

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITTTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
COMMISSIONERS AUDITORIUM
SPECIAL MEETING**

THURSDAY

11:00 A.M.

MARCH 13, 2008

Board members present: Chairman Mark McClain; Vice-Chairman Alan Crankovich; Commissioner David Bowen.

Others: Mandy Robinson, Deputy Clerk of the Board; Clay Myers, Undersheriff; Bob Gubser, Commander; Gene Dana, Sheriff; Judy Pless, Budget and Finance Manager; Jerry Pettit, Auditor; Joyce Julsrud, Clerk; William Holmes, Probation Services Director; Mike Studer, Kittitas Police Department Chief (KPD); Dale Miller, Ellensburg Police Department Chief (EPD); Scott Ferguson, Cle Elum Police Department Chief (CEPD); and thirteen members of the public.

SPECIAL MEETING

3/10TH BUDGET DISCUSSION

COMMISSIONERS

At approximately 11:00 a.m. Chairman McClain opened a special meeting to hear from the local law enforcement chiefs to receive feedback from them as to how they will track the 3/10th of 1% sales tax increase expenditures. McClain stated he felt it was important to come up with a strategy that the voters would feel it would be worth re-authorizing for another seven years. McClain stated he was unsure how best to show voters that the funds were brought in and spent in the best way possible. McClain voiced a concern for a report to be done every few years to show the progress of how the money is benefiting the community. He stated he wanted a coherent strategy now so the voters in seven years will be confident to reissue the tax proposition.

Sheriff, Gene Dana stated he had spoken with Chuck Reasons at Central Washington University in the criminology department and he stated they would be willing to take the project on to do a seven year projection.

Chairman McClain asked where the talks were in regards to GIS.

Gene Dana, Sheriff stated they are working on crime mapping but are delayed right now because of configuring the different law computer programs to make them all mesh.

Chairman McClain asked for feedback from the different Chiefs in regards to how they will track the funds.

Dale Miller, EPD stated the City will be tracking the money in a

separate account like the County has discussed doing. The City was in support of what EPD presented. Chief Miller stated the City has an annual report they submit to the State from all the departments, and on theirs they will show how and where the 3/10th of 1% was spent. Chief Miller also stated they have an interlocal agreement with the other local law enforcement for drugs, gangs etc... that if they call for assistance, assistance will show up immediately. Chief Miller stated in terms of UCR numbers they don't track everything, they just track the major crimes, but with the 3/10th funds they will be hiring a staff member that will track all the other crimes to compile a report. Chief Miller also stated he has found that the public really likes to check the website that was set up for this proposition. He stated he had spoken with Chiefs in other County's that have had this tax passed and they have found the public has really liked to see the new staff etc.. to show them what their money is going to. Chief Miller stated it's a good and inexpensive way to publicize the way the funds are being used, and felt that would be a positive thing to do here as well.

Commissioner Crankovich stated he realizes this discussion needs to take place, but right now we need to authorize the affected departments on whether to move forward or not. He stated last weeks meeting was to give them direction and that did not, take place. Commissioner Crankovich stated we have to get these jobs filled and if not we are doing a huge disservice to the voters who approved this proposition. He stated if we continue to hold out on what was approved, there is a good chance they will never approve this type of tax increase again. Commissioner Crankovich stated he understands the "staging" in hiring but also understands that these positions that were approved are putting us up against a deadline and in order to proceed appropriately, we need to get going. Commissioner Crankovich supported the concern of having to potentially lay off staff if the funding doesn't come in consistently, but feels that the staging in hiring will hopefully prevent that.

Chairman McClain acknowledged Commissioner Crankovich's statements but stated he feels to move forward with the hiring and especially for the Juvenile Justice holding room is premature. McClain stated that he feels the locations being proposed are dangerous.

Chairman McClain stated he still feels strongly about the delay in hire of two deputies in order to stay close to budget.

Commissioner Bowen expressed his apologies for missing last weeks meeting and stated he was at a WSAC/LSC Meeting in Olympia. He indicated his hope for today was to confirm with staff that the funds are anticipated to begin arrive in early May. He fully agrees that the voters spoke loud and clear they wanted "boots on the street". He expressed the same concerns as Commissioner McClain in regards to the Juvenile holding unit. He stated we are talking about building an

Administrative building, and doesn't want to see the money spent on a holding facility that wouldn't be used for long. He felt we need to see that the numbers are accurate before we do too much in regards to restructure in the Juvenile office layout.

Sheriff Dana stated there will obviously be spikes in crime when more boots are on the street because there are more bodies out there to patrol and report crime. He stated the important thing is, is that we need to get going on this because by the time the deputies are hired it's a year out for them to complete the academy and other training needed.

Commissioner Bowen asked if the affected staff still felt that the allocations were appropriate.

William Holmes, Probation Services Director stated that the room that's being proposed will only be a temporary holding cell and it will be a simple box with two sided glass strictly used to get the juvenile's out of the juvenile staff's offices.

Commissioner McClain stated the he had spoke with Lower District Court and Upper District Court and they were comfortable with their current staffing. He stated possibly at some point Superior Court may need an additional staff member.

Commissioner Bowen questioned Finance Staff in regards to what would be needed to move forward today. He said he would presume that we need to have the fund set up for the funds, which would be set by resolution. Judy Pless, Finance Staff stated that will be coming forward at the next agenda session. Commissioner Bowen stated he also assumed a meeting with HR would be needed in order to get the organizational charts corrected as well as PAF's to be drafted following the hiring processes. Commissioner Bowen stated if the cars for the Sheriff's department needed to come sooner than they could come from an interfund and pay the 3/10th fund back.

Commissioner McClain questioned Sheriff Dana in regards to his earlier statements about it making sense to look at the collection rate prior to hiring the last two deputies.

Commissioner Crankovich said in the committee's proposal as it is spelled right out, that if the funds are not there, they will hold off on hiring.

Commissioner Bowen stated he was comfortable moving forward with authorizing the recruitment process to begin, and stated he would like the holding facility for juvenile to come out of the 3/10th money since it was budgeted there.

Commissioner McClain wanted it on the record that they were not to use County Maintenance staff for the project, as he felt they were not qualified to do that level of work. He stated he would also like to still get law enforcement together at some point for a discussion.

Commissioner Crankovich moved to authorize and begin the recruitment process to fill the positions approved by the passage of proposition #2 - 3/10th of 1% Criminal Justice Tax for one Deputy Clerk in the Clerk's office to begin July 1, 2008, two Deputy Prosecutors to be staggered July 1, 2008 and August 1, 2008, six Line Deputies- 2 in July, 2 in September, 2 in November, two PT security positions (= I FTE) in July, one Clerk to begin July 1, 2008, one part time Custody Officer to begin August 1, 2008, with the understanding that if the projected revenues fall short the last two Deputies may be postponed. Commissioner Bowen seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner McClain asked if there were any other questions.

Commissioner Bowen asked Chief Studer if in Kittitas they were going to set up a line in their budget to track the funds. Chief Studer said yes. Commissioner Bowen asked the same question of Chief Ferguson and he stated they will eventually but he has about twenty bosses so he is a little delayed in having the chance to meet with all of them.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Mandy Robinson

Mark McClain, Chairman