

**Minutes of Meeting
Elected Officials
January 16, 2019
9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman Chris Fillios, Commissioner Bill Brooks and Commissioner Leslie Duncan met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Assessor Rich Houser, Clerk Jim Brannon, Coroner Warren Keene, M.D., Prosecutor Barry McHugh, KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Chief Deputy Assessor Joe Johns, Finance Director Dena Darrow, Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney R. David Ferguson, KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Sandy Von Behren, Chief Deputy Treasurer Laurie Thomas, BOCC Senior Financial Analyst Nanci Plouffe and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present was Coeur d'Alene Press Reporter Brian Walker.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** Item three, Emergency Management/Grant Concerns (Action), had been previously removed from the agenda.
- C. Public Comment (Discussion):** 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 was no public comment.
- D. Business:**

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Fillios stated that meetings would now include a Public Comment section at both the beginning and the end.

Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke entered the meeting at 9:07 a.m.

Newly seated Commissioners Leslie Duncan and Bill Brooks briefly introduced themselves.

County Emergency Plans (Action)

Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Director Sandy Von Behren remarked that staff responses to recent incidents at the Courthouse Campus revealed a need to improve instructions and provide simplified plans. She suggested that each Elected Official send a representative to discuss the emergency procedures for the different areas with the intent of making condensed versions. Ms. Von Behren said that KC Notify had worked much better for making the public aware of situations, although it too had aspects that could be improved upon. She added that employees could not be compelled to provide their phone numbers to KC Notify, however they could be made aware that the option existed.

Chief Deputy Prosecutor Barry Black entered the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones entered the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos offered his support for Ms. Von Behren's request. He commented that such attempts had been made in the past, but had quickly lost momentum. Undersheriff Mattos remarked that the final goal was to keep people safe and to reduce the potential for liability for the County.

Treasurer Steve Matheson inquired what level of emergency the exercise would be intended to address. He reminded those present that some levels of preparation would have a definite impact on the Budget.

KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger stressed the axiom that it was wise to, "Prepare for the worst and hope for the best." He advised the plans be tailored for all potential emergencies, up to the level of an active shooter on campus. He stated that, in an actual emergency, no one would be inclined to look in a book to see what is to be done. He said each office should have its own procedures memorized and people's tasks assigned ahead of time, so that actions could be taken automatically at need.

Ms. Von Behren stated that she envisioned a short-term set of meetings to simplify the instructions and do training.

Prosecutor Barry McHugh pointed out that some of the Elected Officials had departments in different areas on the campus and said a representative from each physical location should be designated.

Clerk Jim Brannon confirmed that he supported this course of action. He said that looking at more pro-active actions the County could take might be helpful as well. Sheriff Wolfinger said that metal detectors might not be useful; unlike at the actual Court, it is legal to enter the Administrative Building with a gun. Undersheriff Mattos remarked that a building-wide intercom system had been suggested in the past. He acknowledged that this would certainly have a budgetary impact.

All the Elected Officials voiced their general support for Ms. Von Behren's proposal. Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney R. David Ferguson said that no motion was required to certify this, since it was an administrative issue.

Emergency Management/Grant Concerns (Action)

This item was pulled from the agenda.

Guidance on Budget Process (Action)

Sheriff Wolfinger asked the Board to devote the time to reading the expense justifications and other documents that each department prepares, during this year's budget process. He said that he felt confident about on the processes required by the Clerk's department regarding the Budget, but found the recent Board's needs less clear.

In addition, he suggested that the Budget be examined differently than in the recent past. Sheriff Wolfinger remarked that, in the past, the "A" Budget, which covers employee compensation, was taken up first and only when that was satisfactorily handled were the "B" and "C" Budgets done. He said, "The County does not make widgets; we provide service." He recommended that the employees who provide the service receive more focus.

Treasurer Matheson voiced his agreement. He asked the Commissioners each to provide an overview of how the Budget ought to be approached.

Commissioner Bill Brooks promised that he would read any material submitted to him with full attention. He commented that budget hearings were a complicated process and it was often difficult to distinguish between "need" and "want" in terms of requests. He stressed that he was willing to take the time to examine items closely and hoped for a frank and open relationship with all the Elected Officials.

Clerk Brannon said he knew the BOCC had a very tough job balancing competing priorities during Budget hearings. He stated that all the Elected Officials understood the process and could be trusted not to try to play games with the Board, but to ask only for what was needed.

Commissioner Leslie Duncan said she agreed that the employees should receive the first focus during Budget time. She remarked she had attended many of the public meetings in the previous year and hoped to help ensure this year's would feature increased clarity and make better use of time.

Chairman Fillios reported that he had been speaking with Finance Director Dena Darrow and Grants Management Office (GMO)/Transit Program Manager Kimberli Riley about working with the Board to develop improved approaches to the Budget process within the next thirty to forty-five days' time.

Treasurer Matheson stated he agreed the new Board should focus on employee compensation. He urged that the Board develop improved discipline in handling County personnel matters. He reminded all assembled that the new Human Resources Director would start work on February 4, 2019 and expressed his belief that she would be able to handle the challenges presented by the position.

There was general agreement from those present that "A" budget and personnel matters deserved increased focus.

Update on Election Recount (Discussion)

Clerk Jim Brannon clarified the difference between an audit of elections processes and a recount of ballots, since the term "recount" had been incorrectly applied to the recent processes at Elections. He stressed that no recount was done and that none of the election results had been in any way in question.

Clerk Brannon read into the record a statement explaining the events at Elections, concerning the discovery of inaccurate totals of early voting and absentee ballots. He

pointed out that the error was not reported by the Elections Manager, but by a concerned employee after the canvass. He said he had contacted the Secretary of State's Office and spoken to Chief Deputy Secretary of State Tim Hurst, who advised an audit of office procedures and the vote tabulation system. Clerk Brannon stressed that all audit steps were performed with care, under the oversight of a member of the Kootenai County Prosecutor's Office. He said the press had been appropriately informed and the updated results were posted to the County and the Idaho Secretary of State's websites.

Clerk Brannon provided those assembled with a copy of his statement and a copy of final Absentee Ballot Report. He commented that, "The taxpayers of Kootenai County overwhelmingly chose me. I take this honor very seriously and will not let any vote go uncounted."

Elected Officials Future Meeting Format (Action)

Chairman Fillios asked the Elected Officials whether they would prefer all three County Commissioners to be present for future EO meetings. All assembled agreed that this would be preferable. Treasurer Matheson urged all to remember that the Elected Officials Meeting is a BOCC meeting; the other EO's do not have the authority to make a motion or to control the agenda. He suggested that the Commissioners be mindful of other EO's needs and priorities.

Clerk Brannon urged the Commissioners to be certain that when an item is placed on an agenda that relates to an area covered by another Elected Official, that affected Official is specifically notified. He remarked that this enables the EO to be prepared with any statements or data required.

Prosecutor Barry McHugh suggested that the draft agenda be provided to all by email at least a day or more before a meeting. Commissioner Duncan said this should be possible since all the agendas for the coming week were supposed to be prepared and ready for posting by 3 p.m. each Friday.

Chairman Fillios asked if the other Elected Officials agreed that the position of Chair for the EO meetings be rotated among all three Commissioners. There was general agreement.

Clerk Brannon called upon everyone to congratulate Chief Deputy Assessor Joe Johns on his new position.

E. Adjourn (Action): Chairman Chris Fillios adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk
