

**Minutes of Meeting
Elected Officials
February 17, 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 Assessor Bela Kovacs, Clerk Jim Brannon, Prosecutor Barry McHugh, KCSO Sheriff Robert Norris, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Human Resources (HR) Generalist – Employee Relations Kimberley Van Slate, KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, BOCC Communications Manager and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Ms. Van Slate was present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business (Discussion):**

Fair Booth 2021

Commissioner Leslie Duncan reminded those present that the North Idaho Fair would extend to ten days for the first time this year. She announced that a County Information Booth was planned. She added that Community Development might have its own booth or share in the County’s booth.

She asked the other Elected Officials to consider whether they would like to take part and suggested that anyone interested should contact her so coverage schedules and other details could be decided.

Town Halls

Commissioner Duncan noted that Commissioner Bill Brooks had offered Town Hall-style meetings in the past. She said that both she and Chairman Fillios were interested in organizing some events. She suggested that any Elected Officials that wanted to participate should offer their thoughts on how often such meetings should be offered and how they should be structured.

Kootenai County Resident Summer Bushnell entered the meeting at 9:11 a.m.

Prosecutor Barry McHugh said he thought all the Elected Officials should attend the meetings and suggested holding them twice a year.

Clerk Jim Brannon suggested emulating Post Falls and offering a less formal “Coffee with the Elected Official” style meeting, held more often and on a smaller scale. He also suggested that it would be particularly useful to educate the public on the possible bond issue to fund the new building.

Treasurer Steve Matheson said that he would participate if it were required. He voiced agreement with Clerk Brannon's idea of using them to inform people about the possible bond.

Commissioner Duncan offered to begin organizing a town hall meeting to discuss the bond right away.

Treasurer Matheson cautioned that Elected Officials should refrain from offering personal opinions during such a meeting, since it was intended to serve a purely educational purpose.

Clerk Brannon voiced his strong agreement with the Treasurer's remark.

Spending Policy 930

Commissioner Duncan explained that there were problems with the wording of the County's Spending Policy 930. She said the phrasing might not be in alignment with state statute. She stated that she was working with Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney R. David Ferguson on a draft with improved language. She added that she was not trying to increase bureaucracy in any way, but to ensure the County followed state statute.

In response to a question from KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Commissioner Duncan said that the revised policy would not look much different. She said they might end up keeping the \$5,000 cap to purchases; vehicle purchases were contracts so they would still come before the Board as before. She explained that the wording of the policy did not match the intent: the wording said if a department went over on a line item but had excess funds and were going to spend over \$5,000, then it had to come before the Board; while state statute said budget authority did not mean spending authority.

Assessor Bela Kovacs suggested that they also consider how capping recurring expenses would be handled.

Clerk Brannon offered his perspective and recommended against creating a system that would add complication to the process.

Commissioner Duncan voiced her agreement with his points and repeated that her intent was to follow state law without increasing bureaucracy.

March Jury Trials

Prosecutor Barry McHugh announced that jury trials were scheduled to begin again the first week of March, contingent upon the seven day rate of COVID infections. He cautioned that they could be cancelled again, but said that the trend seemed to be going in a positive direction. He said that they should know by this Thursday whether they would go forward or not.

Kootenai County Resident Summer Bushnell asked whether jury members would be required to wear masks or if face shields would be permitted.

Prosecutor McHugh stated that face coverings would be required and suggested she contact the Bailiffs for specific details.

Grade Reclassification Process

Chairman Fillios commented that the grade reclassification process had been in place for some time, predating his own election to the Board. He said that the input of all Elected Officials had been requested when an employee was reclassified but he would like to drop that part of the process because he felt that an employee's level was primarily the decision of the particular Elected Official, with the BOCC having responsibility specifically for compensation. He added that Human Resources had the related duty of ensuring parity across different departments. He indicated that he felt dropping the requirement would be of benefit, since there were rarely any comments offered.

Clerk Brannon requested additional clarification on the boundaries that would be preserved between the Elected Official's control of employee classification and the Board's control of compensation.

Commissioner Duncan remarked that she would want to see the revised policy in advance of it being taken up by the Board. She added that she would want to be certain these matters were still handled in a transparent way, in open meetings, for public access.

Chairman Fillios confirmed that it was specifically part of Policy 600 that would be addressed.

- 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 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
