

MINUTES

BOARD OF BENTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Special Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 4, 2009, 9:00 am.
Commissioners' Conference Room
Benton County Justice Center
Kennewick, WA

Present: Chairman Max E. Benitz, Jr. Chairman
Commissioner Leo Bowman
Commissioner James Beaver
County Administrator David Sparks
Clerk of the Board Cami McKenzie

Benton County Employees Present During All or a Portion of the Meeting: Adam Fyall, Community Development Coordinator; Public Works Director Ross Dunfee; Larry Moser and Norm Childress, Public Works; Deputy Administrator Loretta Smith Kelty; Personnel Manager Melina Wenner; and Finance Manager Linda Ivey.

Economic Development

Bruce Etzel, representing Benton REA and PEDA, presented a draft brochure created by TRIDEC and PEDA that detailed Benton County and what it had to offer. The Board thanked Mr. Etzel and said they would get back to him with comments or changes.

Commissioner Beaver discussed his view of economic development and said he believed the road program and economic development program should align with each other. He discussed the importance of the Board setting goals and objectives and receiving a list of priorities from the partners (i.e. cities and ports) so the Board could match up where to spend money. Additionally, he said it was important to have better communication and accountability between Public Works and Administration and suggested that through email or monthly reports.

Commissioner Bowman said the Board needed to identify whether economic development would be created through staff or a contractor because Adam Fyall's plate was already full. He said he was hopeful the Board could give direction to staff to come up with a plan on how to move the process forward.

Chairman Benitz suggested the Board review the current economic development plan for changes and create a separate fund for economic development, while identifying other funds that were available. He discussed creating interlocal agreements that worked towards the new economic development plan. Mr. Sparks discussed the current rural county fund and stated there were statutory mechanisms for use of that money.

The Board agreed it was important to create an economic development strategy for Benton County and directed Mr. Sparks to come up with some recommendations for the Board to review.

The Board briefly recessed, reconvening at 10:09 a.m.

Six-Year Road Program

The Board discussed the proposed Six-Year Road Program for 2010-2015 and made the following recommendations:

- Include another column for unidentified funding
- Remove the Pilt/Capital Facilities Fund column as a funding source
- Capital Facilities Plan and Road Program projects and funding should match
- Removal of the CRID (Sagebrush Road – Cottonwood Springs to Badger)
- Addition of Case Road and Knox Road to Rural Arterial Program
- Removal of projects that were complete or expected to complete in 2009

The Board requested Mr. Dunfee present a draft of the program before going to public hearing.

The Board agreed to wait approximately 30-60 days before having another workshop meeting. Commissioner Beaver also requested a written summary on the progress of the items completed.

The Board meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Clerk of the Board

Chairman