

LEWIS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BOCC)

Business Meeting minutes

October 17, 2023

Present: Commissioner Swope, Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Pollock

Recorder: Rieva Lester

Commissioner Swope called the meeting to order at 10 a.m., determined a quorum and then proceeded with the flag salute.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rieva Lester noted that Kyle Wheeler and Ray Chapman-Wilson had submitted written comment.

April Jones shared concerns regarding election fraud. She said Dominion machines and tabulators were found to be fraudulent.

Julie Balmelli-Powe echoed April's concerns about election fraud. She said she supports a return to in-person poll booths. Julie said she has not come to an agreement regarding her property, which is affected by Resolution 23-339. She said she thinks the board would be acting prematurely were it to approve the resolution before resolving right-of-way issues with the affected property owner.

Dena Hackney shared concerns about 158 Walhaupt Road in Onalaska. Dena said gray water from the property is contaminating her pasture and compromising her home. She said she reported the issue on Aug. 7 and that a county representative visited the site Aug. 8. She said the individuals at 158 Walhaupt illegally dug a ditch over the two properties' shared well water line to reroute the gray water.

Ray Chapman-Wilson discussed child sex abuse, noting that library books aren't the cause. He said most offenders know their victims.

NOTICE ITEMS

Commissioner Pollock made a motion to approve Resolutions 23-334 and 23-335. Commissioner Brummer seconded.

Resolution 23-334: Notice of hearing regarding Lewis County 2023 budget emergency and supplemental appropriations to and transfers within current expense and various funds. The hearing will take place in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at or after 10 a.m. Nov. 7, 2023.

Budget Administrator Becky Butler discussed the resolution. Becky said the amendment currently reflects expenditure increases totaling \$2,941,017 with revenue increases totaling \$1,929,003 for a \$1,012,014 decrease of fund balance. She noted that totals are subject to change.

Resolution 23-335: Notice of hearings and an informational meeting regarding the Lewis County preliminary budget for 2024. An informational meeting on the budget will be held at 5:30 p.m. Nov. 21, 2023, and hearings to adopt the 2024 budget and fix the amount of the levies upon property in the county for 2024 will take place at or after 11 a.m. Dec. 4, 2023. The meetings will take place in the Commissioners' Hearing Room on the second floor of the Historic Courthouse.

Budget Administrator Becky Butler discussed the resolution. Becky said discussed the upcoming hearings and the upcoming informational meeting regarding the 2024 budget. Rieva Lester noted that the hearings will begin at 11 a.m.

Motion passed 3-0.

CONSENT ITEMS

Commissioner Brummer made a motion to approve minutes from the October 10, 2023, Business Meeting as well as Resolution 23-336. Commissioner Pollock seconded.

Resolution 23-336: Approval of warrants/claims against the various county departments.

Chief accountant Grace Jimenez, representing the Auditor's Office, said warrants 875,736 through 876,209 and direct disbursements numbered 12049, 11917, 12005 and 12121 through 12127 were issued in October for payments against the county totaling \$2,809,044.94. Grace said payroll/tax deposit warrants numbered 796,111 through 796,115 and Automatic Deposits numbered 59,981 through 60,571 also were approved for payments totaling \$1,279,022.35. Grace noted a skip in sequence for warrants 875,732 through 875,735, which were issued on behalf of Special Purpose Districts.

Motion passed 3-0.

DELIBERATION ITEMS

Commissioner Pollock made a motion to approve Resolutions 23-337 through 23-340 (later amended to exclude Resolution 23-339). Commissioner Brummer seconded.

Resolution 23-337: Approve a grant agreement between the Washington State Department of Commerce and Lewis County Department of Community Development for the Periodic Update Grant in the amount of \$350,000.

Long-Range Planner Mindy Brooks discussed the resolution. Mindy said the resolution allows her to sign the \$350,000 grant agreement with Commerce.

Resolution 23-338: Accept \$250,000 ARPA grant from the City of Centralia for water systems upgrades at the Southwest Washington (SWW) Fairgrounds.

Parks and Recreation Administrator BJ Kuykendall discussed the resolution. BJ said Centralia has pledged funding to help repair the water system at the fairgrounds.

Resolution 23-339: Authorize the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to sign a Local Agency Agreement and Federal Aid Project Prospectus with WSDOT for the Berwick Creek at Labree Fish Passage (MP 0.459), County Maintenance Project (CMP) 2001.

County Engineer Geoff Soderquist discussed the resolution. Geoff said the proposal cannot be submitted until the process is complete, including addressing Ms. Balmelli-Powe's concerns. Geoff said the process is being run in parallel with the process that involves Ms. Balmelli-Powe's property.

Julie Balmelli-Powe expressed concerns regarding the timing and lack of outreach. The commissioners and Geoff discussed the timelines and Balmelli-Powe's concerns and decided to hold the resolution.

Commissioner Pollock made a motion to amend her original motion to exclude Resolution 23-339 from consideration. **Commissioner Brummer** seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Resolution 23-340: Approve a Local Agency Agreement and Federal Aid Project Prospectus between Lewis County and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for the 2023 County Safety Program – County Road Project (CRP) 2205.

County Engineer Geoff Soderquist discussed the resolution. Geoff said the resolution helps the county meet the conditions of receiving conditions of receiving Federal Highway Administration Highway Safety Improvement Program funding.

Motion passed 3-0.

HEARING

Ordinance 1349: Prohibit interference with a firefighter or emergency responder and make a violation thereof a gross misdemeanor.

Commissioner Swope introduced the hearing.

Clerk of the Board Rieva Lester gave the staff report.

Commissioner Swope asked if there were any questions. Julie Balmelli-Powe asked what the punishment for a gross misdemeanor would be.

Rieva Lester cited state law regarding misdemeanors. Matt Jaeger and Becky Butler corrected Rieva's statement to reflect the penalties for a gross misdemeanor: imprisonment in the county jail for a maximum term fixed by the court of up to 364 days or by a fine in an amount fixed by the court of not more than \$5,000, or by both such imprisonment and fine.

Commissioner Swope closed the question-and-answer portion of the hearing.

Rieva Lester, Matt Jaeger and Becky Butler asked that their previous comments be adopted into the record.

Commissioner Swope asked if anyone wanted to speak for or against the resolution. No one chose to speak.

Commissioner Swope closed the hearing.

Commissioner Brummer made a motion to approve Ordinance 1349. Commissioner Pollock seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

PRESS CONFERENCE

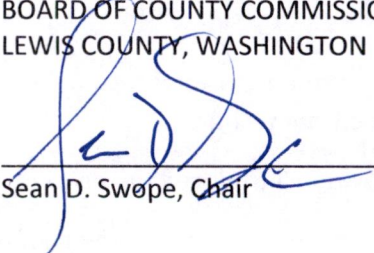
No questions.

ADJOURNMENT

The BOCC Business Meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m., with the next Business Meeting scheduled for 10 a.m. Tuesday, October 24, 2023, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room (Room 223).

Minutes from the BOCC Business Meeting are not verbatim. The weekly Business Meeting streams live on YouTube (search for "LewisCountyWa" on YouTube or go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/LewisCountyWa/featured>). Video footage also is available at no charge at <https://lewiscountywa.gov/offices/commissioners/bocc-meetings/>.


BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Sean D. Swope, Chair

ATTEST:


Scott J. Brummer, Vice Chair


Rieva Lester, Clerk of the Board


Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM, Commissioner

