

Minutes of Meeting
Advisory Board Interview
January 3, 2022
11:00 a.m.

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Leslie Duncan and Commissioner Bill Brooks met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present was Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present were Kootenai County Residents Christina Malm and Deborah Rose. Ms. Rose was present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business:**

Planning & Zoning Commission Applicant Interview: Christina Malm (Discussion)

Chairman Fillios explained that there were two current openings on the Planning & Zoning Commission and a third might occur. He stated that the BOCC planned to interview eight candidates for these and would deliver a decision after the final interview, later this week.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan: What skills and experience in group dynamics would you bring to the Planning Commission that would make you an effective Commissioner?

Kootenai County Resident Christina Malm said she had studied architecture for a year, had worked in architectural offices, had received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Industrial Design, had worked in interior design and had been a high school math teacher for about 20 years. She remarked that she had participated in different boards as well as acting as a supervisor in some past jobs. She called attention to her years in education and mentioned that she was currently tutoring at the college level, all activities that required excellent communications skills and interpersonal skills.

Chairman Fillios: What do you see is the fundamental role of the Planning Commission?

Ms. Malm said she understood the role to be reviewing existing laws and codes and acting as an interface with residents, to help them make their concerns known about projects.

Commissioner Bill Brooks: The ability to conduct research and report to the commission with a critical analysis and suggested course of action is vital. Can you provide an example that demonstrates this ability?

Ms. Malm described her activities in data collection, analysis, organization and presentation during her employment selling office furniture. She said she had also gotten a Master's Degree in Curriculum Development and the entire program had been focused on doing research and writing papers.

Commissioner Duncan: Planning Commissioners are obligated to represent the entire county rather than any particular geographic region or neighborhood area. Can you provide an example that demonstrates your ability to represent the welfare or well-being of the general public?

Ms. Malm said she had been President of the local Teacher's Union Association, because no one else was willing to take on the task. She commented she had to consider the needs of elementary and high school teachers, equally representing all the stakeholders.

Chairman Fillios: An effective Planning Commission requires members from all walks of life to ensure that the entire community is well represented. Would you share why you believe your background or experience would be a helpful addition to the Commission?

Ms. Malm commented that she and her family had previously lived in Seattle and had moved here in 2016, so she could relate well to the large numbers of people who decided to move here. She said she also worked with people with different skill levels and backgrounds, as a tutor.

Commissioner Brooks: Effective Planning Commissioners have certain common traits such as the ability to: express oneself clearly and concisely in public; listen to opposing views and still keep a clear focus on where the real public interest lies (objectivity); keep an open mind to new issues; define what's really at issue on any matter; take the long view; and assemble information and use it to make meaningful recommendations. Can you give us an example of a useful trait you would bring to the Commission?

Ms. Malm reviewed her employment experiences which indicated her abilities to provide all the listed skills.

Chairman Fillios: Why are you applying for the Planning & Zoning Commission?

Ms. Malm said she wanted to contribute something of worth to the community.

Commissioner Duncan: What are the biggest issues Kootenai County is facing?

Ms. Malm stated that growth was definitely the biggest issue facing the County, particularly how to manage growth without creating additional problems or damaging the community's attractiveness. She said she felt improved communication with the public was needed on development issues.

Chairman Fillios: What are your thoughts regarding the balance between growth versus private property rights?

Ms. Malm talked about the need to protect private property rights while allowing be openings for economic development. She voiced her concern about objections from homeowners to legally permitted developments. She said they needed to be heard, but she did not feel they should be able to block a project because they objected to its location for purely personal reasons.

Commissioner Duncan: What are your thoughts on the time it currently takes for building permits to be approved? It used to be two to three weeks; now it is about 3 months.

Ms. Malm remarked that she was used to environments in which building permits took 9 to 18 months. She said perhaps the County could consider using different permit procedures for different types of projects, with the idea of streamlining the process in some categories.

Chairman Fillios: Would you consider limiting the number of building permits issued?

She said she would need more background information to consider that.

Commissioner Brooks: What are your thoughts regarding preservation of open spaces in the community?

She stated she would like to see some shifts in planning for open space in our communities. She suggested establishing greenspace corridors and encouraging new development projects to include natural spaces that did not include planted lawns. She pointed out this would reduce water use and the need for herbicides and pesticides.

Commissioner Duncan: Have you heard of Agenda 2021/2030?

She said she thought she had recently heard about Agenda 2030, but was not clear on what it entailed.

Chairman Fillios invited Ms. Malm to ask them any questions she might have.

Ms. Malm asked why there were two open positions on the Commission, what the relations between the Board of Commissioners and the Planning & Zoning Commission were, and what the dynamic of County versus cities was.

Commissioner Duncan described the services the County provided the cities, but said that each city had its own planning and development processes, as did the County. She said the Commission terms were for a set number of years, so two positions were up for reappointment and a third person was going to resign.

Chairman Fillios stressed that the Commission needed people with a mindset of workers rather than managers at this time.

Commissioner Brooks asked whether Ms. Malm had served in the military.

Ms. Malm said she had not, but her husband had.

Ms. Malm asked whether there were any overlap between the Comprehensive Plans of the cities and the County.

Commissioner Duncan said the cities had their ACIs (Areas of City Impact) within which they had a degree of say in development, based on whether they planned to annex a parcel or not.

Ms. Malm asked the Commissioners what they felt were their personal areas of greatest concern.

Commissioner Brooks stated his was representing all Kootenai County Residents.

Commissioner Duncan said hers was maintaining the rural character of parts of Kootenai County for those people who did not wish to live in an urban environment.

Chairman Fillios said he was concerned with taxing authority, which had been recently affected strongly by new state statute. He commented that the limitations impacted the services the County could offer, staff wages and compression. He added that growth was always a concern as well.

- D. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. Idaho Law prohibits Board action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Comments related to future public hearings should be held for that public hearing. There were no public comments.
- E. Adjournment (Action):** Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

BOCC SIGNATURE

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk