

**Minutes  
Board of Wahkiakum County Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
January 10, 2012**

**Call to Order**

Chairman Daniel L. Cothren called the regular meeting of the Board of Wahkiakum County Commissioners, on January 10, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. in the public meeting room of the Wahkiakum County Courthouse.

Present: Commissioner Daniel L. Cothren, Commissioner Blair H. Brady, Clerk of the Board Marsha LaFarge, Auditor Diane Tischer, Sheriff Jon Dearmore, Undersheriff Mark Howie, HHS Manager Chris Holmes and Public Works Director Pete Ringen. Commissioner Lisa M. Marsyla was excused.

Others Present: *Wahkiakum County Eagle* Publisher Rick Nelson, *The Daily News* Reporter Natalie St. John, Nick Nikkila, Al and Nancy George, Frank Loomans, Jerry & Kathleen Hogan, Michael Linn, Ken Kandoll and Mike Mouliot.

**Flag Salute**

Chairman Cothren led the flag salute.

**Regular Meeting Agenda**

It was M/S by Commissioners Brady and Cothren to approve the regular meeting agenda for January 10, 2012. Carried.

**Consent Agenda**

It was M/S by Commissioners Brady and Cothren to approve the consent agenda for January 10, 2012. Carried. The consent agenda contained the following items:

- A. Minutes of January 3, 2012
- B. Resolution No. 004-12. A resolution authorizing the expenditure of funds from the county properties cumulative reserve fund for the payment of vouchers properly chargeable to said fund in the amount of \$763.47
- C. Voucher Approval - \$44,451.29
- D. Holiday Closure for Martin Luther King Jr. Day - January 16, 2012

**Public Comment**

Nick Nikkila, Post Adjutant of the American Legion Post 111 read a letter from Post members expressing their concerns about the level of county budget cuts made and the impact those cuts will have on public security and safety. Commissioner Brady explained there have been no discussions regarding the cutting of the sheriff's budget. Brady stated the sheriff and all departments have the same level of funding as they did in 2010. He also stated although the county has shifted funds from county roads to current expense, there has been no moratorium on repairs to county roads.

One of the Post's ideas was to not hire a replacement for HHS Judy Bright and fund the sheriff's office with those dollars. Auditor Diane Tischer explained that Health and Human Service's budget is funded from state and federal grants and these grants cannot be used for other departments in the county. Another solution from the Post was to reduce staff in the Auditor's licensing department. Tischer advised Nikkila her office receives \$50,000 a year from the state to keep her licensing department open. She further stated, several years ago when the commissioners were considering closing the licensing department, the biggest supporters to keep it open were citizens from the west end.

Mike Mouliot presented a letter with similar concerns.

Ken Kandoll presented a proposal to correct erosion at Loop Road. Kandoll suggested allowing permits for removal of gravel by county residents in such amounts and to such extent as it necessary to return stream flow to pre-existing channel. Commissioners agreed this would be a good idea; however, they would need to pass this suggestion on to the Public Works Director.

### **New Business**

#### Diking District No. 5

Auditor Diane Tischer reported there are two vacant commissioner positions on the Diking District No. 5 board. Position #1 held by Tom Boschs is vacant because he did not re-file so this becomes a two-year unexpired term. Commissioner Bill Ower, Position #3, has resigned as of December 16, 2011 and no one filed for his position. Both of these positions, according to RCW 85.38.115, need to be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. The board instructed the Clerk of the Board to place an advertisement in the local paper for persons who live in the diking district who might be interested in serving as a commissioner on the Diking District No. 5 board.

#### Payment of Claim

It was M/S by Commissioners Brady and Cothren approving Resolution No. 005-12, a resolution authorizing the expenditure of \$658.51 from the contingent liabilities cumulative reserve fund for payment of claims related to damages to Teresa Howell's vehicle. Carried.

It was M/S by Commissioners Brady and Cothren approving the voucher of \$658.51 to Teresa Howell. Carried.

#### Grays River Fire Department Franchise

It was M/S by Commissioners Brady and Cothren authorizing the publication of a notice of public hearing on franchise application to be filed by Wahkiakum County Fire District No. 3 and setting the public hearing for January 24, 2012, at 10:45 a.m. with the meeting to be held in the public meeting room on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the county courthouse. Carried.

### **Sheriff**

Sheriff Jon Dearmore asked the board to hold a public hearing for the sale of county owned real property located on East Birnie Slough Road. Dearmore has received several inquiries and would like to start taking action to get this property sold. Dearmore indicated the property consists of a large home and shop and is located on 6 acres and has an assessed value is \$248,000.

Commissioner Brady stated he was not prepared to sell the property and would like to hear back from the Health Department regarding possible use for low income housing. HHS Manager Chris Holmes reported he has looked at this property and after consulting with Longview Housing Authority stated the property is too remote for public housing; and is located in the 500 year flood plain. Because of these two factors, it would not be eligible for state funding.

Commissioner Cothren stated he would like to sell the property and get it back onto the tax rolls. It was M/S by Commissioners Cothren and Brady authorizing the publication of a notice of public hearing and setting the public hearing for January 24, 2012, at 11:00 a.m. with the meeting to be held in the public meeting room on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the county courthouse. Carried.

### **Unfinished Business**

Commissioner Cothren invited Public Works Director Pete Ringen to the meeting to discuss Ken Kandoll's suggestion to remove gravel from the Grays River. Commissioner Brady stated he was under the impression that citizens who live along the river have the right to remove gravel from the river adjacent to their property. Ringen stated the State of Washington claims ownership of the areas between the mean high water lines and he is not aware of any laws that allow removal of gravel from the river without permits. Ringen did express his concern over residents removing gravel and the impact it might have on neighboring properties. Al George suggested partnering with Grays River Habitat Enhancement District for funds to divert the river back to its original channel. Cothren asked Ringen to make sure all property owners are on board with any changes to the river channel.

### **Recess/Reconvene**

Chairman Cothren recessed the regular meeting at 10:40 a.m. to reconvene at 11:00 a.m.

### **Recess**

Chairman Cothren recessed the regular meeting at 11:00 a.m. for a public hearing.

### **Public Hearing**

#### *Elochoman Valley Road Speed Limit*

Present: Chairman Daniel L. Cothren, Commissioner Blair Brady, Clerk of the Board Marsha LaFarge, Public Works Director Pete Ringen, *The Wahkiakum Eagle* Publisher Rick Nelson and Michael Linn.

Chairman Cothren asked Public Works Director Pete Ringen for a staff report. Ringen reviewed the engineering and traffic study performed on the Elochoman Valley Road between SR-4 and Family Camp Road. The study found the road width varies from 30 feet to 20 feet north of Kent's Bridge. Ringen noted the standard width for this road would be 22 feet. Ringen looked at the stopping sight distance on curves and determined there are three curves on the road that have sub-standard stopping sight distances. Ringen also evaluated the recorded accident history and found there were 19 accidents in the last 10 years. Another factor Ringen took into consideration, were the number of intersecting driveways. It was determined that this road has the characteristics in the category "suburban." A speed study was conducted at 4 different locations for a one week period and during this period, the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was determined to be 51.2 miles per hour. Because of all the above, Ringen recommended a 45 mph speed limit between mp 0.0 and mile marker 5.5.

Chairman Cothren asked for public comment. Michael Linn suggested the speed be reduced to 40 mph.

**Reconvene**

Chairman Cothren reconvened the regular meeting at 11:05 a.m.

It was M/S by Commissioners Brady and Cothren approving Ordinance No. 152-12 an ordinance changing the speed limit on the Elochoman Valley Road. Carried. Public Works Director Ringen noted the change will take effective as soon as road signs have been posted. Ringen is expecting new retro-reflective signs by late spring.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Chairman Daniel L. Cothren adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Attest: Marsha LaFarge  
Marsha LaFarge  
Clerk of the Board

Approved: Blair A. Brady  
Blair Brady  
Vice Chairman of the Board