

## Minutes for May 21, 2012

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**073041 THE BOARD OF WHITMAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS** met in their Chambers in the Whitman County Courthouse, Colfax, Washington for **Monday, 21, 2012** at **9:00 a.m.** Chairman Greg Partch, Patrick J. O'Neill Commissioners and Maribeth Becker, CMC, Clerk of the Board attended.

**9:00 a.m. - Call to Order/Board Business/Workshop.**

Present: Gary Petrovich and Kelli Hadley and Joe Smillie (9:10 a.m.).

**073042 1.** Items discussed included Public Works Trust Fund loan, Local Revitalization Funds, 2011 county financial statements, CDBG-PS grant application, corrections building chiller, Classification Committee proposal, review of building regulations and liability insurance. No action taken.

**9:15 a.m. - Executive Session.**

Present: Gary and Valerie Hunt and Kelli Campbell.

**9:25 a.m. - Commissioner Largent joined the session.**

**073043 2.** Commissioner Largent **moved** Commissioner O'Neill **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to go into executive session with the above individuals until 9:45 a.m. in accordance with RCW 42.30.140(4)(a) for matters related to negotiations.

**10:00 a.m. - Return to Open Session/Pledge of Allegiance.**

Present: Karen Johnson, Joan Willson, Kelli Hadley.

**D073043A 3. Motion** by Commissioner Largent to accept the consent agenda. Motion **seconded** by Commissioner O'Neill and **carried**.

**073044 4.** Claims/Payroll warrants numbered **263110-263214** for **\$263,809.79** approved.

**073045 5.** May 7, 2012 minutes approved.

**073046-073051 6.** Personnel change orders approved.

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**073052** 7. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to approve the notice for the 2012 Board of Equalization.

**073053** 8. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to sign the Business Associate agreement with FRP Financial.

**073054** 9. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to reappoint Lori Nails to the Classification Committee. Ms. Nail's term will expire 04/01/14.

**073055** 10. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to sign the 2012-2014 Deputy Sheriff's Association agreement.

**073056** 11. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to sign a professional services contract with David Bryne through 06/30/12.

**10:15 a.m.** - Gary Petrovich.

**073057** 12. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to sign the 2012-13 CDBG-PS grant application for submission to the Department of Commerce.

**073058** 13. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to sign the 2012-13 Community Action Center subrecipient agreement for the CDBG-PS grant.

**073059** 14. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to authorize the county's insurance appointed attorney, Michael McFarland to accept service of the Arthur amended complaint on behalf of Whitman County.

**073060** Not used.

**073061** 15. Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to reappoint Dennis Cartwright to a 6-year term on the Parks Board. Mr. Cartwright's term will expire 06/30/18.

**073062** 16. Information was received from Dave Tofte, Washington Survey & Rating Bureau regarding the county's upcoming building code effectiveness grading schedule. Information was forwarded to the Building Department.

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**073063** 17. An executed copy of the Administrative Office of the Courts and Whitman County Juvenile Department #IAA10189(3) was received.

**073064** 18. Commissioners' pending list reviewed.

**10:30 a.m. - Recess.**

**10:45 a.m. - Mark Storey, Public Works Department.**

Present: Joan Willson, Karen Johnson and Kelli Hadley.

**Engineering Division:**

**073065** 19. Chairman Partch convened the hearing for the Zayo Group, LLC franchise and requested a staff report.

Mr. Storey explained the proposed franchise is for countywide telecommunications and the applicant has met all requirements.

The Chairman opened the hearing to public comments. There being none, the hearing was adjourned.

Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** that franchise agreement #2012-01 between Whitman County and the Zayo Group, LLC for a telecommunications system on county road right-of-way be signed as presented. (This franchise is for 25 years.)

**073066** 20. The annual County Road Administration Board Certificate of Good Practice was presented by the Chairman to the Director. Without this certification, the county would not receive its state gas tax allotment used for roads and bridges.

**073067** 21. Commissioner Largent **moved** Commissioner O'Neill **seconded** the motion and it **carried** that the resolution to close county road #4110, Wagner Road for maintenance on the Schroder Bridge be signed as presented.

**RESOLUTION NO. 073067**

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS of Whitman County, Washington in the matter of closing a certain county road/bridge pursuant to R.C.W. 47.48.010;

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the following road/bridge will be closed to vehicular traffic: County Road No. 4110, the Wagner Road at milepost 0.17, beginning June 4, 2012 through June 28, 2012 or until completion of the Schroder Bridge Maintenance.

ADOPTED this 21st day of May, 2012.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF WHITMAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Greg Partch, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Patrick J. O'Neill, Commiss.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Maribeth Becker, CMC  
Clerk of the Board

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Michael Largent, Commissioner

**073068 22.** Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to publish the notice of road closure of Wagner Road #4410 for Schroder Bridge maintenance.

**Maintenance Division:**

**D073068A 23.** Mr. Storey indicated the maintenance crews are currently working on preservation work; seal coating, crack sealing, etc.

**D073068B 24.** The Department is beginning to see the first signs of road damage due to truck hauling and that is the reason haul route agreements are entered into prior to any hauling.

**Solid Waste Division:**

**D073068C 25.** The Director reported Public Works is applying for a \$2 million loan through the Public Works Trust Fund to upgrade the Solid Waste Transfer Station.

**Building Division:**

**D073068D 26.** According to Mr. Storey, First Wind is pouring foundations for the wind turbines on Naff Ridge.

**11:05 a.m. - Recess.**

**11:30 a.m. - Board Business Continued/Monthly Financial Review.**

Present: Bob Reynolds, Cinnamon Brown, David Ledbetter, Esther Tate, Eunice Coker, Fran Martin, Gary Petrovich, Kelli Campbell, Mark Storey, Robin Cocking, Sonya Goldsby, Tim Myers, Joan Willson, Karen Johnson, Kelli Hadley and Art Swannack (11:50 a.m.).

Excused: Janet Schmidt.

**073069 27.** Monthly financial report presented by Gary Petrovich and David Ledbetter.

2012 Revenue Budgeted - \$14,062,552  
2012 Revenue Received thru 04/30/12 - \$5,272,355 (37.49%)  
2012 Expenditures Budgeted - \$14,062,552  
2012 Expenditures thru 05/21/12 - \$3,901,284 (28.00%)

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2012 Cash Balance as of 05/21/12 - \$2,980,805.36

**11:55 a.m. - Recess.**

**1:30 p.m. - Reconvene/Board Business Continued/BOCC Workshop.**

Present: Tim Myers, Janel Goebel, Dave Mahon and Todd Heitstuman.

**073070 28.** Items discussed included Kamiak Butte Park LDS volunteer pine needle rake, Ridge Trail rock work, weed control, snow plowing, route scheduled maintenance, inspection of parks, trees uprooted at Klemgard, Klemgard Envirothon, Army Corps of Engineers spray requirements, Environmental Education Program, Fishing Kids program, Scenic Byways, park signage, Boyd elevator removal, removal of canoe launch at Wawawai, Bill Chipman Palouse trailhead to be designed by Public Works, Developmental Services Awards program, Developmental Services billing system, and office volunteer. No action taken.

**2:15 p.m. - Reconvene/Board Business Continued/Executive Session.**

Present: Denis Tracy, Milton Rowland, Gary Petrovich, Mark Storey and Maribeth Becker.

**073071 29.** Commissioner Largent **moved** Commissioner O'Neill **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to go into executive session with the above individuals until 3:20 p.m. in accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) for matters related to pending litigation.

**3:20 p.m. - Return to Open Session/Recess.**

**4:00 p.m. - Reconvene/Board Business Continued/Classification Committee.**

Present: Bob Reynolds, Gary Petrovich, Brett Myers, Judy McMurray, Judi Dunn-Gray, Dan LeBeau, David Ledbetter, Kelli Campbell, David Nails, Bob Lothspeich, Eunice Coker, Lori Nails, Jeremy Hodson.

**073072 30.** Bob Reynolds said the committee members want to report on what they have been working on all year, make a few suggestions and hope this will become traditional every year before the budget call. In that way the committee can provide the commissioners with what they feel are appropriate considerations as a budget tool. The committee has been analyzing the classification system as it exists. They are finding that it has become inadequate and doesn't seem to keep up with the trends that today's economy is producing. It is terrible to manage, inequities have been found, much improvement can be done to the system and that is the committee's charge; to help improve upon the system adopted in 1998 while being constructive and offer the Board different options to consider. The committee would like to make recommendations today in advance of the call

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for the 2013 budget allowing the Board time for review and research. Gary Petrovich added he will begin working with department heads next month on their 2013 budgets.

Mr. Reynolds went on to say the proposal for modification to the existing classification system is for 2013. If there is anything further the Board needs the committee and Human Resources will work in concert to provide that information.

A. Reduce the time between steps from 18 months to 1 year

Gary Petrovich said there are currently 14 steps, A-N; step categories are spaced at 18 month intervals with the exception of steps A and B. This system results in approximately a 19-½ year term to complete the scale as structured. By reducing the time between steps it makes it more realistic and a better framework for working with a compensation plan.

B. Reduce the amount of step increases from 3% to 2%.

Bob Reynolds said it might be a more manageable figure to work with especially over the next 3 years. Gary Petrovich explained this is an expense neutral proposition. By providing 2% step increases annually rather than 3% every 18 months costs the county zero.

**4:05 p.m.** - Art Swannack.

C. Implement an annual 1% catch-up adjustment in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Bob Reynolds said this would greatly reduce the proportion most of the county employees are currently paid. This is considered a catch-up phase. Gary Petrovich added the impact for 2013 with the 1% increase is approximately \$40,000 in total for all employees except for elected officials Sheriff's Deputies and Corrections. The commissioners verified this would amount to \$40,000 per year for 3 years or \$120,000. Mr. Petrovich noted not all employees in the classification system are covered under the general fund. However, the \$40,000/year pertains to general fund only.

D. Consider a longevity incentive of 2% in the 17<sup>th</sup> year.

Judy McMurray expounded 28 of the 67 Public Works employees are maxed out in the system amounting to 41% of their workforce. She felt the 2% increase in the 17<sup>th</sup> year was a very small increase overall. In April 2009 when Mark Storey was the Chair of the committee, he presented longevity proposal options to the Board and to date no response has been received. Echoing Judy's comments, Brett Myers thought this is critical because there are numerous employees who are maxed out in the system and have been employed for 14-17 years. With this proposal those employees would receive over 3 years about a 5-6% increase (2% at year 17 plus 1% for 3

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years). Although it would be nice to go above this percentage, the committee feels this proposal is very prudent and attainable.

Commissioner Largent said there are two separate components to classification system; 1) revenue fed into the salary structure and how that revenue is distributed and 2) where is the revenue derived. What he didn't see on the proposal is the net, anticipated budgetary effect for the total proposal, realizing the commissioners don't have discretion on the revenue side for the most part.

To put things into prospective, Gary Petrovich said the current general fund budget for 2012 is in excess of \$14 million. A \$40,000 increase in 2013 is less than 1/3 of 1% of the total \$14 million general fund budget. Proportionately, it is a very, very small percentage amount of the total overall operating budget.

Commissioner Largent stated the \$40,000 is only for the 1% catch-up proposal and that does not include longevity. He learned that the total budgetary impact had been calculated for the overall suggested proposal.

Brett Myers pointed out the 3% for step increases is already built into the system. They are not talking about a lot of new money. This is a recommendation from the committee. It is not the charge of the committee to determine where the revenue is derived or how it is attained. It is a recommendation for the Board to consider and is actually a very affordable and feasible recommendation given the structure that is already in place and currently affords employees raises at 18 month intervals. The recommendation doesn't come with suggestions necessarily on how to pay for the proposal.

Commissioner Largent said he was not disputing Sheriff Myers' comments. However, that is how a consideration is made with the means to fund it. He was not saying the proposal was unreasonable but principally it involves two distinct components; 1) resources moving in and 2) how that resource is allocated. If you are asking for resources to implement the model, you are meshing together both issues causing him difficulty in making a decision.

Gary Petrovich explained attainability in finding the funds for the proposal is an integral part of the budgeting process and budget reviews with the departments beginning in June. Finding the funds within the departmental budgets will be the key to implementing this proposal. Commissioner Largent agreed adding it would be difficult for the commissioners to provide an answer whether this is an acceptable proposal or not. He was not prejudging until such time as the funding requested has been identified. Bob Reynolds thought that was reasonable and why the committee is asking this be a consideration while preparing the 2013 budgets.

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Commissioner Largent did not believe the request was unreasonable. The Classification Committee has done the best they can to understand the constraints the county operates under. Just so the members understand, when he reviews the classification system, in his own mind he must separate the two components. As long as the county is not negatively impacted based upon a change in the classification system, he would be amenable to what the committee comes up with since the committee is comprised of representatives of employee groups suggesting how resources fed into a model are distributed. He simply wanted to lay it out from his prospective.

Ms. McMurray said it is similar to what anyone faces with their own family budgets and that is a matter of priorities. If the commissioners were to talk to rank and file employees they want to know how far down they are in the rank of priorities and retaining good employees versus spending the money elsewhere. Obviously, she didn't have in her frame of reference where the funding is derived. She can report to the Board on morale and a memo Phil Meyer of Public Works wrote listing the Public Works positions lost in the last four months specifically due to wages.

Commissioner Largent stated priority is going to be the difficult question moving into 2013. For example the Corrections building chiller unit that had to be replaced. He understands the morale issue and is quite sensitive to it. The fact he is focusing on budgetary issues is not to be construed as a lack of concern for the salary structure. But 2013 as he anticipates is going to be a contraction year as far as services.

E. Include one county commissioner in the Classification Committee proceedings.

Bob Reynolds said with a member of the Board on the committee, everyone can be kept up to speed as to what the committee is working on and gives the commissioners much more lead time. Most of the other county committees have commissioner representation and he thought it would be beneficial. Commissioner Partch explained the commissioners committee assignments are established at the beginning of each year and they can have discussion as to whether they want to add this committee to their list.

In response to Commissioners Largent's inquiry, Gary Petrovich said he did not have a cost associated with the proposal in its entirety today but they can provide a more specific breakdown. Commissioner Largent was only looking for an approximate cost also said he appreciated the Classification Committee's work because this is a difficult issue.

On behalf of the Department Heads and Elected Officials Brett Myers reiterated this should be something given strong consideration over the

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next couple weeks. If it is a decision the Board considers the departments should develop into their 2013 budgets and not wait until the end of the budget process to determine if it is feasible, otherwise it won't be feasible. Sheriff Myers didn't believe this was an excessive proposal. It basically moves the step schedule forward, is very reasonable and can be done.

Commissioner O'Neill requested clarification on the steps and longevity. Brett Myers stated the proposal compresses everything to 14 steps but adds a 17-year step for longevity. What that means is everyone who has been employed for at 17-years would receive an instant 3% increase (2% for the step and 1% for longevity).

Commissioner O'Neill wondered if the committee has looked at the possibility of shortening the number of steps. Sheriff Myers said that was considered, but this method offers a more palatable option for the commissioners' consideration without a lot of excess costs and also makes it easier for budgeting purposes. Gary Petrovich suggested another idea might be to hire new employees at a higher starting step depending upon the position.

Commissioner Partch said he was a little disappointed because in March 2010 the committee presented a more comprehensive idea. This proposal just lists a few things. At that time there was discussion about possibly removing the first 2 steps and maybe putting them at the end of the scale. It accomplishes the same thing but provides for a higher entry level wage to attract people which he liked. In this proposal he thought the committee is saying the Board doesn't have to accept the proposal in it's entirety, maybe take one piece of it at a time. As Commissioner Largent pointed out \$40,000 might be just a piece, but over 3 years it is \$120,000 and each year compounds. He emphasized the county is struggling. It was \$1.5 million out of balance at the beginning of the 2012 budget process. They were able to balance the budget because of wind mills, but wind mills sales tax is not an option in 2013 and the property taxes received from the wind farm have been mortgaged. He would like to say yes, we should adopt one or more of these suggestions, but they need to see where they are financially, probably sometime around September, but he thought July was too soon to determine where the numbers shake out. If the 2013 budget is out by \$1.5 million again they will have to look at priorities. They can tell each department this is something that can be done, but in turn, they will have to give something up. That might mean people because 70% of the general fund is for personnel. If a department doesn't have the revenue or there is a decline in revenue the option might be attrition. There is a little flexibility, but he didn't see how the Board could move forward right now. They are great ideas, but not as comprehensive as 2010. He would like to go back and visit the 2010 proposal and maybe remove the first 2 steps. Once something is made permanent, they have to

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be able to sustain it. The figure of \$40,000/year is \$120,000 over a 3 year period.

Gary Petrovich pointed out \$40,000 is only half of what the Salary Commission recommended for the elected officials and that comes directly out of the general fund each year beginning in 2013. Commissioner Partch said he realized that is an argument to be made. However, the 18 month step increments of 3% have been in place forever for employees that haven't reached 17 years. The electeds have not received any of those increases and Commissioner Partch didn't feel it was fair to bring that issue up. Gary Petrovich disagreed saying it is dollars that must be addressed in the budgetary process. Commissioner Partch said the Salary Commission has spoken and it is out of the county commissioners hands.

Kelli Campbell said she has heard the Board talk previously and today about a gradual movement from where the classification system is now to something else and the 2010 proposal. She didn't believe the committee is opposed to their 2010 proposal but they have found a different, gradual way to move in that direction. By cutting off the first 3 steps and moving those steps to the back of the schedule could cost more than the \$40,000 per year proposed today. Commissioner Partch said that is good to know. This is a smaller amount and if we can figure out a way to come up with that money because the budget is going to be \$1.5 million out of balance. The Board is not only going to be looking for every \$40,000, but every \$5,000 and \$1,000 reductions. Otherwise, he liked the proposal if it is sustainable and is very simplified.

Bob Reynolds said another factor with this proposal is that it is more easily understood, predictable and simplified for management and new employees. Commissioner Partch agreed adding this proposal has a lot of merit. There will be 6 months of additional wages but that is a minimal cost. If pieces of the proposal could be adopted that are affordable he thought they should take a piece of it at a time, but it is all about sustainability. They are looking at a very tough 2013 without new revenue, but thought there is a good opportunity with the Stateline development, the only one on the horizon.

David Nails said he has been on the committee since the 2010 proposal was submitted. The committee never heard back from the commissioners and that is one of the reasons they have tried to come up with new things for the commissioners to consider. To have a commissioner at least attend the meetings, not necessarily a member, but to help the committee find sustainable means. They are looking for anything to help and need the commissioners input.

Commissioner O'Neill said since he came on board he has spoken with Kelli Campbell numerous times about making changes to the system knowing employees retiring, the need to retain current employees and attract new

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employees. He does like what he has heard so far and by Gary Petrovich visiting with the departments in the next month he can determine how willing they are in buying off on this proposal because it has to be a team effort.

David Ledbetter said as someone that works with the budget and the mention of waiting until September or October, he thought it might benefit department heads upfront if this is something that can be considered before they can build into their budgets. It is something that should be done earlier rather than later. Commissioner Largent said the Sheriff suggested the same and he highly concurs. There has been some discussion about trying to come up with a revenue project as part of the 2-step process in building the budgets. He felt it would be helpful to know what the county's budgetary constraints might be and provide more information to the individuals preparing budgets, such as how far are you willing to go with this proposal, where we think we need to find x-amount of dollars to replace the loss of wind farm money, etc. He has brought this up previously but didn't know if the department heads feel this is a good idea. He would prefer department heads know these things going into the budget process rather than guessing at what the revenues might be.

Commissioner Partch asked for detailed cumulative dollar figures to determine sustainability and if sustainable he wouldn't have a problem with the proposal. It goes back to what Commissioner O'Neill said about every department head has to buy into this. He could commit to one year but maybe not 3 years.

Commissioner Largent suggested looking at the proposal in a couple pieces; simplification of the classification system without addressing expenditures and a way to reallocate existing anticipated resources. At least that could be done but could cause other difficulties because many employees' wages are currently frozen.

Bob Reynolds thought a directive from the Board could be taken back to the committee. To take Brett and David's suggestion further, the people creating budgets should know the playing field as far in advance and prior to constructing their budgets as possible by projecting revenues first and building around that. David Ledbetter said before knowing what all revenues will be, you are again looking at late July. Many department heads are already looking at their budgets for next year and if they had some kind of direction, they are budgeting around people and not the revenues they are bringing in. For example, they are taking their portion of what the impact will be into their department based on certain information and reducing their budget around it. General fund revenue is going to vary and they will be playing the waiting game with it until the middle of October or later before they have a better picture of anticipated revenue.

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Commissioner Partch said as long as everyone buys into this, he didn't disagree but at the end of the day there are only so many dollars. The Board can tell the department heads to build the increases into their budgets, but with the understanding their budgets could be reduced.

Dan LeBeau summarized what he thought to be the Board's comments. We all want a different classification system. This is a more simplified system and a simple modification to the current system. Instead of having 14 steps stretched out over 19 years it is reduced to 14 steps over 14 years. This will sting employee coming up to their 14th step because instead of receiving a 3% step increase they will only receive a 2% step increase. To make up for that the 17 year longevity proposal was created. All things being equal going from 14 steps at 18 months to 14 steps at 12 months and adjusting down from 3% to 2% between steps is revenue neutral, easy to adjust, easy for department heads to budget, easy for employees to understand and look forward to every year.

Mr. LeBeau said every year in September a proposal is submitted and nothing happens. He didn't envy the decisions the Board and department heads have to make at budget time. However, if the employees all knew instead of waiting until December 31<sup>st</sup> that causes a morale issue that nothing is coming until whenever the arbitrary step increase. With this proposal everyone would know come January 1<sup>st</sup> that an increase of 2% would be received. Then, the employee and departments have something to plan on. As Bob Reynolds indicated the committee is happy to take anything back and consider it. The reason they are proposing this now is to get something to the Board that is workable for budgets and gives employees something to grab onto. The nice aspect of this proposal is taking what we have and modifying it in a way that is revenue neutral. The Board can send the proposal back to the committee but any proposal the committee brings forward will have complications related to the numbers.

The commissioners pointed out the revenue neutral issue involves only one part of the proposal. Commissioner Largent said what he was trying to get at and he thought the Board was all in agreement, is how do we give our budget writers the tools to know which direction to go so they are not duplicating their efforts and that probably requires more specific discussion. For him personally, it must be a positive or budget neutral. He tends to accept the ideas proposed by the committee but it will be up to the budget writers to figure out how to allocate their available resources. The challenge comes into play when expenses are added to available resources.

Commissioner Partch concurred that none of the commissioners disagree with the one piece (Part B) because it is revenue neutral. There are other pieces within the proposal that need to be further discussed. He verified with Kelli Campbell that this must also be discussed with all bargaining units. At this time, Part B could be enacted for the non-represented

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employees only. It may sound simple and yes it is practical, but it is more complex as Commissioner Largent pointed out on the one element (Part C) that does have much merit.

Commissioner Partch said the current system is complicated and this would simplify it. He didn't feel the Board had any problem with reviewing the figures and taking on one piece of it. However, he was reluctant to pursue the 3-year portion (Part C) because sustainability is what it is all about in addition to the bargaining units.

Eunice Coker wondered how many department heads/elected officials are aware of the proposal. The Auditor said she is buying into it in her department. Judy McMurray said Public Works has incorporated it into their budget. Commissioner Partch suggested this issue be brought up at the next EAT meeting. Sheriff Brett Myers thought most department heads are aware of the proposal and he was not aware of any department head that has an issue with it. He added the commissioners are not going to find a more prudent offer even if it ends up being \$150,000 which is a small impact over a 3-year period.

Commissioner O'Neill asked for a couple weeks to review the information. Sheriff Myers said the committee didn't expect an answer today, but noted the call for the 2013 budget is 6 weeks out.

Ms. McMurray said the classification system was established in 1997. She has been on the committee since 1998 and in all that time the commissioners have accepted only one recommendation from the committee. Commissioner Partch said that was a \$500,000 per year sustainable adjustment. Ms. McMurray understood but said it is so frustrating because the committee never receives a response back from the Board.

Commissioner O'Neill stated if routine maintenance is done on the system it will last, otherwise it will cost more down the road. He was confident everyone could come up with a workable solution he could buy off on.

Commissioner Partch said he was certainly willing to look at the first steps.

Bob Reynolds understood the Board's directive to the committee is to come back with dollar figures for each aspect of the proposal and Gary Petrovich said the proposal would be broken down by employee.

**4:55 p.m. - Recess.**

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**D073072A THE BOARD OF WHITMAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS** met in their Chambers in the Whitman County Courthouse, Colfax, Washington for **Tuesday, May 29, 2012** at **9:00 a.m.** Chairman Greg Partch, Patrick J. O'Neill and Michael Largent Commissioners and Maribeth Becker, CMC, Clerk of the Board attended.

**9:00 a.m. - Meeting Reconvened/Board Business Continued/Workshop.**

Present: Gary Petrovich.

**073073 31.** Items discussed included the annual financial statement, Public Works Trust Fund application and Martin Hall. No action taken.

**9:50 - Recess.**

**10:00 a.m. - Board Business Continued.**

Present: Joan Willson and Karen Johnson.

**073074 32.** Claims/Payroll warrants numbered **263251** and **263339** for **\$388,393.68** approved.

**073075-073076 33.** Personnel change orders approved.

**073077 34.** Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to authorize payment for special bond counsel, Jeff Nave of Foster Pepper for the Hawkins project, to be paid from the General Government Fund #010.

**073078 35.** Commissioner O'Neill **moved** Commissioner Largent **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to approve the Homeland Security grant in the amount of \$24,688 for Emergency Management for the period 09/01/11-05/31/14.

**10:15 a.m. - David Ledbetter and Gary Petrovich.**

**D073078A 36.** David Ledbetter spoke to the Board about the establishment of an Asset Account for rebating First Wind up to 75% in taxes paid for the Naff Ridge wind turbine project. Gary Petrovich said it isn't clear what mechanism the state will use. The state could choose to hold back future sales tax revenue from the county or ask the county to remit the rebate amount back to the state. Since there is nothing to preclude the county from establishing the account if necessary, Commissioner Largent **moved** Commissioner O'Neill **seconded** the motion and it **carried** authorizing the establishment of an asset account to be used if necessary.

**10:20 a.m. - Recess.**

**10:30 a.m. - Board Business Continued/Workshop.**

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Present: Joe Reynolds, Robin Jones, Bob Lothspeich, David Ledbetter, Karen Johnson, Joan Willson, Bill Spence, Esther Wilson, Gary Petrovich, Bob Lothspeich.

**073079 37.** The issue of the Assessor and Treasurer's staffing discussed. No action taken.

**11:00 a.m. - Recess.**

**1:00 p.m. - Board Business Continued/Executive Session.**

Present: Michael McFarland and Kelli Campbell.

**073080 38.** Commissioner Largent **moved** Commissioner O'Neill **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to go into executive session with the above individuals until 1:05 p.m. in accordance with RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) for matters related to pending litigation.

**1:05 p.m. - Return to Open Session/Recess/Adjournment.**

**D073080A** Commissioner O'Neill **moved** to adjourn the **May 21 and 29, 2012** meeting. Motion **seconded** by Commissioner Largent and **carried**. The Board will meet in regular session, in their Chambers', in the Whitman County Courthouse, Colfax, Washington, on **June 4, 2012**. The foregoing action made this **29th** day of **May 2012**.

ss/ PATRICK J. O'NEILL, COMMISSIONER  
ss/ MICHAEL LARGENT, COMMISSIONER

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MARIBETH BECKER, CMC  
Clerk of the Board

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GREG PARTCH, CHAIRMAN  
Board of County Commissioners