

**Minutes of Meeting  
Elected Officials  
August 19, 2020  
9:00 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 were Clerk Jim Brannon, Prosecutor Barry McHugh, KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, Chief Deputy Clerk Jennifer Locke, Deputy Finance Director Keith Taylor, Staff Accountant – Budget Michelle Chiamonte, Chief Deputy Coroner Lynette Acebedo, Human Resources (HR) Director Sylvia Proud, Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Darrin Murphey, KCSO Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Community Development Director David Callahan, BOCC Communications Manager Nancy Jones and Deputy Clerk Tina Ginorio. Also present were Idaho Department of Labor Economist Samuel Wolkenhauer and Kootenai County Residents Olivia Brooks, Sandy White, Jeff Tyler and Tim Vulles. Mr. Murphey was present via teleconference.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman Chris Fillios called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
- B. Changes to the Agenda (Action):** There were no changes to the agenda.
- C. Business:**

**Presentation by Idaho Department of Labor Regional Labor Economist Sam Wolkenhauer on the Long Term Effects of COVID-19 (Discussion)**

Assessor Bela Kovacs entered the meeting at 9:01 a.m.

Commissioner Bill Brooks introduced Idaho Department of Labor Regional labor Economist Samuel Wolkenhauer.

Treasurer Steve Matheson entered the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

Resource Management Office (RMO) Director Jody Bieze entered the meeting at 9:11 a.m.

Mr. Wolkenhauer provided a presentation illustrating the probable long term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the state’s economy. He stated that the economy was in recession and the effects of the pandemic would continue to be felt for much longer than people thought. He reviewed historical data on the labor market, the unemployment rate, consumer spending, number of open jobs and economic stabilizing factors. He also went over different indicators to monitor, such as mortgage delinquency rates, renter eviction risk, and business closures.

Mr. Wolkenhauer exited the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

**Impact of COVID-19 Infections on County Services (Discussion)**

Prosecutor Barry McHugh updated those assembled on District Court’s plans. He confirmed that jury trials were to begin on September 14, 2020 and described some of the efforts to ensure social distancing.

KCSO Sheriff Ben Wolfinger described the impact of the pandemic on services provided by his department. He noted that driver's licenses were being issued by DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) on a by-appointment basis. He stated that the Jail population had been increased by delays in transportation of inmates to the state detention facilities. He noted that every inmate had been tested for Coronavirus, except those who had specifically declined.

Clerk Jim Brannon outlined his departments' efforts, particularly those in District Court Services and at the Elections Office. He commented that he was considering having Elections move to an appointment-only procedure, since all their services could be accessed online. He noted that they still did not know for certain whether the legislators would approve consolidated voting centers for the upcoming election.

Assessor Bela Kovacs suggested that all Elected Officials share their experiences in staff telecommuting in order to determine best practices.

Prosecutor McHugh remarked that all his attorneys possessed laptops, so they were able to work from home. He said provisions had been made to allow support staff to use their home computers as well. He added that Human Resources staff were also able to work from home computers and were doing so on a rotating basis.

Ms. Bieze exited the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

Sheriff Wolfinger said his department have staggered schedules for staff to minimize the number of people in the office at any one time.

Chairman Fillios commented that the BOCC had fifteen departments to track. Of those, he said Public Defender staff were working from home as much as possible and Community Development had gone to appointment-only services.

#### **Bonuses for Fiscal Year 2020 (Action)**

Commissioner Leslie Duncan stated that Legal had advised that the method for determining staff bonuses were too subjective and had recommended tabling the item until tighter guidelines had been instituted.

Chairman Fillios said that no vote was needed at this time.

- 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.

Sandy White, 939 West Dee Court in Hayden voiced her objection to the Panhandle Health District (PHD) mask mandate passed on July 23, 2020. She inquired whether steps were being taken to remove Jai Nelson and Richard McLandress from the PHD Board.

Commissioner Brooks explained the method by which a member could be removed from that Board. He noted that Panhandle Health served five counties, with a total of fifteen

county commissioners and that a majority of those commissioners would have to vote to remove a person.

Ms. White stated that she was also opposed to contract tracing being undertaken by PHD.

Jeff Tyler, 5892 West Harbor Drive, praised Mr. Wolkenhauer's presentation.

Assessor Kovacs noted that masks were required by the mandate ONLY when six foot social distancing was not possible.

Sheriff Wolfinger voiced his agreement with the Assessor's statement. He reported that KCSO had chosen to emphasize education over rigid enforcement of the mandate.

**E. Adjournment (Action):** Chairman Fillios adjourned the meeting at 10:04 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

CHRIS FILLIOS, CHAIRMAN

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tina Ginorio, Deputy Clerk

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