

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 52  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for September 17, 2014

*This document is a summarized version of the Board of Commissioners proceedings. The minutes are paraphrased, not verbatim. Access to an electronic audio recording of the meeting is available upon request.*

The Honorable Board of Franklin County Commissioners met on the above date. Present for the meeting were Brad Peck, Chair Pro Tem; and Rick Miller, Member; Fred Bowen, County Administrator; and Margo Hines, Pro Tem Clerk to the Board. Commissioner Robert E. Koch, Chairman, was absent on personal business.

Meeting convened at 9:00 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **FACILITIES**

Facilities Director Gordon Hanscom met with the Board. Present in audience: Darryl Banks, Tim Waters, Tri-City Herald Reporter Geoff Folsom, Linda Robb and Mike Mathis.

#### **Bid Opening: RFP for Courthouse Window Restoration**

One bid was received:

Sage Architecture, LLC	\$82,847
------------------------	----------

The bid will be reviewed for responsiveness to the RFP.

### **WSU EXTENSION**

WSU Extension Director Tim Waters and WSU Regional Extension Agronomist Wayne Thompson met with the Board.

#### **Department update, regional dryland cropping systems**

Mr. Waters introduced Mr. Thompson who is the new regional dryland cropping systems specialist for Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield and Asotin Counties. Mr. Thompson told the Board about some areas of interest to Franklin County that he will be participating in, including nutrient management of soil and water use.

### **FRANKLIN COUNTY HORTICULTURAL PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL BOARD**

(9:19 am)

Pest Control Board Inspector Mike Mathis met with the Board.

#### **2015 Budget**

Mr. Mathis answered questions about the 2015 Pest Control Board budget.

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 52  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for September 17, 2014

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved to adopt the 2015 budget for the Franklin County Horticultural Pest and Disease Control Board. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolution 2014-380 was approved.

**PUBLIC WORKS (9:26 am)**

Public Works Director Matt Mahoney met with the Board.

**Purchase of tractor loader with backhoe**

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved that the Board authorize the declaration of SL-1357 as surplus and that it may be used as a trade-in for new equipment and moved that the Board award the bid for a tractor loader to Central Machinery Sales, Inc., and sign the award letter. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolution 2014-381 was approved. (Exhibit 1: Letter to Central Machinery Sales, Inc.)

**Purchase of Trimble S6 total survey station equipment and software (9:29 am)**

Mr. Mahoney said the new equipment is needed because the old one will no longer have maintenance or service available.

**Motion** – Mr. Peck moved that the Board authorize the surplus and use it as a trade-in for the new Trimble S6 equipment as Mr. Mahoney described for us. Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolutions 2014-382 and 2014-383 were approved.

**JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER (JJC) (9:31 am)**

JJC Administrator Darryl Banks and Superior Court Judge Bruce Spanner met with the Board.

**Report on architect's feasibility study and assessment**

Mr. Banks and Judge Spanner gave a report to the Board and asked for approval to proceed with a design process with the architect involving a feasibility study. Discussion included: need for changes, either by remodeling or replacing; concerns expressed by Benton County Commissioners about remaining as a bi-county Juvenile Justice system; and concerns about funding sources.

The Commissioners **gave approval** to do a feasibility study with Franklin County cost sharing on its current pro rata basis.

**TRAC (9:59 am)**

TRAC Manager Troy Woody met with the Board.

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 52  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for September 17, 2014

Award of carpet bid to Great Floors LLC

The money for the carpet and adhesive come from the .08% funds.

**Motion** – Mr. Peck moved to accept the bid from Great Floors LLC and approve the letter awarding the bid for \$38,869.03. Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor. (Clerk's Note: The letter was signed at the September 24, 2014, Board meeting.)

**OFFICE BUSINESS (10:03 am)**

Administrative Assistant Margo Hines met with the Board.

Vouchers

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved to approve the vouchers in the amount of \$194,60.95. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. (Exhibit 2)

<u>Fund Expenditures</u>	<u>Warrants</u>		<u>Amount Issued</u>
Current Expense	103187	103214	49,213.84
FC Public Facilities Const Fund	103215	103216	7,103.29
TRAC Operations	103217	103229	9,810.59
County Roads	103267	103290	28,091.86
Solid Waste	103291	103294	1,710.52
Motor Vehicle	103295	103318	19,910.08
Current Expense	103319	103329	8,887.01
Election Equip Revolving	103330	103331	8,717.90
Ending Homelessness Fund	103332	-	1,705.05
Crime Victims/Witness	103333	-	3,131.51
Courthouse Facilitator	103334	-	1,000.00
Clerk LFO Collection	103335	-	31.93
FC Capital Projects	103336	-	27,641.00
Current Expense	103393	-	750.00
Current Expense	103419	103426	27,036.37
Auditor O&M	103427	-	20.00
			<b>Grand Total: \$194,760.95</b>

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved for approval of vouchers for Salary Clearing payroll, Emergency Management Payroll and Irrigation payroll in the total amount of \$647,680.66, signed by Matt Beaton and Julie Jordan. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. (Exhibit 3)

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 52  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for September 17, 2014

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<b>Salary Clearing Payroll:</b>		
Payroll	61276-61350	\$172,529.13
Direct Deposit		357,480.10
		<hr/> 530,009.23
Benefits	61351-61355	93,272.16
	<b>Total</b>	<hr/> <b>\$623,281.39</b> <hr/>
<b>Emergency Mgmt Payroll:</b>		
Payroll	103394-103399	\$2,593.04
Direct Deposit		6,934.71
		<hr/> 9,527.75
Benefits	103400-103403	1,610.48
	<b>Total</b>	<hr/> <b>\$11,138.23</b> <hr/>
<b>Irrigation Payroll:</b>		
Payroll	103404-103414	\$3,553.80
Direct Deposit		7,540.22
		<hr/> 11,094.02
Benefits	103415-103418	2,167.02
	<b>Total</b>	<hr/> <b>\$13,261.04</b> <hr/>
	<b>Grand Total All Payrolls</b>	<hr/> <b>\$647,680.66</b> <hr/>

Consent Agenda

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved to approve consent agenda items 1 through 8. Second by Mr. Peck.  
2:0 vote in favor.

1. Approval of Resolution 2014-384, Agreement #14/15-DD-SA-00 between Benton and Franklin Counties Department of Human Services and Service Alternatives, Inc.
2. Approval of Resolution 2014-385, Professional Services Contract #PSC-2014/15- SHELTER PLUS CARE – NECC-0 between Nueva Esperanza Counseling Center, a subdivision of Tri-Cities Community Health, and Benton and Franklin Counties Department of Human Services
3. Approval of Resolution 2014-386, Agreement #14/15-DD-ACCS-00 between Benton and Franklin Counties Department of Human Services and Ambitions Community Support Services of Washington, Inc.
4. Approval of Resolution 2014-387, First Amendment to Agreement #13/15-SA-LCC-00 between Benton and Franklin Counties Department of Human Services and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital at Pasco, d/b/a Lourdes Health Network

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 52  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for September 17, 2014

5. Approval of Resolution 2014-388, Fee for Services Contract between Benton/Franklin Counties Juvenile Justice Center and Kennewick School District
6. Approval of Resolution 2014-389, reenrollment in the Microsoft Select Plus program allowing Franklin County to purchase Microsoft products at discounted pricing
7. Approval of Change of Status for Secretary/Day Porter
8. Approval of Change of Status for Part-time Seasonal Facility Worker

**Recessed** at 10:08 am.

**Reconvened** at 10:18 am.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

County Administrator Fred Bowen met with the Board.

**Executive Session** at 10:18 am pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g), review performance of public employee, expected to last up to 15 minutes.

**Open Session** at 10:34 am.

**PROSECUTOR** (10:35 am)

Deputy Prosecutor Tim Dickerson, Public Works Director Matt Mahoney and Corrections staff member Mike Monk met with the Board.

Claims for Damages

**Executive Session** at 10:37 am pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i), review of claims for damages, expected to last 20 minutes.

**Open Session** at 10:58 am.

Mr. Dickerson recommended denial of claim for damages from Paul Halliday.

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved to deny claim per PA recommendation. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolution 2014-393 was approved.

Mr. Dickerson recommended denial of claim for damages from Maria Valdez.

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved to deny claim for damages for repairs to vehicle driven by Maria Valdez. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolution 2014-392 was approved.

Mr. Dickerson recommended denial of claim for damages from Julie McKeown.

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved to deny claim for damages from Julie McKeown. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolution 2014-391 was approved.

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 52  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for September 17, 2014

Mr. Dickerson recommended approval of claim for damages from Washington State Department of Transportation.

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved for approval based on Mr. Dickerson's description. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolution 2014-390 was approved.

**PROSECUTOR (11:06 am)**

Prosecutor Shawn Sant and Deputy Prosecutor Tim Dickerson met with the Board.

**Executive Session** at 11:07 am pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss with legal counsel: Matters relating to agency enforcement actions; litigation or potential litigation, expected to last 15 minutes.

**Open Session** at 11:24 am.

**Executive Session** continued at 11:24 am expected to last 15 minutes, reserving the right to come out early.

**Open Session** at 11:38 am.

**Agreement for Prosecution Services between Franklin County and City of Connell**

**Motion** – Mr. Miller moved to approve the agreement with the City of Connell. Second by Mr. Peck. 2:0 vote in favor. Resolution 2014-394 was approved.

**OTHER BUSINESS (11:39 am)**

Present in audience: John Trumbo and his mother (unidentified by name).

**Land exchange with City of Connell**

A legal survey will need to be done in order to complete the appraisal of county-owned property in the City of Connell.

**Public Comment**

John Trumbo requested that the Franklin County Commissioners begin their meetings with a prayer. He gave the Board documents to review (Exhibit 4).

**Adjourned** at 11:46 am.

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 52  
FRANKLIN COUNTY  
Commissioners' Proceedings for September 17, 2014

There being no further business, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned until September 24, 2014.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON



\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert E. Koch, Chairman



\_\_\_\_\_  
Brad Peck, Chairman Pro Tem



\_\_\_\_\_  
Rick Miller, Member

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk to the Board

Approved and signed October 1, 2014.



# FRANKLIN COUNTY

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

**Matt F. Mahoney**, Public Works Director

**Matthew S. Rasmussen, PE**, County Engineer/Asst. Director

September 17, 2014

MM-14-003

Van Fowers  
Central Machinery Sales, Inc.  
1802 E James Street  
Pasco, WA 99301

Re: Purchase of tractor loader with backhoe

Dear Mr. Fowers,

On September 17, 2014, the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners reviewed quotes for the supply and delivery a tractor loader with backhoe to our Pasco maintenance facility. At that time, your firm was the lowest quote submitted.

After careful review of the submitted quotes, we have determined that the quote submitted by Central Machinery Sales, Inc., is fair and reasonable and in the best interest of Franklin County.

Therefore, the quote for the tractor loader with backhoe, as outlined in your bid proposal, signed on August 28, 2014, is hereby awarded to Central Machinery Sales, Inc., of Pasco, Washington, at lump sum price of \$76,400.10 including sales tax. This price is based on the trade-in of Franklin County's current 1987 Cat backhoe/loader (7BC647).

This letter will serve as the official agreement for Central Machinery Sales, Inc., to supply the abovementioned equipment at the specified amount in accordance with the information provided to you in our printed instructions to bidders.

Recommended:



Matt Mahoney, Public Works Director



Fred Bowen, County Administrator

Attest:



Clerk of the Board

Approved:

**ABSENT**

Chairman



Chairman Pro Tem



Member





FRANKLIN COUNTY AUDITOR

Matt Beaton, Auditor

9/17/2014

Franklin County Commissioners:

Vouchers audited and certified by the auditing officer by RCW 42.24.080, expense reimbursement claims.

Action: As of this date, 9/17/2014

Move that the following warrants be approved for payment:

*[Handwritten signature]*

certified by RCW 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing, which has been sent to the board members.

FUND Expenditures	WARRANTS		AMOUNT ISSUED
Current Expense	103187	103214	49,213.84
FC Public Facilities Const Fund	103215	103216	7,103.29
TRAC Operations	103217	103229	9,810.59
County Roads	103267	103290	28,091.86
Solid Waste	103291	103294	1,710.52
Motor Vehicle	103295	103318	19,910.08
Current Expense	103319	103329	8,887.01
Election Equip Revolving	103330	103331	8,717.90
Ending Homelessness Fund	103332	-	1,705.05
Crime Victims/Witness	103333	-	3,131.51
Courthouse Facilitator	103334	-	1,000.00
Clerk LFO Collection	103335	-	31.93
FC Capital Projects	103336	-	27,641.00
Current Expense	103393	-	750.00
Current Expense	103419	103426	27,036.37
Auditor O&M	103427	-	20.00

In the amount of

194,760.95

The motion was seconded by

*[Handwritten signature]*

And passed by a vote of 2 to 0

Reviewed by County Administrator

*[Handwritten signature]*

The attached vouchers have been approved by Auditor or Deputy

*[Handwritten signature]*

Vouchers Audited By : Margaret Mathia

*[Handwritten signature]*

And Julie Jordan

*[Handwritten signature]*



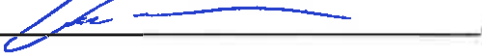
**FRANKLIN COUNTY AUDITOR**

Matt Beaton, Auditor

September 17, 2014

Franklin County Commissioners:

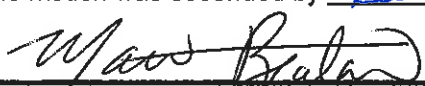
Vouchers audited and certified by the auditing officer by RCW 42.24.080, expense reimbursement claims certified by RCW 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing, which has been sent to the board members.


Action: As of this date, September 17, 2014  move that the following warrants be approved for payment.

<u>FUND</u>	<u>WARRANT</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<b>Salary Clearing Payroll:</b>		
Payroll	61276-61350	\$172,529.13
Direct Deposit		357,480.10
		<u>530,009.23</u>
Benefits	61351-61355	93,272.16
	<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$623,281.39</u></b>
<b>Emergency Mgmt Payroll:</b>		
Payroll	103394-103399	\$2,593.04
Direct Deposit		6,934.71
		<u>9,527.75</u>
Benefits	103400-103403	1,610.48
	<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$11,138.23</u></b>
<b>Irrigation Payroll:</b>		
Payroll	103404-103414	\$3,553.80
Direct Deposit		7,540.22
		<u>11,094.02</u>
Benefits	103415-103418	2,167.02
	<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$13,261.04</u></b>
<b>Grand Total All Payrolls</b>		<b><u>\$647,680.66</u></b>

In the total amount of **\$647,680.66** (\$623,281.39 + \$11,138.23 + \$13,261.04)

The motion was seconded by  and passed by a vote of 2 to 0.

  
The attached payroll has been approved by Auditor or Deputy

  
Payroll Prepared by Julie Jordan

## A Call for Prayer at Council Meetings

I would like to see the Franklin County Commission open its public meetings in prayer.

The tradition of calling upon God for guidance and wisdom at the beginning of government meetings in this nation goes back to the Founding Fathers, who, in recognizing the importance of what they were doing, realized they needed the help of the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent Creator.

Like reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, praying helps create a proper attitude of respect and seriousness. It also is a reminder that we have a duty to serve and to respect one another, and to acknowledge that we are instruments of a reality greater than ourselves.

Praying also is an act of submission to God, who in supreme sovereignty is the giver of all good things. It follows, then, that we as government officials, would do well to heed President Lincoln's example: that we pray not that God is on our side, but that we be on His side.

President John Quincy Adams declared on the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence: "The highest glory of the American Revolution was this; it connected to one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity."

Samuel Adams, father of the American Revolution, said at the signing of the Declaration of Independence: "We have this day restored the Sovereign to Whom all men ought to be obedient. He reigns in heaven and from the rising to the setting of the sun, let His kingdom come."

U.S. Senator William C. Byrd of West Virginia told Congress on June 27, 1962, two days after the Supreme Court declared school prayer unconstitutional, that evidence of a "deep and abiding faith in God" permeated the national government and the nation's Capitol itself.

Byrd noted that each house of Congress opens each session in prayer, has its own chaplain and that there is a private prayer room just off the rotunda in the Capitol reserved only for members of Congress. The room features a stained-glass window of George Washington kneeling in prayer. A verse from Psalm 16:1 reads: "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust."

Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a public prayer prayed at the start of a governing town board meeting in Greece, N.Y., did not violate the constitution. The ruling clears up any question about the constitutionality of prayers conducted at governmental meetings, and dismisses any allegations that prayers violate a nonconstitutional principle known as separation of church and state.

The Greece Town Board has been opening its meetings with prayers for 15 years, but a challenge forced the Supreme Court to deal with the issue earlier this year. Its decision is consistent with the sentiments of the Founding Fathers, who had no problem 240 years ago when The Rev. Jacob Duche invoked before the First Continental Congress in 1774: "Be thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly....(ending with)...All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Savior."

President James Buchanan stated at his March 4, 1857, inaugural address: "In entering upon this great office I must humbly invoke the God of our fathers for wisdom and firmness to execute its high and responsible duties." As elected officials, we should do the same.

I have been informed by a local pastor in Kennewick that this city council used to open its meetings in prayer -- more than 20 years ago. Why that ended I don't know, but I believe that we as a city council would do well to renew the practice of praying at our public meetings.

Where else does wisdom come, if not from the Creator Himself?

We, as this city's governing body, ought to show the same humility and respect before the same God who has given us not only life, but a responsibility to govern well.

If the council agrees, I would recommend that an opening prayer be done following the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of each publicly noticed council meeting, as defined by state law. There would be few guidelines: that the prayer be no longer than 90 seconds in duration; that the mayor or presiding officer allow anyone to volunteer to pray; that absent a volunteer the prayer may be skipped for that meeting; that all persons present in the room be silent and respectful during the prayer. Finally, I suggest that the prayer be directed in name and reference to the same God addressed in the Founding Fathers' signatory documents that established this nation, ie the Declaration of Independence.

As a practicality, there can be a prayer sign-up list, or someone may volunteer to pray at the start of the council meeting, at the discretion of the mayor or mayor pro tem.

If there is no one willing or available to lead the prayer, the council meeting may proceed without benefit of a prayer.

With these limited rules, I submit that public prayers prior to council meetings should be acceptable to all persons, and to our heavenly Father, Creator and Supreme Sovereign.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Trumbo  
Kennewick City Council Member

Sept. 2, 2014

**IS GOD IS OMNIPRESENT IN NATION'S CAPITAL?**

The longest serving member of the United States Congress was Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd, who was born November 20, 1917.

Elected as a Democrat to Congress in 1953, and serving in the Senate from 1959-2010, he never lost an election.

On June 27, 1962, just two days after the Supreme Court stopped school prayer, Senator Robert Byrd addressed Congress:

"Inasmuch as our greatest leaders have shown no doubt about God's proper place in the American birthright, can we, in our day, dare do less?..."

In no other place in the United States are there so many, and such varied official evidences of deep and abiding faith in God on the part of Government as there are in Washington....

Every session of the House and the Senate begins with prayer. Each house has its own chaplain..."

Senator Robert Byrd continued:

"The 83rd Congress set aside a small room in the Capitol, just off the rotunda, for the private prayer and meditation of members of Congress. The room is always open when Congress is in session, but it is not open to the public.

The room's focal point is a stained glass window showing George Washington kneeling in prayer. Behind him is etched these words from Psalm 16:1: 'Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust.'.."

Senator Byrd went on:

"Inside the rotunda is a picture of the Pilgrims about to embark from Holland on the sister ship of the Mayflower, the Speedwell. The ship's revered chaplain, Brewster, who later joined the Mayflower, has open on his lap the Bible. Very clear are the words, 'the New Testament according to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.'

On the sail is the motto of the Pilgrims, 'In God We Trust, God With Us.'

The phrase, 'In God We Trust,' appears opposite the President of the Senate, who is the Vice-President of the United States.

The same phrase, in large words inscribed in the marble, backdrops the Speaker of the House of Representatives..."

Senator Byrd added:

"Above the head of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court are the Ten Commandments, with the great American eagle protecting them. Moses is included among the great lawgivers in Herman A MacNeil's marble sculpture group on the east front.

The crier who opens each session closes with the words, 'God save the United States and this Honorable Court.'

Engraved on the metal on the top of the Washington Monument are the words: 'Praise be to God.'

Lining the walls of the stairwell are such biblical phrases as 'Search the Scriptures,' 'Holiness to the Lord,' 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.'

Numerous quotations from Scripture can be found within its [the Library of Congress] walls.

One reminds each American of his responsibility to his Maker: 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and love mercy and walk humbly with thy God'(Micah 6:8).

Another in the lawmaker's library preserves the Psalmist's acknowledgment that all nature reflects the order and beauty of the Creator, 'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork' (Psalm 19:1).

And still another reference: 'The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not' (John 1:5)..."

Senator Byrd stated further:

"Millions have stood in the Lincoln Memorial and gazed up at the statue of the great Abraham Lincoln.

The sculptor who chiseled the features of Lincoln in granite all but seems to make Lincoln speak his own words inscribed into the walls.

'...That this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.'

At the opposite end, on the north wall, his Second Inaugural Address alludes to 'God,' the 'Bible,' 'providence,' 'the Almighty,' and 'divine attributes.'

It then continues:

'As was said 3000 years ago, so it still must be said, The judgments of the Lord are true

and righteous altogether.'..

**Senator Robert Byrd concluded:**

**"On the south banks of Washington's Tidal Basin, Thomas Jefferson still speaks:**

**'Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever.'**

**"Jefferson's words are a fearful and explicit warning that to remove God from this country will destroy it."**

***(For 52 years this nation has not heeded Jefferson and Byrd's warning. We now have the evidence of what a Godless nation reaps -- civil injustices, disintegration of core family relationships, immorality flaunted on innocents, shameless greed and unrepentant public lying and an epidemic of violence on and by children, including state sanctioned murder of the unborn. Now is the time to restore ourselves to our Creator and recall the promise God made to Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7:14 -- "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land."***

***The choice is ours.***

You are receiving this email because you were one of several people who emailed to me your concerns about my suggestion that the Kennewick City Council start its public meetings with prayer. I am responding in this way, hoping to address the majority of you in a single communication, which I hopes shows that I have heard and carefully considered your statements.

(I am also distributing copies of this email to other people who have a reason to be informed about this topic, ie local officials and community leaders.)

It is clear we do not share the same beliefs about God. I respect your opinion and welcome further opportunity to discuss with you the reason we disagree. But I also want you to know that the nature of truth is that someone will be correct in their belief and someone will be wrong. I think we can agree on that, can we not?

Truth, of course, does not depend on what I, or you, believe or say. Truth by definition, stands on its own, is absolute and is not dependent on anyone's opinion.

As for the question about the God of the Bible, ie the God of Abraham, being an integral part of this nation, from founding to present, I submit the following evidence for your thoughtful consideration.

Thank you for taking the time to be a truth-seeker.

1. President John Quincy Adams declared on the 45th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence: "The highest glory of the American Revolution was this; it connected to one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity."
2. Samuel Adams, father of the American Revolution, said at the signing of the Declaration of Independence: "We have this day restored the Sovereign to Whom all men ought to be obedient. He reigns in heaven and from the rising to the setting of the sun, let His kingdom come."
3. President James Buchanan stated at his March 4, 1857 ingaugural address: "In entering upon this great office I must humbly invoke the God of our fathers for wisdom and firmness to execute its high and responsible duties."
4. Senator Robert C. Byrd told Congress in June 1962, two days after the Supreme Court banned compulsory school prayer: "Inasmuch as our greatest leaders have shown no doubt about God's proper place in the American birthright, can we, in our day, dare do less?"
5. The Rev. Jacob Duche invoked before the First Continental Congress in 1774: "Be thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly....(ending with)...All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Savior."



6. The stained glass window in Congress' private chapel/meditation room off the Capitol Rotunda shows President George Washington kneeling in prayer, with the words from Psalm 16:1 etched in glass: "Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust."
7. On the south banks of Washington's Tidal Basin are preserved the words of President Thomas Jefferson: "Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever."
8. Scriptures from the Bible are chiseled in stone on the walls of the Washington Monument, the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court and at the Lincoln Memorial. There are numerous quotes from the Bible throughout the architecture of the nation's capital.
9. President Abraham Lincoln commented publicly during the nation's darkest days about his desire to be in God's will as he struggled with the Civil War. At one point Lincoln urged the nation to pray, "not that God is on our side, but that we be on His side."

Clearly these presidents, including those oft-called Deists, recognized that the God of Abraham and the Bible was a living Creator who had not abandoned humanity following creation, but is a God who cares about all people and would answer their prayers. Otherwise, why would Washington pray or Jefferson fear the justice of God?

In answer to some people who claim the Treaty of Tripoli (1797) proves that this nation has no connection with the God of the Bible and His Son Jesus Christ, please be informed of the purpose of the treaty. It was written to establish in the minds of the Muslim nations of North Africa, that the United States was founded without any religious bond to Christianity as a state religion. Such was not the case in England or France, which was why the North African Muslim nations had declared a holy war on them. The Treaty of Tripoli was intended to show that the United States had no religious agenda or basis for being considered an enemy of the Muslim people, who had declared war on the United States, assuming it to be a government with Christianity as an established state religion. Please read the entire text and context of the treaty to gain a fuller understanding. The treaty is not a proof that the Founding Fathers intended the nation to not be "under God."

Again, thank you for giving me the opportunity to engage in this, what I hope has been and will continue to be, a meaningful exchange.

John Trumbo  
Kennewick, WA