



**FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING
AND PUBLIC HEARING**

JUNE 23, 2020

The Minutes of the Board of Commissioners proceedings are not verbatim. Access to an electronic audio recording of meetings are available on the Franklin County website or upon request.

9:00 a.m.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Commission Chairman Robert Koch called the Franklin County Commissioners' Regular Board Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., in the Commissioners' Meeting Room in the Franklin County Courthouse located at 1016 North Fourth Avenue, Pasco, Washington.

Commissioners Present: Commission Chair Robert Koch, Chair Pro Tem Brad Peck attended telephonically and Member Clint Didier was present in the Commissioners Room.

9:01 a.m. **PUBLIC HEARING-Amending the Speed Limit Ordinance (04-2020)**

Public Works Director Matt Mahoney gave a background of the purpose of the Speed Limit Ordinance in which he included the following. State law (RCW 46.61.400) sets Washington's basic speed law and the maximum speed limits for state highways, county roads, and city streets. County roads are set at 50 mph. The statute also authorizes agencies to raise or lower these maximum speed limits, when supported by an engineering and traffic investigation.

Public Works Department has determined, based on an investigation, that the conditions have changed and warrant changes to the speed limit.

❖ *After a few questions from the Board, Commissioner Koch opened the Public Hearing at 9:11 a.m. to hear from the public.*

- Travis Colter was in support of reducing the speed limit on 170 and Glade North.

❖ *Commissioner Koch closed the Public Hearing at 9:15 a.m. Commissioner Peck moved to approve Speed Limit Ordinance 04-2020 as presented. Commissioner Didier seconded and the motion carried.*

9:10 a.m. **PUBLIC HEARING-Adoption of Franklin County Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program- Resolution 2020-136**

Public Works Director Matt Mahoney gave a background of the annual update of the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a planning and project management tool for federal, state, and local governments. The TIP represents the County's priority transportation improvements and all projects listed within the program are eligible for state funds, federal funds and the County Road funds.

The County's TIP not only lists the specific projects, but also documents the planned schedule and cost for each project phase.

❖ *After a few questions from the Board, Commissioner Koch opened the Public Hearing at 9:29 a.m. to hear from the public.*



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- There were no public comments for the Public Hearing.
- ❖ ***Commissioner Koch closed the Public Hearing at 9:32 a.m. Commissioner Peck moved to approve as presented. Commissioner Didier seconded and the motion carried.***

9:33 a.m. Public Comment

- Robert Anderson commented on lab testing available with a high accuracy and environment cleaning.
- Verleen Richardson voiced concerns on Cherry Drive and its lack of improvements.
- Lawanda Hatch voiced her concerns about the Benton Franklin Health Department and a letter personal letter she received from the County Administrator.
- Derek Ellington, President of the Tri-City Youth Hockey Association sent in a request for the lease of the Ice Rink at the HAPO Center and he was following up on this matter. Administrator Keith Johnson replied, it was received and getting prepared to go before the Board.
- Autumn Fielding was concerned with the approach that we have taken to advert Covid 19. She has a website that may be a better avenue for the future.
<https://www.citizenswantactiontoday.com/>

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9:54 a.m. **Approval of Fund Expenditure Warrants**

06/23/2020

Franklin County Commissioners:

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

Action: As of this date, 06/23/2020

Move that the following warrants be approved for payment:

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

Peck (motion by Brad Peck)

Warrants \ Check Numbers:	00361319 - 00361428	\$786,799.33
EFT Check Numbers:	00000514 - 00000523	\$28,448.36
		<u>\$815,247.69</u>

Fund Expenditures	Amount Issued
CURRENT EXPENSE	\$618,170.32
AUDITOR O & M	\$45.61
ELECTION EQUIP REVOLVING	\$704.36
TRIAL COURT IMPROVEMENT	\$3,417.49
BOATING SAFETY	\$1,098.30
JAIL COMMISSARY	\$576.22
DARE FUND SHERIFF	\$47.76
COUNTY ROADS	\$136,618.74
VETERAN'S ASSISTANCE	\$884.01
ENDING HOMELESSNESS	\$12,699.87
CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND	\$301.40
THE HAPO CENTER RENEW & REPLAC	\$536.56
THE HAPO CENTER	\$9,173.12
FRANKLIN COUNTY RV PARK	\$7,511.19
MOTOR VEHICLE	\$23,462.74

In the amount of: \$815,247.69

The motion was seconded by: *Didier*

And passed by a vote of: 3 to 0

Reviewed by the County Administrator: *Peck*

Jeff Burckhard
The attached vouchers have been approved by Auditor or Deputy:
Jeff Burckhard

Peter Gadomskiy
Vouchers Audited By:
Peter Gadomskiy

www.co.franklin.wa.us/auditor

❖ *Commissioner Peck moved to approve Fund Expenditures audited and certified by the auditing officer for warrants prepared for the week of June 23, 2020 for payment totaling \$815,247.69. Commissioner Didier seconded and the motion carried.*



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9:55 a.m. **Approval of Consent Agenda**

1. Resolution 2020-137 A&E Professional Services Consultant Agreement with PBS Engineering and Environmental
2. Resolution 2020-138 Quadiant Leasing Postage Machine in Public Works
3. Resolution 2020-139 Contract E21-016 between Washington State Military Department and Franklin County
4. Resolution 2020-140 Amending ILA for Benton County Emergency Services for Additional Communication Site
5. Resolution 2020-141 Prosecutorial Diversion Services from Lourdes Counseling Center
6. Resolution 2020-142 Professional Services Contract between Lutheran Community Services NW and Benton Franklin JJC

❖ Commissioner Peck moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Didier seconded and the motion carried.

9:55 a.m. **Administration Office Business**

- Discussion was had on the HAPO Ice Arena and the option proposed by the Tri-Cities Hockey Association to take over the making of and maintaining the ice. Further discussion will take place later.
- Administrator Keith Johnson suggested starting a Facebook page for easy access to the public on county matters. After discussion, the Board considered opening this position to those who are qualified and interested in running the Franklin County Facebook page.
- Commissioner Didier asked Administrator Keith Johnson about the public comment given by Lawanda Hatch earlier in the meeting regarding an email she received from Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson clarified that he responded to a notice on her Facebook page concerning Dr. Amy Pearson's from the Health Department and clearly stated he was not sending the email as a county representative but as a private citizen.
- Matthew Morrell asked the Board if there was a follow up on the travel vouchers and if there were audit findings. Mr. Johnson asked Matthew Morrell to contact him by phone to discuss this.
- Auditor Matt Beaton had concerns with Mike Paoli taking over the social media for the county; although he would be an asset, there may be a conflict of interest with Commissioner Peck knowing him. He encouraged the Board to open the position to others.



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“Verbatim section”

- **(Commissioner Didier)** Mr. Chairman, I have a couple comments. First Keith, we had a caller call about the travel voucher. He was asking for an answer, now I’m asking for the answer. Where are we at on that? **(Keith Johnson)** We’ve completed the review of travel vouchers going back as far as we had records. We sent a statement to Commissioner Peck, which he reimbursed the county for what we think were the correct amounts going back on those and uh. **(Didier)** So there was a reimbursement given back to the county? **(Johnson)** yes. **(Didier)** in the amount of what? **(Johnson)** I don’t have the exact figure in front of me, but it was around, I want to say around about \$1,700, going back to 2013. **(Didier)** So let me understand this right, I, when we had a meeting that day, I sat here in front of the SAO and I asked them at what threshold does this, and they said there is no threshold and they claim they never found anything. Why is Commissioner Peck paying back money? **(Keith)** Ahh. **(Commissioner Peck)** So Keith, I am going to respond. I identified the issue several months ago and I requested the review of past travel vouchers. And, I submitted reimbursement to correct an administrative error, no one else brought this up, I’m the one. However, it does appear others in the Auditors office may have attempted to use this as some sort of a campaign ploy and in fact the calls from one of the callers today was a repeat call, if we want to get into association, is a good friend of Mr. Beaton and I believe yourself. So let’s just be clear. Our own travel policy approved by Mr. Beaton’s office, failed to include language requiring the 50 mile offset. I identified the problem; I received coordination with the legal office to make sure the interpretations I had were correct. And then I proceeded to have the board correct the travel policy. And then I audited my own vouchers and reimbursed the county. That’s the way the process works. If you’re suggesting that there’s anything else more than that, then you’re mistaken and I’ll leave it there. **(Didier)** Well I think I’m gonna have to ask for a full review of this because something doesn’t seem right here. I’m the one that asked for the travel policy, I’m the one that asked for the travel policy and it was changed when I came into office and the fifty miles was removed and asked in the meeting why the 50 miles was removed. And then it was re-implemented in this last travel policy. There seems to be a play with policies here and I want to get to the bottom of it. **(End of Verbatim)**
- Commissioner Didier asked Mr. Johnson about the travel vouchers how this matter was resolved. Mr. Johnson replied that Commissioner Peck reimbursed the county for travel that was taken due to unclear travel policy language. Commissioner Peck also clarified that he saw the mistake and made every effort to correct the problem. Commissioner Didier shared his concerns on the changing of the policy with the 50-mile radius written in the policy and taken out.
- Commissioner Didier also had concerns with the Coyote Ridge Corrections facility and the National Guard going in to do COVID testing. The inmates are sharing the virus in order to be released. Over one hundred inmates and personnel have tested positive.



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- Commissioner Didier was concerned with the email that was received at the courthouse to solicit monies for Jay Inslee’s campaign for re-election.
- Commissioner Koch confirmed that the Health Department would remove the positive Covid 19 cases at Coyote Ridge from the Franklin County data sheets.

Adjourn

With no further business to bring before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Chair

Clerk of the Board

Date