinations.

Commissioner Duncan inquired whether vaccinations were going to be offered on site.

Ms. Jones stated that Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud had said that Panhandle Health had indicated they could do a clinic at the Administration Building, perhaps in May, depending on vaccine supply. Ms. Jones said Ms. Proud would update the Board as she gets more information.

Commissioner Duncan expressed a concern regarding equity of treatment for employees that had already had their vaccinations and had not received administrative leave.

Ms. Jones reported that KCSO, Adult Misdemeanor Probation (AMP), Juvenile Detention and Juvenile Probation had already had the chance to be vaccinated.

Prosecutor Barry McHugh voiced his support for Commissioner Brooks' suggestion.

Commissioner Duncan stated she would discuss the issue with Ms. Proud and bring any additional information back to the Board. She suggested the item be addressed in a Business Meeting, if they decided to proceed. She also asked whether employees should be required to provide proof they had received the vaccination to be eligible for the administrative leave time.

Commissioner Brooks indicated that he felt they should act on this immediately.

Chairman Fillios stated that he felt that taking a week to collect more information before making a policy decision would be wise.

Ms. Proud entered the meeting at 11:16 a.m.

Ms. Proud said she did not have any information on whether the employees that had already received their vaccinations had done it on company time or not. She said she would look into that and get the data. She offered to bring the information to the Board next week.

Ms. Proud exited the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

New Building Financing Options (Discussion)

Treasurer Steve Matheson reviewed different methods of financing the Attorney Center, along with their benefits and drawbacks. He called attention to the probability that the Legislature was going to impose restrictions on counties' revenue collection this year. He said that would certainly affect the funding of the project.

Commissioner Duncan remarked that the Legislature might behave in a more restrictive fashion next year or the following year, even if they were moderate this year. She said it seemed to her that a General Obligation Bond would be the way they needed to go, because the County would then have the taxing authority necessary that could not be taken away from the Legislature.

Chairman Fillios commented that the project could be funded through foregone taxes and asked for input on that option.

Treasurer Matheson provided some suggestions for ways the Board could proceed, if they chose to draw on the foregone taxes as a funding mechanism. He outlined benefits and drawbacks of that idea.

Ms. Darrow explained how individual taxpayers would be affected by using foregone. She estimated it would result in about a \$100 cost per taxpayer for homes valued around \$400,000, keeping in mind the potential \$100,000 Homeowner's Exemption. In response to questions from Commissioner Duncan, she offered her view of the advantages and disadvantages of using foregone as opposed to other potential funding mechanisms.

Prosecutor McHugh exited the meeting at 11:37 a.m.

Chairman Fillios said he was willing to consider any of these options, once he decided which one offered the County the best result.

Commissioner Duncan remarked that she had spoken to three different groups about the possibility of trying to pass a bond and that they had responded favorably, after hearing details of the choices. She indicated she would be in favor of putting the question up for an advisory vote.

In response to a question from a person participating remotely, Chairman Fillios provided a definition of foregone balance. He said it was a theoretical amount of money the County could have taken in taxes in the past but had not. He explained that every time the County did not take advantage of its full 3% taxing authority in a year, the difference went into that virtual account.

BOCC Senior Business Analyst Nanci Plouffe offered additional information about the possibilities entailed by taking foregone taxes to pay for the building. She explained how it could impact amortization of any loan the County took for the project.

Treasurer Matheson expressed reluctance to expend the foregone balance in this manner.

Chairman Fillios called a halt to the ongoing discussion for now. He commented that they had to wait until April, to find out what the Legislature would do before they made their final decisions.

Commissioner Duncan confirmed that they had already paid the architect \$33,000 and were only obligated to \$693,000 for Phase I.

- 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.

Kootenai County Resident Erin Barnard, from Coeur d'Alene, said she thought the facilities expansion discussion had been really good. She commented that she thought the possibility of using foregone seemed worth exploring further.

Ms. Barnard stated that she felt that the COVID vaccine should be treated in a manner consistent with the way all the other vaccines were handled by the County. She warned the Commissioners about setting new precedents that might prove problematic in the future.

- E. Adjournment (Action):** Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
