Cowlitz County Board of Commissioners

Joe Gardner, Chairman
Dennis P. Weber, Commissioner
Arne Mortensen, Commissioner
Tiffany Ostreim, Clerk of the Board

Minutes
September 15, 2020
Vol. 579

**ATTENTION** Washington State Governor issued Proclamation 20-28 which among other things, temporarily prohibits in-person public attendance at meetings subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA).

View the Agenda online at: http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/535/Agendas---Regular-Public-Meetings

Board of Cowlitz County Commissioners regular Tuesday meetings are shown live on KLTV Government Access Channel 29: http://www.kltv.org

Written comments on the Agenda items may be submitted prior to or after the public meeting at: cowlitz@co.cowlitz.wa.us - use PUBLIC COMMENT in the subject line.

Remote and real-time public participation - https://zoom.us/j/94612805144#success
Or Phone: 12532158782, 94612805144#

Commissioner Gardner called the regular meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. by Zoom. Commissioner Weber and Commissioner Mortensen participated by Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance – Led by Commissioner Gardner.
The Board of Health sent a letter to the Washington Secretary of Health on Friday, September 11 formally requesting an update on the process to submit applications to advance in the Safe Start Washington phases. Have not received a response yet. The letter is on the Consent Agenda. The public hearing for the zoning map amendment is on today’s agenda for 9:45 a.m.

Approval of Minutes of September 8-11, 2020 and Consent Agenda of September 15, 2020
Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve the Minutes of September 8-11, 2020. The motion carried with all voting in favor. Commissioner Weber moved to approve the Consent Agenda of September 15, 2020. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

Change Order No. 1 with Advanced Excavation Specialists for the Wren Loop/White Road Culvert Replacement Project No. 1794 to address additional work and material; total contract increases by $26,180.19 for a new contract total amount of $525,626.19. Mike Moss, Public Works; presented by Zoom. Change Order due to unsuitable material that was encountered during excavation; 48” culvert was found during excavation and had to be removed; and right of way issues. Funded 75% from FEMA; 12.5% by State of Washington Department of Emergency Management and 12% local funds. Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

Change Orders with Accurate Electric Unlimited Inc., for the Locking Control and Camera System Replacement at the Jail in the amount of $22,914.28, including WA State sales tax. Jacob Huston, Facilities Maintenance; presented by Zoom. Changes were made to cameras and wiring. Commissioner Weber moved to approve. The motion carried with all voting in favor.
Resolution No. 20-076 - Recognizing that the people of Cowlitz County are being destroyed economically and spiritually by the unlawful enforcement of executive suggestions. Commissioner Mortensen presented by Zoom. Founding fathers gave us limited government and codified that in the US Constitution, defining our republic. We have avenues of recourse which people must understand and exercise. One avenue is to resist mandates foisted upon the people under the color of law. It is our duty to resist unconstitutional laws. People must act when their freedom is limited unconstitutionally. Those in power will not yield immoral or illegitimate power under any but the strongest resistance. He collected over 500 signatures and emails in support of unlocking the county. We are elected by the people, not appointed by the governor or any other entity of government.

The resolution states:

1. The BOCC supports the Constitutional rights of every citizen. Previously the Prosecutor and Sheriff said they would not arrest or prosecute under a law they felt personally was unconstitutional. This resolution has the support of Sheriff Brad Thurman.

2. Recognizing its limited powers and jurisdiction, the BOCC does not and will not support any regulations or governmental actions that violate the constitutional rights of citizens. The commissioners will not violate their oath of office, but they want the people to know they have no control over the machinery at the state level. The County has no specific means to protect the people, but will not be the instrument of this tyranny.

3. The BOCC declares that Cowlitz County is no longer limited by the arbitrary phases of lockdown and all businesses and organizations may resume operation immediately. Subject to section 2 above, the BOCC has stopped executing the governors’ orders regarding the lockdown and phases.

4. The BOCC encourages prudence by voluntary adoption of sensible practices to mitigate the spread of infection.

This advises that Covid continues to remain a threat. It is our individual responsibility and no one else’s to behave in a manner that we deem necessary for our safety. No laws should force us to choose between obedience and survival. No one can account for the cost of the lockdown. The CDC is continually changing data and guidelines. We have closed schools and set in motion some very bad consequences and long term effects. The death rate, demographics, impacts on hospitals and a treatment/cure are important. The initial worry and justification for the lockdown did not happen. The government continues to take our money but provides limited services. The constitutions were written for the people; not for the arbitrary creation and application of law. The resolution does not rescind the governor’s orders. It’s time to stand up and show courage. Remember Article 1, section 1 of the state constitution. All political power is inherent in the people, and the governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and are established to protect and maintain individual rights.

Citizens spoke in opposition: Kurt Anagnostou.

Commissioner Weber made the motion to table the resolution for further discussion, amendment and consideration on made Wednesday afternoon. Wording is contrary to the constitution. The Board is in unanimous agreement the rulings of the governor are inconsistent. Agree we need to open the best we can. Would like to workshop the resolution with legal and get it right. Commissioner Mortensen disagreed, requested the work be done today.

Commissioner Gardner stated the county is not an enforcement agency regarding this issue. He wants the county open. #3; has to mean something. The county did not close or limit activity; the state agencies who have enforcement did. The state issues the business licenses and regulates and enforces labor standards.

Commissioner Mortensen disagreed, it’s up to the people to decide for themselves; it’s not the county’s job to protect them from Labor and Industries.
Commissioner Gardner stated he is not impeding folks to sustain themselves. Commissioner Mortensen stated if they can't pass the resolution they don't deserve to be in their jobs. Commissioner Weber withdrew his motion to table the resolution. Proposed to strike item #3 which the lawyers say is not doable.

Dana Gigler, Prosecuting Attorney's Office; advised the Board at this point and setting, if you have questions on the analysis you should contact the Chief Civil Deputy or Prosecuting Attorney.

Commissioner Mortensen stated the Chief Civil Deputy did a good job of explaining his case, but he does not do policy. Commissioner Gardner stated people want the elected representatives to stand up and voice their opinion. The Board has declared their opinion numerous times. But that doesn't change the enforcement issue. The county cannot keep businesses safe or shielded from state agencies; it puts business in the riskiest position.

Commissioner Mortensen stated they could add a sentence to #3 – the BOCC recognizes the various licensing agencies are not bound by this decision and you may be at risk.

Commissioner Weber stated he agrees with the people, but can't take illegal action. Can't declare open when we never shut down. Wants to make the motion acceptable and legal so people's wishes can move forward. Can't make false promises. Wants the county open and wants to do it right.

Commissioner Mortensen moved to adopt the resolution as he presented. Commissioner Weber moved to amend the motion to strike language after executive session in the title and item #3 from the body of the resolution. The motion to amend the resolution carried with Commissioner Weber and Commissioner Gardner in favor and Commissioner Mortensen opposed. Commissioner Weber moved to adopt the amended resolution. The motion carried with Commissioner Weber and Commissioner Gardner in favor and Commissioner Mortensen abstained.

Public Hearing - Ordinance No. 20-077 - Zoning Map Amendment from the designation of Unzoned to the designation of Light Manufacturing on approximately 4.19 acres, Lewis River Storage, Woodland. Nine forty-five a.m. was the time set for the public hearing. The public hearing started at 10:25 pm. Jason Lugo, Building and Planning; presented by Zoom. Property owner is asking for zone change from Unzoned to Light Manufacturing for two adjacent parcels. The properties board the city limits of Woodland, and the applicant desires the property to be more in-line with city zoning to offer more certainty and flexibility in standards. The property is developed with a boat and RV storage and transmission repair shop and ATV sales/repair center. City of Woodland has an Urban Growth Boundary and plans under the GMA. Unzoned areas allow for non-nuisance uses to be permitted. Light industrial uses also allows for non-nuisance industries. Proposal meets the goals for the Urban Land use elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends approval. The Planning Commission held on open record public hearing and approved the application 6-2.

Commissioner Weber worried about the possibility of a wrecking yard. Noted City of Woodland is opposed and requests it be zoned Commercial. The designation will not be in compliance with the city's comprehensive plan and affect the city's ability to comply with GMA. Light industrial allows for auto wrecking yards. Questioned storage units being allowed. Questioned if this was the appropriate zone. Asked if the application can go back to the Planning Commission for recommendation of Neighborhood Commercial zone.

Commissioner Gardner commented on the two descending votes from the Planning Commission. The application went through the critical areas assessment. Any application for future use, such as a cell tower, would have to go through the review process. The owner submitted an application, must act on the application.
Commissioner Gardner opened the closed record portion of the hearing for parties of record.

Theresa Wasel, Nevi Trust; spoke against the rezone. Also noted the City of Woodland is opposed. Noted the surrounding residential areas, river and larger area that floods. Detrimental to surrounding area.

Chris Meyers spoke against the rezone. His property is adjacent to the subject properties. He has applied for his home to be a historical landmark. Discussed the many wildlife in the area, recreation, and removal of an eagle tree. Posed questions to the city regarding his water and potential for development.

Travis Goddard, Community Development Director, City of Woodland; reviewed SEPA comments for rezoning and has concern of impacts without property mitigation. Site is within the city’s Urban Growth Area and the proposed designation will not be in compliance with the city’s comprehensive plan. City’s comp plan has a commercial designation for the site. Will affect the city’s ability to comply with GMA. Also affect the city’s ability to implement its comprehensive plan. Suggested the applicant not do zone change, but annex into the city which would save them money and help the city fill GMA requirements for planning. Would apply to the city for future development and balance the neighborhood.

Nick Little, representing the applicant; spoke on the reasons for the application for rezone. Amending the zoning designation reflects the current and future use of the property to prevent administrative or legislative roadblocks in permitting applications. Will also protect the landowners’ investment in their property. No plans for wrecking yard. Setbacks may be reduced, but requirements for screening. Would allow for easier and logical permitting path for a potential wireless tower to serve the area. Reflective of the current use of the property. Future development would also be reviewed under a more appropriate zoning classification. The landowner is not interested in annexation. PacifiCorp removed an eagle tree in 2016, not the property owner.

Greta Holmstrom, Building and Planning explained the city prohibits commercial storage but it’s allowed in the county so would not be prohibited unless annexed into city. Applicant wants light manufacturing. Property is in city urban growth area, but not the city. It is unzoned now. Allows for any use that is not a nuisance. It’s classified in comp plan as urban. Has urban services and transportation and meets urban per conservation plan. Difference is in zoning and classification.

Commissioner Gardner closed the public testimony portion of the hearing.

Commissioner Gardner explained the property owner submitted an application to change from unzoned to light industrial which does put tighter sideboards on what he can do with the property. Staff recommending the change. Planning Commission approved the change.

Commissioner Mortensen stated it was alarming someone wants to go from less restrictive to more restrictive.

Commissioner Weber stated when the comp plan was revamped, strived to avoid non-conforming uses. In this instance, the zoning recommendation would be consistent with preserving the owners use. Ends up being close to a spot zone in a mixed neighborhood. Need to know if we have the legal right to return to Planning Commission for them to look at the entire unzoned parcels in the long run. In the review, discovered larger problem.

Greta explained the options today are to review the application and approve or deny. If you deny this application, have to come up with findings.
Commissioner Mortensen voiced frustration. A process was followed and no justification to go against the process.

Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve based on the findings and conclusions in the staff report. The motion carried with Commissioner Mortensen and Commissioner Gardner in favor and Commissioner Weber opposed.

**Consent Agenda**

**Agreements / Contracts / Bid Awards**

Microsoft Enterprise Software Agreement renewal agreement covers the traditional software and license that prior Enterprise Agreements offered, in addition, it is allowing the county to move its email infrastructure to the cloud along with taking advantages of additional cloud resources and also changes the license methodology from counting desktops (workstations and laptops) to users, reducing the cost of the renewal and migration. Contract will cover three years (2020-2023) at a cost of approximately $240,446.01 per year for 645 users for a total cost of $721,398.02 including sales tax.

Modification No. 4 to Workforce Southwest Washington Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement dated July 17, 2017 - June 30, 2021 signed by Southwest Washington Executive Board, County Commissioner Dennis Weber.

Contract completion with Five Rivers Construction Inc. for the fabrication and installation of the Corrections control panel table top for a total cost of $9,529.02 including WA State sales tax.

Contract completion with Accurate Electric Unlimited, Inc. for the Cowlitz County Jail main breaker repair for a total cost of $3,476.52 including WA State sales tax.

Contract completion with Capital Heating for the repair of a coil on one of the jail's roof top units; total cost $4,505.45 including WA State sales tax.

Public Works Org chart as required by County Road Administration Board (CRAB).

**Resolutions**

Resolution No. 20-075 - Recognizing United Way Day of Caring September 11, 2020 approved by Commissioner Weber and Commissioner Gardner; Commissioner Mortensen abstained.

**Board Correspondence**

Letter dated September 11, 2020 to John Wiesman, Secretary of Health, Washington State Department of Health; from Cowlitz County Deputy Health Officer Steve Krager and the Cowlitz County Board of Health requesting update on the process to submit applications to advance in the Safe Start Washington phases.

Reappointment letters dated September 15, 2020 to Josh Johnson, representing citizens-at-large, and Robert Nichols, representing agriculture; on the Cowlitz County Solid Waste Advisory Committee; terms to expire March 15, 2022.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission notice of Reservoir Restriction, Yale Project 2071.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission notice of PacifiCorp Project 935-140, 2071-082, and 2111-080 and Public Utility District No. 1 Project No. 2213-043.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission notice of Board of Consultants for the Yale Project 2071.

**Vouchers**

Drainage Improvement District No. 1 June 2020 vouchers in the total amount of $8,456.45.

Drainage Improvement District No. 1 July 2020 vouchers in the total amount of $9,837.22.

The following vouchers/warrants are approved for payment

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The Cowlitz County Board of Commissioners adjourned at 11:55 a.m. to meet again Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

[Signature]
Tiffany Ostrum, Clerk of the Board

[Signature]
Joe Gardner, Chairman
Cowlitz County Board of Commissioners

Minutes
Open Public Meetings for the week of
September 15-17, 2020

**ATTENTION** Washington State Governor issued Proclamation 20-28 which among other things, temporarily prohibits in-person public attendance at meetings subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA).

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**Tuesday 8:45 a.m. Commissioners Pre Public Meeting Conference**
[https://zoom.us/j/94612805144](https://zoom.us/j/94612805144)
Or Phone: 12532158782, 94612805144#
Zoom: Joe Gardner, Dennis Weber, Arne Mortensen, Tiffany Ostreim
Established quorum.

**Tuesday 9:00 a.m. Regular Public Meeting – separate minutes**
[https://zoom.us/j/94612805144](https://zoom.us/j/94612805144)
Or Phone: 12532158782, 94612805144#

**Wednesday 9:30 a.m. Work Session**
[https://zoom.us/s/91516609489#success](https://zoom.us/s/91516609489#success)
Or Phone: 12532158782, 91516609489#
Zoom: Joe Gardner, Dennis Weber, Arne Mortensen, Tiffany Ostreim, Axel Swanson, KayLee McKay, Carolyn Fundingsland, Kurt Williams, Carole Harrison, Dr. Krager, Shannon Hoskins

**Agenda Items/Topics:**
**CARES Act Funding –**
Received amended contract from the State Department of Commerce for an additional amount of $2,179,000 for Coronavirus Relief bringing the total award of $8,171,250. Board needs to make decisions on how to utilize the additional funding and remaining funds from the original amount. Ideas: additional small grants for $1 million, schools for $1 million, utilities for $1 million, hospitals and long-term care facilities for $850,000. Utilizing those ideas leaves approximately $105,580 out of the total of $8,171,250. Looking for ideas for approximately $4 million in unallocated funding. Funding ends November 30, but if we have a good plan for use of the funds expect through the end of the year. It's a federal deadline. Need clear message from both Commerce and State Auditor about documentation. Need clarification on paying utilities. Need clarification on supplanting language.

Weber requested funding for long term care facilities be reserved, but not off the table.
Mortensen favored money going back to people harmed, not schools. Likes small business grants. Questioned what the next set of grants would look like.

Discussed a more efficient small grants program. Need guidelines. Ideas included cap of $10,000, have businesses be more responsible for their expenses and relieve county of auditing, targeted business - places that have specifically been impacted with restrictions and social distancing. Go out beyond the Cowlitz Economic Development Council; include all Chambers – find out the damages to the businesses; how many are out of business. Get more specifics from schools in their need and what the funds would be used for.


Commissioner Weber had to excuse himself for another meeting at 10:00 a.m.

**CARES Funding Approved** -
Wages for grant management – approximately $8,000 for August.
Superior Court laptop for court procedures – approximately $2,300.
Auditor – Full-Time temporary employee –approximately $5,531 October through November.
Auditor spoke on this request. Possibly more if filled in September. Will be designated to disinfect and provide customer guidance. Utilize Employers Overload - $17.56 per hour.
Commissioner Gardner recommended the Auditor communicate with the other Elected Officials on the second floor. Would like the employee to go between lobbies and disinfect. Good way to reopen to the public.

At 10:30 am the Board took a five minute recess.
The Board reconvened at 10:35 a.m. with Commissioner Gardner and Commissioner Mortensen present and Commissioner Weber absent-excused.

**COVID-19 Update** –
Public Health Officer Dr. Krager and the Board of Health sent a letter to the Washington State Secretary of Health John Wiesman. Statewide meeting with all Health Officers today at 4:30 pm.
First topic is safe start reopening, revamp. Like to think our letter pushed that along. Hope to have actual process to apply for next phase or what it will look like.
CDC notified Health Departments to be prepared of possibility of vaccine end of October or November. Most advanced vaccines are in Phase 3 of research. Working with local partners on logistics for distribution. Health Department does not have clinical services. If there was a population the providers were missing, may help out. No discussion about the vaccine being required. Need to know the effectiveness of the vaccine and people’s willingness to get the vaccine.
Should have options - if certain things move positively thresholds should be updated.

Commissioner Weber arrived.

Long term effects of COVID-19 are unknown. Have to weigh the risks and benefits of any medication. Hope for something safe and effective soon. Many school districts are opening by the end of the month. They have weekly calls and it is their decision when to open.

Cowlitz County continues to have good indicators. Spike in positive cases since July 4th are much lower. Currently 583 positive cases which represents 0.53% of the population of the County. For every 1 case there are about 9 cases we don’t know about which equates to 5.3% of the population have been infected to date. Rates in Cowlitz County are about half compared to Washington State. Doing approximately 100 tests per day which is lower than the states rate. CDC released state goal of 2%, has more to do with testing than outbreak. Local hospitalizations and Covid related deaths have been very low in the County. According to Washington Department of Health school reopening
metric, Cowlitz is has remained in the moderate level for 5 1/2 weeks. Report on September 21 will tell us how Labor Day affected rates. Median time from symptom onset to testing for confirmed cases is less than 2 days; we are closer to 3 days. Percent of cases reached within 24 hours of report is 90%; we are meeting that target. Percent of close contacts reached within 48 hours of positive lab results is 80%; we are meeting that target. Have to compare the percent positivity change to the testing rates change to find the transmission rate. Most recent trend – since mid-August, activity may be creeping back up. Past trends – steady and low while the stay home – stay healthy proclamation was in place; large increase after Cowlitz County entered Phase 2, with activity peaking in mid-July; and large decrease from mid-July through early-mid August. Assuming masks have contributed to the drop in infection rates. Covid tests look for viral particles – respiratory issues because of the smoke are different; but may cause an increase in testing.

**Wednesday 1:30 p.m. Commissioner Conference**
https://zoom.us/s/92101312772#success
Or Phone: 12532158782, 92101312772#
Zoom: Joe Gardner, Dennis Weber, Arne Mortensen, Tiffany Ostreim, Axel Swanson, Sabrina Fraidenburg

**Agenda Items/Topics:**
**Human Resources requests as needed**
**Auditor – Elections Manager position** – Request Step 6 of Grade 525.
Board approved.

**WCIF – Group Master Application for 2021 WCIF Coverage** – WCIF negotiated a decrease in our rates.
Board approved.

**Public Health Nurse** – request to reconsider two Covid Public Health Nurses through December 31, 2021. (Current employee and open position) Has the work and need and funding from state.
Board approved.

**Great Rivers BHO** – Letter to WA State Health Care Authority support for adding MCO’s to the Great Rivers region. Will allow more choices.
Board approved.

**Morgue update** – Three phases of demotion. Public Works then Contractor. Public Works will remove concrete and retaining wall. Site work estimate – demo of four buildings - $94,581. Current costs utilizing Public Works – contractor demo two buildings - $47,290. Public Works demo two buildings - $26,700. Will provide a savings of $20,590. Have option for WSU to move to the white building across from the Hall of Justice. Owners willing to go month by month. Morgue utilities will have to be taken into consideration. Road fund would be reimbursed through capital projects fund. Information Technology has been apprised for network services.
Board approved moving forward with Public Works demoing two buildings for $26,700.

**Jail Rate letters** – Initial term of the interlocal agreement with the cities for the use of jail facilities expired December 31, 2018. Negotiations on a new contract have not produced an agreement. County exercising automatic renewal clause until a new agreement can be reached. Bed rate for 2020 - $94.81, a 5.0% change from prior year. Bed rate for 2021 - $99.56, a 5.0% change from prior year. Contract with State Department of Corrections runs July to June - $85.44 and then $89.71. State legislature sets a limit. DOC reimburses for medical and the Jail has ability to deny taking state DOC inmates.
Board approved letter to be sent.
**cfn advocates contract** – cfn provides federal lobbying services. Services pertain to Mt. St. Helens – monitoring and maintenance dredging, Spirit Lake outlet long-term solution, re-authorization of the Army Corps of Engineers authority to provide flood protection and sediment management currently set to expire in 2035. Meetings with federal officials – scheduling congressional office and federal agency meetings.
Corps did receive acceptance of moving money for the river survey and SRS work. That was a reprogramming, it was not budgeted by Congress annually as it should be.
Board approved to renew the agreement for another year at the same cost - $36,000.

**ICE Contract** – Commissioner Weber supports the Superior Court judges and recommendation to continue with the contract. It provides a safe haven for kids who are subject to gang pressures. These are not babies and little children being separated from their parents.
Commissioner Mortensen noted juveniles are better off here under almost any circumstances. We are inquiring, but in order to change they have to provide a case. We have a top notch Juvenile Center; very well operated.
Commissioner Gardner was in agreement. No information to cause us to change course. Has been there since 2001. Seems to be a lot of misinformation as to why these individuals ended up in the system. Policy issue at federal level. Our facility is a good program.

**Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) Potential Litigation** – for a period of 30 minutes. Starting at 2:30 pm. Present: Joe Gardner, Dennis Weber, Arne Mortensen, Tiffany Ostreim, Axel Swanson, Doug Jensen, Susan Eugenis. At 3:00 pm all parties came out of Executive Session. No decisions were made.

**Thursday 9:00 a.m. Public Workshop**
https://zoom.us/j/99184841011
Or Phone: 12532158782, 99184841011#
Zoom: Joe Gardner, Dennis Weber, Arne Mortensen, Tiffany Ostreim, Brad Thurman, Darren Ullmann, Katrina Harris, Kurt Williams, Traci Jackson

**Agenda Items/Topics:**
**Department Requests with BOCC and Administrative Services –**
**Sheriff Budget Workshop** – overall budget is a decrease.
Court Security Contract - increase of $33,950.
Court Security Overtime – increase of $42,000.
Direct Labor - overall increase of $7,105.
Ammunition – increase of $13,900.
Internal Service Fund – Motor Pool – reduction of $380,400.
911 Communication - $8,869 increase
Securing Evidence – increase of $6,510 however once storage building is built will save approximately $15,000 annually in rent.
Registered Sex Offender Program – pass through funds of $13,030 will need to continue.
Establish New Fund - Sheriff’s Reserve Deputy Program – Special revenue fund of $5,500; no increase.
The Sheriff’s Office has many budgets in each section of the department including but not limited to: Benefits Administration, Boat Safety, Drug Task Force, Extradition, K9 Program, Records, Civil Service, and Emergency Management.
Board would like to see a summary sheet with all the different budgets that relate to the Sheriff’s Office.
Benefit Administration Budget – Emphasis was given to increase this budget by at least $25,000. The Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Retirement System (LEOFF Plan 1) provides for lifetime medical. Approximately 19 members. Depending on long term care needs the funds could be drastically depleted quickly. Sheriff noted the retirement fund, which the state pays is very well funded. If those funds can be used to help pay medical benefits would relieve pressure on counties and cities. Would begin at the LEOFF Board level, may require legislative approval to use those funds.

Board agreed must be proactive and prepare. Requested Budget Office to work on increasing the budget. Commissioner Weber will bring the request to use LEOFF 1 funds for nursing home relief to the WSAC Board of Directors.

Records – Longview pays 50% - close to $700,000 a year and believes they can to cheaper. The total budget is approximately $1.5 million and 13 full time employees. If Longview pulls out would cut the department in half. Infrastructure might have a little savings. Longview is looking at July 1, 2021. Actuals never got trued up over a four year period causing the ending fund to decrease quickly. The cost for the department definitely went up every year and compounded. Was a $200,000 increase for both the county and city.

911 – Formula is based on calls for service, assessed valuation and population of entities. The 911 Board approved a 1.6% increase across the Board. Don’t expect an increase in users’ fees when the new facility is built. Commissioner Gardner will get a comparison of costs between Cowlitz 911 and CRESA.

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m. Next budget workshop is Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.