

ASOTIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 4, 2019

Regular Meeting

The Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Asotin, State of Washington, met this date. Present was Brian Shinn, Chairman; Jim Jeffords, Vice Chair and Chris Seubert, Member.

Regular meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m.

(1)

Jeffords moved to approve the minutes of October 28, 2019 as written. Seubert seconded, motion carried.

(2)

Shinn announced there would be an additional open to the public after discussion with Fish & Wildlife, but there would be limited time of 3 minutes to each, also there will be an executive session added after the budget workshop regarding personnel issues.

Open to the Public:

(3)

Sam Ledgerwood, Alpowa area said he had spoken to Shinn about the cougar situation and the involvement the Klickitat County Sheriff has taken. Ledgerwood said he felt Asotin County needs to get proactive with the cougar issues here, with cougar coming into town.

Stephen Pozzanghera, WA Department of Fish & Wildlife Region 1, Regional Director:

(4)

Pozzanghera discussed the WA Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) current evaluation and input process for land transactions in the County. Pozzanghera said the WDFW are mandated to serve wildlife but they still have to provide access to the public and to do that they have to acquire property. Pozzanghera said, every other year the regional directors have to bring land acquisitions forward to WDFW and this year the property presented was Green Gulch In-holding, 643.5 acres; Harlow Ridge, known locally as the Charlie Knight Ranch, 1,654 acres; 4-0 Ranch, which WDFW has already purchased some of the property, this purchase would be for the remainder. Pozzanghera said WDFW are in the evaluation phase so there is no foregone conclusion that these can be purchased, the agency has to seek the funds.

Shinn asked if he would just be discussing what they are interested in and then will he be back with the comments they received? Pozzanghera answered yes.

Seubert asked where the funds would come from to make the purchases. Pozzanghera said they have to find the best funds. Shinn asked if those would relate to RCO funds. Pozzanghera said he believed it would be state funds used. Shinn commented that there are some monies given that have restrictions on them as to what the land can be used for, but not the state dollars. Shinn asked if state dollars or private grant dollars would be used. Pozzanghera said he understands only state dollars would be used.

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Pozzanghera discussed the three properties being considered: Green Gulch which is existing in a in-holding of 643.5 acres which abuts the Chief Joseph Wildlife area, an area important for elk herd management. 4-0 Ranch, Phase 6 which would be the final 767 acres. WDFW already purchased 11,271 acres but due to personal issues the landowner wanted to reduce the acres but WDFW wasn't interested. Now the landowner wants to sell the remaining 767 acres. Harlow Ridge (Charlie Knight Ranch) is 1,654 acres with 2.5 miles common with WDFW property. This is good winter range for the elk and spring calving. Pozzanghera said WDFW would maintain the ag areas to help with th elk damage in the Cloverland area. Pozzanghera said WDFW knows there is a potential to subdivide the area but they would like to see it remain intact and used for additional public land base and public access for hunting, wildlife viewing and photography.

Pozzanghera said WDFW has been working with the County Assessor and the best figures they can come up with are 2019 figures. They used the Assessors values and total acres owned by WDFW just to get a figure but then will use open space rate.

Shinn said there are no dollars listed for the 4-0. Pozzanghera said that was correct because there are too many structure upgrades so they didn't do any numbers. Shinn said there is a lot of personal property dollars which will not be replaced by PILT. Pozzanghera said that was correct.

Pozzanghera pointed out, support from the public for lands acquisition, saying there is a report on their website that shows a survey with responses from county residents that he would recommend the public check out.

Mark Heuett, Snake River Road said he has farmed the Charlie Knight ranch as well as the 4-0 and farming is a hard living. Heuett said he felt these parcels are good areas to allow the WDFW to purchase as it will be the best use of the property.

Shinn stated that Lands Committee member, Matt Seibly called him to say he opposed the WDFW buying more land in Asotin County, with the exception of the Green Gulch property.

A citizen from Clarkston said there is a problem with the accumulative impact of all the state and federal agencies buying land because of the lack of payment. Also there is an impact on the cattlemen with regard to grazing. If WDFW wants to do something, they need to purchase hunting access from property owners and also delist the wolf to help the rancher.

Jay Holzmiller, Anatone said he was on the Fish & Wildlife Commission and as a commissioner he never voted one time for land acquisitions. Holzmiller asked when is enough - enough for purchasing land. Holzmiller said he understands the Board doesn't want to get in the middle of a willing seller and WDFW but the public looks to the Board for keeping up the tax base.

Client Didier said he owns property in Cloverland and as a Commissioner in Franklin County, they also have the same problem. Didier said the Assessor told him he has to show receipts for working the land to get open space taxes but the property they bought is simply for recreational use so why should he have to pay full tax price. Didier said the WDFW wants to put a camping ground across the road from his property, he urged the Board not to allow the purchase. Discussion pursued regarding the lack of PILT funds compared to regular tax dollars.

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Sam Ledgerwood said he has a lease for grazing in the county and wolves do have an effect on the landscape. Green Gulch is a in-holding area and as a member on the Lands Committee he agreed to it, but he felt the property needs to stay in ag and if it doesn't then it should be taxed at the recreational rate.

Stan Wilson, Asotin County Sportsman said the County probably gets more taxes from WDFW for Green Gulch then currently from the property owner. The Charlie Knight Ranch would give the sportsman a good hunting area where it currently is posted no trespassing.

Jenny Rynearson, County Assessor commented that the WDFW owns 50,169 acres in the county which is 473 parcels at an open space rate of \$4.66 million.

David Brown said he has property that borders WDFW property for several miles and he doesn't think they can maintain what they currently have.

Megan Stewart, Asotin County Conservation District Programs & Operations Coordinator:

(5)

Stewart gave an update on the Cottonwood Creek Culvert Replacement project. Stewart said the design funding was secured and is in for final design review. Most funds are secured from the Fish Barrier Board and SRSB for approximately \$550,000.00 but the engineer's estimate is higher. Stewart said after the contracts are done she will bring the land owner agreement for the Board's signature.

(6)

Stewart discussed the Cougar Creek Barrier informing the Board, this project will complete the culvert for Grande Ronde and asked if the Conservation District should continue to get the funding. Seubert asked if it is an Asotin County barrier and if there were any others identified. Stewart said no, but during the grant application process they have to identify the amount of fish to be impacted.

By consensus the Board agreed to have the Conservation District to proceed.

Jenny Rynearson, County Assessor:

(7)

Rynearson gave an update on the Segrove property in Asotin. Rynearson said as the Board is aware the survey was completed and a site visit showed an error in the survey which is to be corrected. Originally there was to be 3 lots but because the State Highway Department has a 70' right-of-way there will only be 2 lots. At te corner of Fairgrounds Road access the property owner, Segrove owns the bulk of the road but has agreed he would cut the corner and give to the County Fair. Shinn said it looks like a possible path forward to make a win/win. Jeffords commented that there is now only 2 tracks out of the 3, so what is Segrove going to do. Rynearson said as far as she knows, he is not sure yet.

Dustin Johnson, Public Works Director:

(8)

Johnson presented a resolution adopting the Six Year Transportation Improvement Program (2020-2025).

Seubert moved to adopt Resolution No. 19-30 "In the Matter of the Asotin county Six Year Transportation Improvement Program (2020-2025). Jeffords seconded, motion carried.

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(9)

Johnson presented a resolution adopting the 2020 Annual Construction Program and 2020 County Arterial Preservation Program.

Jeffords moved to adopt Resolution No. 19-31 "A Resolution Adopting the 2020 Annual Construction Program and the 2020 County Arterial Preservation Program. Seubert seconded, motion carried.

(10)

Johnson presented an ordinance adopting the County Transportation Plan. Johnson informed the Board, this is a "living" document as projects are completed and added the document will be updated. Johnson said this document includes a capital improvement plan (CIP). It is a guiding document for the County.

Seubert moved to adopt Ordinance No. 19-32 "An Ordinance Adopting the Asotin County transportation Plan". Jeffords seconded, motion carried.

Karst Riggers, Building Official/County Planner:

(11)

Riggers presented for final approval, Variance 19-24 for Earl and Rose Hood Estate at 14915 Highway 12, located by Chief Timothy. Riggers explained the applicant is requesting a variance to split a 40 acre parcel into 21.5 acres to be retained by the Hood Estate and a 18.5 acre parcel to be sold to the buyers of the remaining estate. Riggers explained the requirement is 40 acre minimum parcel size in the agricultural zone. Riggers informed the Board, one neighboring property owner was concerned that it is a hay field and wants the area to remain the agricultural use. Riggers said the Planning Commission doesn't have the right to set that, but the new owner has the first right of refusal and the neighbor with the concerns wants to have the second right of refusal. That would be up to the Hoods to grant that. Department of Transportation (DOT) requirement is the existing access has to be used.

Riggers said the Planning Commission recommends for final approval.

Jeffords moved to follow the recommendation of the Planning Commission and grant final approval. Seubert seconded, motion carried.

(12)

Committee reports.

(13)

Jeffords moved to authorize the Chairman to sign the renewal with Regence for County dental coverage with an increase from \$101.70 to \$102.35 per month per employee. Seubert seconded, motion carried.

(14)

Seubert moved to approve the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement with the City of Lewiston to provide ambulance and vehicle extrication services for areas not currently included in the EMS levy area. Jeffords seconded, motion carried.

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Open to the Public:

(15)

Charlotte Tuttle, City of Asotin resident said she was opposed to the WDFW purchasing more property in the County.

(16)

Sam Ledgerwood informed the Board he would be attending the Blue Mt Forest Plan meeting on November 22 and asked if any of them would be attending and urged them to get involved.

(17)

Media: None

Claims approved and ordered paid:

#001	Current Expense	\$	8,935.13
#101	County Road	\$	7,765.22
#104	County Fair	\$	1,134.70
#107	Veterans Relief	\$	293.00
#127	E911	\$	45.00
#129	Community Services	\$	6,179.89
#170	Trial Court Improvement	\$	1,140.60
#410	Landfill	\$	2,583.31
#501	ER&R	\$	10,064.68
#502	Central Services	\$	1,121.20

The following voucher (warrant) numbers are approved for payment:

293428 through 293496 for \$39,262.73

The following voucher (warrant) numbers and direct deposit are approved for Payroll:

293336 through 293371 for \$44,347.06 and \$288,427.74

(18)

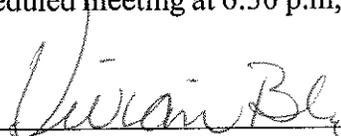
2020 budget workshops were continued with Chris Kemp, COO; Gloria Hancock, Financial Analyst and Jenny Rynearson, County Assessor.

Executive session held at 11:48 a.m. for approximately fifty-six minutes regarding personnel issues per RCW 42.30.110(I).

Board adjourned at 12:43 p.m. until their next scheduled meeting at 6:30 p.m, Monday, November 18, 2019.



Brian Shinn, Chairman



Vivian Bly, Clerk of the Board

November 18, 2019