

**BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' BRIEFING MINUTES**  
**Mason County Commission Chambers, 411 North 5th Street, Shelton, WA**  
**Week of September 18, 2017**

Monday, September 18, 2017

- 9:00 A.M. Sheriff's Office – Chief Theresia Ehrich  
Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.
- Chief Ehrich presented information for the 2017-2019 DOE Litter Grant award of \$46,100 which was approved to place on the agenda.
  - Civil Fee increases were approved.
- 9:15 A.M. Community Services – Dave Windom  
Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.
- Dave provided information on Amendment 15 to the Consolidated Contract to incorporate changes to funding for Foundational Public Health Services. Although the amendment will exceed \$15,000, Director Windom is requesting permission to sign the amendment to expedite billing.
  - Dave then reviewed current financial statements from Community Services.
  - The permit issuance backlog is improving.
  - Two applicants for the Planning Advisory Commission – Jeff Carey and Steve VanDenover. The current PAC is working well through the Comp Plan update. This will be brought back at next week's briefing.
  - Nurse Family Partnership has a six month contract and the services will then be based out of Thurston County.
- Commissioner Discussion
- Cmmr. Drexler shared the plans for the Triage Treatment Center on Cota Street which will be a 12 bed facility.
  - Cmmr. Drexler stated she is working Todd Parker on creating the process for the distribution of the Mental Health tax with a reporting requirement.
  - Cmmr. Neatherlin stated Wave Cable is being responsive to improving service in the Tahuya River Valley.
  - Cmmr. Drexler will be applying to continue to serve on the WSAC Board of Directors.
- 10:15 A.M. The Board took a 15 minute break.
- 10:30 A.M. Public Works – Jerry Hauth  
Utilities & Waste Management  
Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.
- Revisions to the Interlocal Agreement with the WA State Patrol were approved.
  - Request to approve County Road Projects (CRP) for John's Prairie Road and Mason Lake Road.
  - Director Hauth reviewed proposed revisions to the submitted Road Fund 2018 and 2019 preliminary budgets. They have identified a net savings of \$511,922. There is a \$750,000 reserve from when the Public Works facility was built and the suggestion is to request permission in 2018 to roll into the Road Fund. Staff was directed to check with Treasurer Lisa Frazier and bring forward in a Finance Committee meeting.
  - Bart Stepp presented information on North Bay Lakeland lift station pump repair and a pump for the Belfair Sewer system. Bart will bring forward information on all the necessary pump repairs.
  - Public hearing on September 26 for changes to the Solid Waste and Biosolids Handling and Facility Regulations.
  - The public hearing on the Wave Franchise Agreement has been continued and staff is working with Frank Pinter on follow up information.
  - Cmmr. Neatherlin asked for a brief summary of how the Road Fund is encumbered.

Board of Mason County Commissioners' Briefing Meeting Minutes  
Week of September 18, 2017

11:15 A.M. Support Services

Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.

- The 2018 Lodging Tax awards made by the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee were reviewed. The recommendations are as follows: For 2018 Visitor Information Centers - \$57,400 to Shelton Chamber of Commerce; \$33,500 to North Mason Chamber of Commerce. For tourism promotion, including festivals and small events, \$206,000 to Northwest Event Organizers, Inc. Cmmr. Drexler provided background information on the LTAC's review process. The Commissioners approved moving the awards forward.
- Purchase of computer backup system for a total cost of \$41,351 from the Information Technology fund (#500) which has funding available was approved to move forward.
- Review of resolution amending Current Expense Reserve Balance to 12%-15% of previous year's expenditures and establishing other reserves. The Commissioners provided edits. Cmmr. Drexler would like to see the 5-plan on how to achieve these goals. Cmmr. Neatherlin concerned with implementing the 12% reserve in 2018 because we're already experiencing budget cuts. Frank noted that with the proposed cuts to the 2018 budget, it barely puts us at the 9% reserve. Frank will place the resolution on agenda for approval.
- Review of draft letter to County offices regarding 2018 Budget that was first briefed last week. The letter requests those departments that did not submit their 2018 preliminary budget according to the budget guidelines, to resubmit their budget. There was a lengthy discussion of the letter. In an effort to obtain compliance, Cmmr. Neatherlin had suggested adding a penalty to those departments that do not comply with the budget guidelines. Commissioners Shutty and Drexler did not support this method. Cmmr. Drexler would like departments to submit in their budget narrative where they would use the levy lid lift proceeds, if the ballot measure passes. She pointed out that without a reduced 2018 preliminary budget, she doesn't know where the cuts are and therefore she can't prioritize the potential levy lid lift proceeds. Cmmr. Shutty stated there needs to be a deliberate approach of the County's priorities for the ballot issue; the voters need to know where dollars will go. He is comfortable with the priorities in the original draft of the letter. Cmmr. Neatherlin stated it is difficult to determine the priorities when the actual budget cuts/programs are unknown. The Board agreed the letter can be distributed requesting the departments resubmit their 2018 preliminary budgets.
- 2017 budget hearing; request to set on October 17 was approved to move forward

Commissioner Discussion – there was no discussion.

BREAK – NOON

2:00 P.M. State Auditor Financial & Single Audit Exit Conference – Zachary Wilson  
Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.

- Zac Wilson provided the SAO report for the 2016 period and reviewed the exit items for the audit.

3:00 P.M. Probation Services – Jim Madsen

Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.

- Jim Madsen provided information on the BECCA Bill services and the agreement for \$73,179 that will be placed on the agenda.
- CASA funding is \$62,746 for 2017-2018 and will be placed on the agenda.
- Functional Family Therapy contract with Strengthening Foundations Counseling, LLC will be placed on the agenda.
- Request to open recruitment for Extra Help/On-call positions for the Juvenile Detention Center was approved. Also a Detention Corrections Officer position has recently vacated and the Commissioners asked Jim to come back with that request.



Board of Mason County Commissioners' Briefing Meeting Minutes  
Week of September 18, 2017

3:15 P.M.

Public Defense – Peter Jones

Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.

- Request to terminate a contract with Kelly Seago and replace the contract. Ms. Seago's schedule does not work with the court calendar.

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance.

- Cmmr. Shutty asked about the request from Steve Bloomfield regarding the Seattle Shellfish lease. Diane will follow up with Tim Whitehead and Steve.

Briefing meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 19, 2017,

1:00 P.M.

Mason County Elected Official/Director Meeting

Commissioners Shutty, Drexler and Neatherlin were in attendance. Also in attendance: Auditor Karen Herr, Assessor Melody Peterson, Coroner Wes Stockwell, Clerk Sharon Fogo, District Court Administrator Patsy Robinson, Treasurer Lisa Frazier, WSU Extension Lisa Dewall, Superior Court Administrator Robyn Lockwood, Probation Services Jim Madsen, Public Works Director Jerry Hauth, Community Services Dave Windom, Chief Public Defender Peter Jones, Prosecutor Michael Dorcy, Superior Court Judge Dan Goodell and Sheriff Casey Salisbury.

Chair Shutty called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

- Employee Position Control – Frank explained that within MUNIS there is a position control option that allows HR/payroll to track employee information and can assist departments with budgeted salaries and benefits. Commissioners can establish staffing levels in the offices/departments with or without position control.

Karen Herr provided the history of position control and stated that at the time when MUNIS was implemented, the then-HR Director was against it along with Commissioners. MUNIS said to make the decision and stay with it. In 2015, MUNIS came out and set up position control in TRAIN and when compared to payroll, it did not match. This would be a huge programming change with a large cost and staff effort. She doesn't see a benefit for her office.

Dave Windom asked how does it project forward with moving through salary steps within the budget cycle. Frank stated that MUNIS makes changes when told to do so. Lisa Frazier asked the cost and who will implement. Frank stated it would be implemented through HR; MUNIS is coming out in early November for an audit how the system is used and to make recommendations for improvements as part of the maintenance contract. They will provide an estimate and he assumes it would cost around \$10K to implement.

Melody Peterson asked what the benefit would be to her office. Frank answered that he doesn't see this assisting departments individually but it helps HR and payroll in on-boarding employees. Rather than individually, it can be input with the class information implementing the position automatically and it can be used in budgeting.

Ms. Herr pointed out that her office is not asking for this change.

Ms. Peterson asked if it is worth the cost with the current budget constraints.

Sheriff Salisbury asked that with the many staff pay changes that occur in his office, would position control slow the process. Frank answered that currently the pays are managed by Excel which has to be manually updated; in position control all that

Board of Mason County Commissioners' Briefing Meeting Minutes  
Week of September 18, 2017

information is in the system, no translation error. It works on the actual data and would help the department and HR. Everyone needs that info input into the system and this reduces the input process.

Discussion of how classifications are established – specialty pays are assigned to the appropriate positions.

Departments still have to input PAF's but step increases are automatic, if automatic per the CBA.

Position control can bring efficiency because it reduces data entry.

The second function of position control is establishing staffing levels. Commissioners can establish staffing levels unilaterally or collaboratively with all offices. It would be decided on the number of employee positions in classifications.

Prosecutor Dorcy asked is it not up to the elected official on what staffing levels are in their office. Frank responded that is one way to establish the employee positions. Frank cited RCW 36.16.070 which allows Commissioners to fix compensation and shall authorize bonds, if necessary. Lisa noted that RCW doesn't allow the Commissioners to fix the number of positions.

"RCW 36.16.070 In all cases where the duties of any county office are greater than can be performed by the person elected to fill it, the officer may employ deputies and other necessary employees with the consent of the board of county commissioners. The board shall fix their compensation and shall require what deputies shall give bond and the amount of bond required from each. The sureties on deputies' bonds must be approved by the board and the premium therefor is a county expense. ..."

Sheriff Salisbury pointed out there isn't just one RCW that establishes staffing levels in independently elected offices and there is also case law and it can get complicated. Frank noted that the RCW doesn't allow choice of hire, any promotion, suspension, discharge but it does allow the Commissioners to set the compensation.

Prosecutor Dorcy stated that fundamentally this path could lead to the Commissioners determining the number of what class of employees the offices would have. It seems it should be up to him, as the elected official, determine what positions he needs to run his office.

Judge Goodell asked if this a policy decision or a system feature that can be used.

Cmmr. Drexler stated she has no intention of telling any elected official how to manage their staff; the first role of position control, in her opinion, is to be able to run scenarios using the MUNIS system in order to make policy/budget decisions.

Sheriff Salisbury stated he appreciates the ability to run scenarios but doesn't want the Commissioners telling him what positions he needs.

Frank pointed out that the Commissioners do not need position control to manage staffing levels; do need position control in order to simplify the process for employees.

Cmmr. Shutty suggested the County talk to MUNIS for a demonstration so we would have a better idea of the benefits. Staffing levels is not an area he intends to go into - would give deference to the elected official on how they manage their offices with money provided by the Commissioners. We are all accountable to our constituents. He has no intention to move into a system where the Commission determines other elected's staffing levels.



Ms. Peterson pointed out this would spend money that makes life easier to HR but she doesn't have enough money to fund her office.

- Levy Lid Lift Ballot Measure - Frank provided information on the prohibition to use of county resources for a ballot measure and a draft of Frequently Asked Questions with regard to Proposition 1 property tax levy ballot measure. This document could be put on the website to provide information to the public.

Cmmr. Drexler acknowledged she would like to include in the document where the monies would be used, but has held back because she doesn't have a full understanding of what the budget reductions are doing to the offices. It is her job to put the ballot measure on the ballot. She asked offices to share how these cuts affect the offices operation and the impact to the public.

Auditor Herr noted that on the original FAQ, there was information stating where the ballot measure funding would go – that language is now lined out – she hopes that language is being reconsidered because it's important to fund all offices.

Sheriff Salisbury stated the public wants to know where would the money would go and not wait until the money comes in to decide where to spend it.

Cmmr. Neatherlin stated the idea of putting the numbers in the original document wasn't vetted. The public needs to know where the money will go and also know where there would still be shortfalls.

Prosecutor Dorcy stated (with regard to the letter to offices requesting the 2018 preliminary budgets be resubmitted) that some of the reaction is in semantics or positions being taken; he believes they could explain how the cuts would impact their office; that is different than everybody resubmit their budget.

Sheriff Salisbury agreed he can explain what the cuts would do to his office but he doesn't want to be told where to cut in his office.

Cmmr. Shutty stated the document (FAQ) is a working document; his concern is whatever funding levels would be restored for the various offices, they need to be prioritized not only for the elected but for the public.

Cmmr. Drexler asked for comments if there were an across-the-board distribution by percentage.

Treasurer Frazier stated she has cut staff and they will have to cut hours if there are further budget reductions. Her office provides services to not only the public, but other offices and junior taxing districts.

Assessor Peterson echoed what Lisa said. She would have no choice but to cut staff and that delays the basic functions of her office, along with the Auditor and Treasurer.

Cmmr. Neatherlin asked for any ideas on generating revenues.

General discussion of the levy distribution, the various county functions, and how to educate the public.

- 2018 Budget Process  
Frank shared a letter including an Excel spreadsheet and budget workshop schedule.

from the Commissioners requesting departments to resubmit their 2018 budgets by October 13.

Lisa Frazier asked who to approach to negotiate with labor unions a proposal to reduce operating hours. Frank stated he has been approached by AFSCME to allow furloughs without impacting seniority levels and asked that requests be forwarded to him.

Sheriff Salisbury referred to paragraph "discusses the impact of budget cuts to services". The preliminary budget is to ask what the elected officials need to run their office and reduces his liability if he asks to fund certain services. Clarified that this is where the offices explain the cuts.

Prosecutor Dorcy stated he has submitted his preliminary budget as statutorily required to do; ultimately the number comes from the Board. He can submit an Excel showing the contingencies if the budget is reduced and what services are reduced in his office. There are different roles in the budget process.

There was discussion of the format to submit for the budget narrative and budget numbers. Comments made: elected officials have submitted their preliminary budgets; what is the point of asking for a resubmission; ultimately the Board will establish the budget numbers. The intent of the Board is to understand what services will be impacted.

Auditor Herr asked about having the conversation with the Board before submitting where reductions could be made and the service impacts.

Judge Meadows stated she stands by her prelim budget and would consider a reduced budget as a hypothetical budget if there aren't enough revenues to support the preliminary budget. This hypothetical budget would start the conversation with the Commissioners on the impacts of the reductions.

Judge Goodell expressed concern with the language "did not follow" because he feels they did not do anything wrong.

- Updates from Elected Officials

Superior Court – Judge Goodell stated that Therapeutic Courts continue to expand to qualified participants with positive results.

Sheriff Salisbury thanked Public Works for their assistance on a recent criminal investigation.

Auditor Herr noted that since 2014, her revenues have increased however her staffing levels have decreased.

Clerk Fogo stated her office is in the process of training new hires; still hoping to do passport photos but needs staff in order to do so.

Treasurer Frazier stated the new Odyssey system is impacting their office. They are working on determining the impacts of the new state levy; there are multiple new BARS lines. October tax collections will be slowed down due to less staff.

District Court Judge Meadows shared that MRT continues; there is a Veterans probation meeting; will be hiring a new probation officer to fill a vacancy due to retirement.

Commissioner Neatherlin stated he attended the first sanctioned meeting of City of Bremerton, Port of Bremerton, and Mason County regarding sewer connections; in North Mason area there is new commercial development and housing development.

Commissioner Drexler shared information on the BHO and how to improve the delivery of services.

Commissioner Shetty appreciates the participation at the meeting and encouraged people to reach out to the Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Board of Mason County Commissioners' Briefing Meeting Minutes  
Week of September 18, 2017

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Zoren, Administrative Services Manager

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Shetty  
Chair  
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Terri Drexler  
Commissioner  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy Neatherlin  
Commissioner