

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES  
KITITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
PUBLIC HEARING**

**MONDAY**

**4:00 P.M.**

**DECEMBER 6, 2004**

Board members present: Chairman Perry D. Huston, Vice-Chairman Bruce Coe and Commissioner Max A. Golladay.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Judy Pless, Budget & Finance Manager; Paul Bennett, Public Works Director; Lana Thomas-Cruse, WSU Cooperative Extension Agent; Duke Senter, Computer Services Director; Lisa Young, Human Resources Representative; Bob Gubser, Sheriff's Department; William Holmes, Probation Services Director; Darryl Piercy, CDS Director; Clay Myers, Undersheriff; Sande DeSalles, Fair Manager; Greg Zempel, Prosecutor; Gene Dana, Sheriff; Nancy Goodloe, Public Health Administrator; Amy Mills, Treasurer; Joyce Julsrud, Clerk; Iris Rominger, Assessor, and approximately 5 members of the public.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**2005 BUDGET**

**COMMISSIONERS**

At 4:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN HUSTON** opened the public hearing to consider adopting the 2005 County Budget.

**JUDY PLESS, BUDGET & FINANCE MANAGER** reviewed proposed figures for the County budget for the fiscal year 2005. She said the advertised budget was in the total amount of \$52,270,676.00 however there had been new figures submitted relating to the increase in new construction calculation for property taxes in the amount of \$172,000.00 for the General fund levy. This figure has been added to the budget reducing the beginning fund balance. She said the total amount therefore reflects a balanced budget.

**CHAIRMAN HUSTON** noted the new software program for the Treasurer and Assessor's office had not been built into the budget, but said the Board would revisit it some time during the first quarter of 2005. He explained that with the growth in sales tax, the Board could dedicate funds from the 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% Law and Justice account to fund one Law Clerk and one Transport Officer, and from the Drug Fund for one Detective position.

**COMMISSIONER COE** asked if the Sheriff's department could contract out the processing of civil papers to an outside agency in order to free up time for another Deputy so they can be out on patrol. **CLAY MYERS, UNDERSHERIFF** said there had been a significant increase in the amount of papers requiring service.

**THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING:** **LEE BATES** said he was against a property tax increase. **GENE DANA, SHERIFF** said there had been a 61% increase in criminal activities throughout the County since last year. He said this past year had brought on several major investigations (arsonist, burglaries etc.) and there was a serious backlog of investigations going on. He encouraged the Board to support the use of Road Diversion funds, which is allowed by law to fund traffic related activities. He compared the amount of available funds was equivalent to either chip sealing 10 miles of County roads by the Public Works Department or hiring 2 full time Deputies.

**COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY** commented on the significant benefit package that the Sheriff's Deputies receive and said he did not want to lay off other County employees in order to give the Sheriff's office additional deputies, because all County employees provide important services. **COMMISSIONER COE** questioned if it would be cheaper to drop the amount of overtime the Sheriff's Deputies accrue and use that money towards hiring an additional Deputy. **SHERIFF DANA** said most of the overtime occurs at the end of a persons shift, noting that Deputies can not leave a crime scene or an accident just because their shift is up. **STEVE LOVEJOY** supported the Sheriff's offices efforts in obtaining additional funds for new Deputies. He felt the Sheriff's office was severely understaffed and can not properly handle situations as they currently stand. He encouraged the Board to look to the future and ways to help protect the citizens of Kittitas County. **SUSAN BLACK** said she lived at the top of Snoqualmie Pass, stating it was a fast growing community, although the most distant from the City of Ellensburg. She said crime rates in their area were usually higher in the winter time, and they were at a disadvantage being so far from County services and protection. She explained how their community was currently organizing a crime watch effort because of the law enforcement services being so limited in their area. **JACK EDWARDS** commented on the amount of ticketing for illegal parking that goes on in the Snoqualmie area, and felt it could be a source of income to cover the expense of having more police presence in the area. **CHAIRMAN HUSTON** clarified that the amount of funds received from ticketing was very minimal once the State etc. has received their portion. **THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

**CHAIRMAN HUSTON** moved to amend the General fund proposed budget reflecting the increase in new construction in the amount of \$172,000.00, to authorize a transfer of funds from the 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1% Sales Tax for Law and Justice, to fund one Law Clerk and one Transport Officer; to fund one Detective position from the Drug Fund, and to direct staff to prepare the enabling documents for the Board's consideration. **COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

**COMMISSIONER COE** said 65-70% of the County's general funds budget is law & justice related, and the State needs to step up and pay for those mandates they approve. He encouraged the County to continue communicating with the Legislature in Olympia to define what's important to them and what they are willing to fund.

**CHAIRMAN HUSTON** moved to continue the public hearing to Tuesday December 7, 2004 at 2:00 p.m. to review enabling documents.

**COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD**

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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**Julie A. Kjorsvik**

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**Perry D. Huston, Chairman**