

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

**TUESDAY**

**1:00 P.M.**

**DECEMBER 8, 2015**

Board members present: Chairman Gary Berndt; Vice-Chairman Obie O'Brien and Commissioner Paul Jewell.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Brett Wachsmith, Treasurer; Robin Read, Public Health Administrator; Kaitlyn Reddick, Fiscal Analyst; Holly Myers, Environmental Health Supervisor and 11 members of the public.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**ADMISSIONS TAX**

**COMMISSIONERS**

At 1:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN BERNDT** opened a Public Hearing to consider implementing a County Admissions Tax, per RCW 36.38.

**CHAIRMAN BERNDT** reviewed a Staff Report on a County Admissions Tax that is allowed per RCW. He said it is a local tax and the administration and collection is accomplished locally, not through the Department of Revenue. **ROBIN READ, PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR** reviewed the Public Health Departments funding, programs and services. She also reviewed the cuts and decreased Federal and State funding. **KAITLYN REDDICK, FISCAL ANALYST** provided information on the General Fund contributions as well as required functions of Public Health. **BRETT WACHSMITH, TREASURER** explained the administration of collecting the tax and said it would be a joint effort between Treasurer and Auditors office.

**THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: FRANK CRIMP, ELLENSBURG GOLF CLUB,** expressed opposition of the proposed admission tax. He noted 95% of the people who play golf at their facility are local citizens with an average age of 68 years old. He thought there were other ways to generate funding for the Public Health Department. **LEE DAVIS** felt if an admissions tax was implemented it should be done across the board and the only exemptions should be those outlined at the State level. **RALLA VICKERS, ELLENSBURG FILM FESTIVAL,** asked for clarification on non-profit groups. **AMY MCGUFFIN, KITITAS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,** asked for clarification and questioned if the State was exempt from the tax (Discover Pass, etc. events at Central Washington University). **THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

**CHAIRMAN BERNDT** explained how the list of exemptions had been created. The Board reviewed various activities that would require an admission charge as well as those that would not if the admissions tax were to be implemented. **COMMISSIONER JEWELL** said the tax was

**APPROVED**  
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different than others as it would be the County's responsibility to go out and impose the tax. He noted the County does not have history relating to the matter as they've never had the tax before.

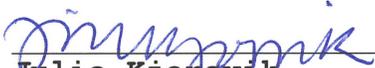
**COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN** said he did not expect to receive a wind fall from the admissions tax. **CHAIRMAN BERNDT** reviewed other Counties who have implemented an admissions tax and said he would be willing to go back and do some additional research before the Board makes a final decision.

**COMMISSIONER JEWELL** moved to continue the Public Hearing to January 5, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Auditorium, 205 West 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Ellensburg, WA noting the record would remain open to both written and oral testimony. **COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD**

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Julie Kjossvik

  
Gary Berndt, Chairman