

Minutes for August 28, 2006

Disclaimer: This is only a web copy of the Whitman County Commissioners' Monday Meeting Minutes. Official minutes may be obtained by contacting the Whitman County Commissioners office at (509)-397-6200.

065807 THE BOARD OF WHITMAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS met in their Chambers in the Whitman County Courthouse, Colfax, Washington for **August 28, 2006** at **9:00 a.m.** G.R. Finch, Chairman, Greg Partch and Les Wigen, Commissioners and Maribeth Becker, CMC, Clerk of the Board attended.

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

Present: Joe Reynolds.

065808 1. Items discussed included the Assessor's staffing changes, Spokane meeting request, Palouse River fire update, Pullman misdemeanor/gross misdemeanor contract and century farms map update. No action taken.

9:30 a.m. - Recess.

10:00 a.m. - Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Thinkh Nguyen.

D065808A 2. Motion by Commissioner Wigen to approve the consent agenda. Motion **seconded** by Commissioner Partch and **carried**.

065809 3. Claims/Payroll warrants numbered **194354** and **194396-194462** for **\$114,540.12** approved.

FUND	FUND NAME	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
001	Current Expense	664.61	34,531.93
101	Self Insurance		1000.00
102	Building & Development		24.08
103	Countywide Planning		172.00
110	County Roads		4,422.15
112	Public Facilities Improvement		12,309.11
118	Inmate Welfare	18.50	
127	Drug Enforcement-Quad City		226.65
300	Capital Projects Asset Acq.-300.010.001	12.13	3,881.29
400	Solid Waste	3,265.76	6,975.18
410	Solid Waste Reserve		
501	Equipment Rental & Revolving	3,232.32	19,294.10
510	Photocopier Revolving		78.39
660	Whitcom-General-660.911.000		8,189.34

BOCC MINUTES-08/28/06

660	Whitcom-Grant Funding-660.911.001		2,446.39
690	CAC Agency Svc.-690.026.001		13,796.19

065810 4. August 21, 2006 minutes approved.

065811 5. August 23, 2006 minutes approved.

065812-065818 6. Personnel board orders approved.

065819 7. Commissioner Partch **moved**, Commissioner Wigen **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to authorize publishing a notice of hearing for proposed revisions to Whitman County Code Title 2.

065820 8. Pursuant to County Code regarding delegation of purchase orders, claims and payroll responsibilities, an authorization form was received from the Public Health department, signed by the Board and forwarded to the Auditor's office. **Motion** by Commissioner Wigen **seconded** by Commissioner Partch and **carried**.

065820A 9. Commissioner Wigen **moved**, Commissioner Partch **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to sign and forward a letter to the Sheriff regarding medical insurance.

065821 10. Notice of a request for a domestic winery license for Moffetts Organics, Inc., Colton, Washington was received from the Washington State Liquor Control Board. No objections raised.

065822 11. A petition signed by 5 individuals was received opposing various portions of the proposed revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning and Subdivision ordinances related to Rural Residential Development.

065822A 12. A report as of today on the Palouse River Fire was received noting it is 100% contained and 95% controlled.

065823 13. An executed copy of the Department of Ecology Coordinated Prevention grant #G0600373 received.

D065823A 14. Commissioners' pending list reviewed.

10:15 a.m. - Recess.

10:30 a.m. - Margaret Howlett, Latah Economic Development Council (LEDC) Director.

Present: Janet Schmidt, Tammy Lewis, Thinh Nguyen and Ryan Bentley.

065824 Ms. Howlett explained LEDC is working on economic development primarily in the county. LEDC is funded by Latah County, the City of Moscow and the University of Idaho. The City of Moscow recently completed a

process called, "New Cities" that focuses on what a city can do to make it work better; i.e. communications, preparation for the City's comprehensive plan update and economic development. Out of that process came recommendations for regionalization by creating the Palouse Knowledge Corridor. Using the assets of the two universities that provide opportunities for a skilled workforce, technology transfer and research it is hoped 2-3 businesses could be spun off in our communities.

As recommended by the planning group, Ms. Howlett proposed an economic summit focusing on the idea of the Palouse Knowledge Corridor posing the questions, "How do we brand this and are we stronger if we work together"? Realizing there will be issues the two communities won't agree on, she was interested in working on issues they do agree on.

The university presidents have agreed to co-chair the summit. She has also been working with Joe Poire' of the Port and Ken Olson of Palouse Economic Development Council (PEDC) who has agreed to co-host the summit with LEDC. Ms. Howlett asked the commissioners if they were interested in participating in such a summit in October.

Commissioner Finch said he has always contended that both communities comprise a region. However, Whitman County has been rebuffed by the City of Moscow when approached for assistance with worthwhile proposals. The communities must work together for all to prosper or they will continue to be adversaries. He thought a summit was a step in the right direction.

Commissioner Wigen concurred and pointed out Ms. Howlett and Nancy Chaney both spoke at the last quarterly regional breakfast meeting about working together for the region.

Commissioner Partch was also in agreement and pointed out regional cooperation successes with Moscow and Latah County that include Whitcom, Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee, Idaho/Washington Water Summit, Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport, SR 270 and the Bill Chipman Palouse Trail.

11:00 a.m. - Dane Dunford, Public Works Director.

Present: Mark Storey, Thinh Nguyen and Ryan Bentley.

ACTION ITEMS

Administration Division:

065825 1. The Director advised the commissioners that Holly Chetwood called/wrote saying Paradise Ford was the 08/21/06 successful bidder for one new 4-door sedan but is unable to fulfill the contract due to an early build-out by the manufacturer. Therefore, Mr. Dunford recommended re-awarding the bid to the second lowest bidder, Chipman & Taylor Chevrolet. Commissioner Wigen **moved**, Commissioner Partch **seconded** the motion and it **carried** to re-award the bid for one, 4-door sedan to Chipman and Taylor

BOCC MINUTES-08/28/06

Chevrolet in the total bid amount of \$17,209.40 (without tax) due to the withdrawal of the awarded bid by Paradise Ford. (Public Health vehicle)

065825A The commissioners also signed the bid contract with Chipman & Taylor Chevrolet.

Solid Waste Division:

065826 2. Cindi Lepper gave the following reports:

Friday Night Pullman Street Fair from 6 p.m.-11 p.m.

Event attendance estimated at 15,000

Collected 19 bags of #1 plastic (193 lbs.)

Used 22 bins (11 sets) stationed at each garbage can

Bins were attended with NO contamination reported

Saturday Lentil Festival from 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

11 recycling stations at each garbage can

1 cardboard dumpster (set up by Pullman Disposal)

278 lbs. #1 plastic collected (record amount)

61 lbs. aluminum collected

Beer garden plastic cup collection recovered 6 lbs. of cups for recycling at Moscow Recycling. One volunteer and one Moscow Recycling employee manned the beer garden. Whitman County provided the recycling bins and collection bags.

2007 Lentil Festival Event

Planning to use more recycling bins for the bridge and skate park.

065827 3. The 2007 Fall Cleanup has been scheduled for Monday, October 2nd through Saturday, October 7th.

Engineering Division:

D065827A 4. Mark Storey gave a brief update on the status of the Almota Road project.

Maintenance Division:

D065827B 5. Dane Dunford reported the crews are grading, ditching and washing culverts until the rock haul season begins. Centerline and edgeline striping will take place in September.

11:30 a.m. - Recess.

1:00 p.m. - Board Business Continued/BOCC Workshop.

Present: Bob Lothspeich, Eunice Coker, Adam Roberts, Josh Powers, Polly Anderson, Fran Martin, Maribeth Becker and Thinkh Nguyen.

D065827C 15. LaserFiche software discussed. No action taken.

3:00 p.m. - Recess.

D065827D THE BOARD OF WHITMAN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS met in their Chambers in the Whitman County Public Service Building, Colfax, Washington for **August 29, 2006** at **6:45 p.m.** G.R. Finch, Chairman, Greg Partch and Les Wigen, Commissioners and Maribeth Becker, CMC, Clerk of the Board attended.

6:45 p.m. - Reconvened/Comprehensive Plan and Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Proposed Revisions.

Due to technical difficulties with the recording system, the hearing was delayed from 6:00-6:45 p.m.

Present: Dane Dunford, Mark Bordsen, Mark Storey, Denis Tracy, and approximately 77 individuals in attendance.

065828 The Chairman opened the hearing for proposed revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and read an opening statement. The hearing was then opened to comments for or against the proposal.

Karen Kiessling read a prepared statement (on file) from the League of Women Voters of Pullman. The League believes the commissioners acted wisely in requiring an assessment of the proposed language and urged them to continue to work with the law firm as well as the planning staff to achieve the appropriate wording for the ordinances to be enacted. The League wished to underline the Prosecutor's summary to the commissioners that the county has the authority to enforce its planning goals. Areas of importance are the protection and reinforcement of agriculture, the rural nature of the county, tourist related business, health and safety of all residents and geologically significant areas.

Steven D. Johnson of Genesee, Idaho was representing his son. He spoke about a potential problem they recently discovered when reviewing the proposed ordinance. There is an old farmhouse on their property they would like to remodel. It is located in somewhat of a wet zone. They want to move the house a couple hundred feet to an area that is much dryer and more suitable for a septic system but that ends up being a subdivision. He encouraged the commissioners to consider some type of common sense approach with flexibility for farm operations to accommodate the needs of today.

James Fitzgerald of Olympia, Washington, a non-resident property owner said the gist of what he has been listening to during the development of this ordinance has been the resource of the beauty of the county. He has come to realize another resource is probably more important right now than the beauty of the county and that is the people that work the land. There is a crisis in farm country right now. The farmers and their grandchildren are making decisions about whether to stay on the family farms. If we are going

BOCC MINUTES-08/28/06

to preserve rural Whitman County we have to give that resource equal consideration, understanding residents are the number one cost in the cost of living index. With added regulations, it makes it difficult for our children to stay. Mr. Fitzgerald was less concerned Whitman County will turn into another Latah County than he was with Whitman County turning into another Othello. Somehow you need to back off some of these regulations and give these families a chance to farm. He proposed the county take the initiative to help the rural communities absorb some of the growth by taking the pressure off farmland and moving it into the population areas where it belongs. That makes it possible for the kids to remain on the farm and build their home.

Gary Kopf of Pasco, non-resident property owner concurred with James Fitzgerald and added, the more regulations in any ordinance, the more property rights are taken away from the people. Those property rights are for the people. This could be a taking of some type and some of those things could be reimbursable by the system. The consultant's summary had some real important issues the commissioners need to review. In summary, he was for fewer regulations and more property rights.

Ray Lindquist of Pullman wondered what part of private don't they understand"? Because this is such a volatile issue he thought the commissioners should come up with a final draft and put it on the fall ballot and let the citizens decide.

Perry "Skip" Tate of Colfax said he farms in Colfax and would like to see his grandkids as he gets older. With a zero population growth, they will have to go elsewhere. If this ordinance is passed, it won't be carved in stone. If it doesn't work, change it and put something in that does work. He extended his appreciation to everyone that has worked on this document.

Tom Barlass of Colfax, a rural and city property owner and veteran served for the privilege of having freedom. In Whitman County it seems like our freedoms are getting shorter. It is getting to the point that the people in Whitman County have absolutely nothing to say about what they can do on their own property.

Scott Cornelius of Pullman thanked the Planning Commission for the tremendous effort they put into the document and the county commissioners for supporting good planning. In his view, we are living in a time of transition. Economic transition because agricultural commodities may in the future be of declining importance to this county. Philosophical transition because 30 years ago when we last went through this process, many farmers were requesting the county protect them from development. Now, many farmers are requesting more choices. Social transition because there is an increasing contingent of people who would prefer a rural lifestyle. There are contradictions too. We all want a high quality of life and at the same time we want to be free of all government regulations. He wholeheartedly endorsed the proposal by the Planning Commission. Mr. Cornelius recalled

BOCC MINUTES-08/28/06

the June 1982 National Geographic article "A Paradise Called the Palouse" and how extremely proud everyone was to have our Palouse featured in such a prominent magazine. He hoped the people in the article demonstrate how we in the face of transition are able to retain this paradise and not become an urban mess through poor planning.

Brenda Dillard of Colfax referred to the consultant's report stating the document is incredibly vague with respect to tourism because Colfax is basically a ghost town. As a property owner, she agreed we would become a socialist state if this document were enacted. She purchased her property for her and her children's enjoyment and she was against the color, plant and view shed restrictions.

Jennifer Bowman of Colfax and a native of Whitman County said the proposal takes away property rights and she supports a ballot issue.

Jim White of Colfax is a farmer and landowner in Whitman County. He was on the Planning Commission that put together the original ordinance to protect agriculture and was in favor of the ordinance remaining as it is. He supports small town growth and infrastructure.

Kathy Prout of Pullman favored the Planning Commission's work. The commissioners should accept the commission's recommendations that provide a broader spectrum solution than what some of the other people are presenting. She suggested waiting until the District 3 commissioner is elected this fall before a decision is made. In the past year her tenant farmer has had numerous problems with neighbors without buffer zones. Ms. Prout said it is also important to note what people do on their property does affect other property owners. Without regulations, the county cannot maintain standards.

Rhoderick McIntosh of Pullman, a former Planning Commission member and farmer thanked the Planning Commission for the thousands of hours spent trying to balance the rights of the property seller and the rights of the adjoining property owners. If people read the regulations they would realize they are being protected. A farmer who sells a corner of land places the liability on his neighbor. He then spoke from his own experiences. Everyone is excited about view sheds, but these same people that want you to sell them land in the county are the same people that demanded a one-half mile buffer for cell towers. He felt it was only fair if the buffer zone is removed from this ordinance it should also be removed from the cell tower ordinance. If they don't want to look at a cell tower, he shouldn't have to look at their house. He thought the planned development around all the cities and towns was an excellent idea. Mr. McIntosh asked everyone to really think about the proposed ordinance because there is good reasoning and logic behind the regulations.

Pete Lazzarini of Garfield (Elberton) and property owner of Whitman County asked the audience for a show of hands from those opposed to the proposed ordinance.

Susan Fagan of Pullman representing Schweitzer Engineering said despite her efforts, she did not get the results she wanted. With respect to butte protection, she wondered if the Planning Commission asked the landowners what they think about that. There is a similar issue on the ballot borne from regulation frustration. The view shed concept is too stringent, tax dollars are leaking out of the county, people who work here live elsewhere, and Whitman County's growth peaked in 1974. Good reasonable growth is a smart thing and we should be capturing those fees and taxes. She wondered if it was the county's job to protect the farmer who has land to sell and the potential buyer. Ms. Fagan said she would provide written comments for the record.

Sheri Farr of Albion said she lives on a 4th generation family farm and she would like her children and grandchildren to have the opportunity to build on the property if they choose to do so without worrying about view sheds, etc.

David Bromling of Oakesdale said he wants to build on a hill. Earlier farms were all in view. The issue is intrusive government and he supports the ballot idea.

Dan Shirer would like to maintain the right to put a shop or home where he wants on his property.

Chairman Finch closed the public hearing. The comment period will remain open until 5 p.m., Friday, September 8, 2006. The commissioners have scheduled Monday, September 11, 2006 for the first work session with staff and will attempt to meet every 2 weeks thereafter. The general public is invited to attend but will not be participating in the commissioners' staff work session. Upon conclusion of all the work sessions, the commissioners will publish notice of another public hearing once a new draft ordinance is crafted and will set a date for their decision on revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning and Subdivision ordinances as they relate to rural residential development.

8:00 p.m. - Adjournment.

D065828A Commissioner Partch **moved** to adjourn the **August 28 and 29, 2006** meeting. Motion **seconded** by Commissioner Wigen and **carried**. The Board will meet in regular session, in their Chambers', in the Whitman County Courthouse, Colfax, Washington, on **September 11, 2006**. The foregoing action made this **29th** day of **August 2006**.

ss/ Greg PARTCH, Commissioner
ss/ LES WIGEN, Commissioner

BOCC MINUTES-08/28/06

Clerk of the Board

Board of County Commissioners