



BOARD of CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES for the week of January 1 - 5, 2024

1a
JAN 09 2024

WORK SESSION – 9 a.m.

The work session convened at 9 a.m., Tuesday, January 2, 2024. Present were Commissioners Ozias, Johnson and French, and Administrator Mielke.

Items of discussion per the agenda published December 28 were:

- Calendar/Correspondence
- Resolution authorizing action on Current Use Assessment CUA applications pursuant to Clallam County Code Chapter 27.08, Open Space
- Letter of Support for Home Depot Foundation grant (1c)*

Meeting concluded at 9:06 a.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Chair Ozias called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, January 2, 2024. Also present were Commissioners Johnson and French and Administrator Mielke.

- Selection of Chair and Vice Chair for 2024
Election of Chair for 2024

ACTION TAKEN: CMOM to nominate CMF as Chair, mc

Selection of Vice Chair for 2024

ACTION TAKEN: CMFm to nominate CRJ as Vice Chair, mc

REQUEST FOR MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION TAKEN: CMOM to adopt the agenda as presented, CRJs, mc

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- CMF commented on Recompete

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1a Approval of payroll for the period ending December 15
- 1b Approval of minutes for the week of December 25
- 1c Letter of Support for Home Depot Foundation grant

ACTION TAKEN: CMOM to adopt the consent agenda as presented, CMFs, mc

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- CMF commented on
- CRJ commented on
- CMO commented on

CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

- 2a Agreement with Habitat for Humanity of Clallam County for American Rescue Plan Act Funds ARPA

ACTION TAKEN: CMOM to approve, CMFs, mc

BIDS AND AWARDS

- 3a Approval of Developmental Disabilities funding recommendations 2024

ACTION TAKEN: CMOM to approve, CMFs, mc

BOARD of CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES for the week of January 1 - 5, 2024
Page 2

ADMINISTRATION

4a Resolution designating Commissioner involvement on advisory Boards 2024

ACTION TAKEN: CMOm to adopt, CMFs, mc

4b Resolution reappointing Ioana Bociu to the Marine Resources Committee

ACTION TAKEN: CMOm to adopt, CMFs, mc

4c Resolution appointing Patricia Willits to the Conservation Futures Program Advisory Board

ACTION TAKEN: CMOm to adopt, CMFs, mc

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Ed Bowen, Clallam Bay, commented on County Administrator, item 4a, cancellation of timber sale in district III
- Jeff Tozzer, Sequim, commented on Towne Road (see attached)
- Denise Lapio, Sequim, commented on Towne Road
- Derrick Eberle, Sequim, commented on Towne Road
- Thomas Ash, Sequim, commented on Towne Road
- Larry Campbell, Sequim, commented on meeting with Commissioner Ozias
- Colleen Robinson, Sequim, commented on American Rescue Plan Act Funding ARPA

Meeting concluded at 10:24 a.m. and continued to 9 a.m., Monday, January 8, 2024.

The Board of Commissioners attended Coffee with Colleen and Housing Solutions Committee Meeting during the week of January 1.

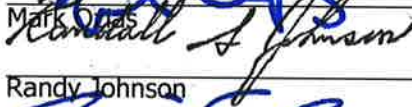
PASSED AND ADOPTED this 9th day of January 2024.

ATTEST:


Loni Gores, MMC, Clerk of the Board

BOARD OF CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Mark Ozias

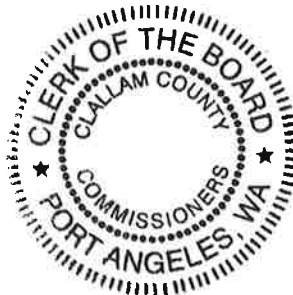

Randy Johnson


Mike French

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS:

ATM Administrator Todd Mielke
CMO Commissioner Mark Ozias
CRJ Commissioner Randy Johnson
CMF Commissioner Mike French

m moved
mc motion carried
s seconded



Public comment
Jeff Tozzer
1/2/24

Jeff Tozzer, Jamestown Road, Sequim

In 2014 the County held a "Towne Road Work Group" meeting led by County Biologist Cathy Lear. The summary of the meeting read: *"Without Towne Road or equivalent access, emergency response time may be increased by 3-7 minutes" and "If emergency response vehicles are located more than 5 miles away, fire insurance rates increase from \$425 to \$1000."*

On June 19th of last year, the Fire Chief said in an email: *"removing connections increases response times and could have a negative effect for the citizens who live in and around that area... These connections can have an effect on insurance ratings for neighborhoods around that area also."*

That email was sent to all three Commissioners.

On August 23rd a home burned north of the Towne Road closure. The responding units traveled via Towne Road but were forced to detour five miles once they found a locked gate. The mother and her two daughters survived, their dogs did not. Once the fire was out, the family's only belongings were the pajamas they wore. Fire Chief Orr said via email, *"the added response time certainly added to the loss for that family. I have encouraged the County Commissioners to have a larger view and to consider the ramifications of their actions regarding closing any public right of way. I certainly understand the appeal of a pedestrian trail, but I would hope that public safety would outweigh that appeal..."*

That email was shared with all three Commissioners.

On September 25th, Sheriff King said that I had been the first to ask him about the closure of Towne Road. I thought the Commissioners would have asked first responders if a closed road had any effect on public safety. The Sheriff replied, in part, "anytime you close a road response times (depending on the destination) could be affected." He also said, "Scenarios like this certainly would have impacts to our response time... Closing a road would inevitably have some impact to public safety."

I sent Sheriff King's email to all three Commissioners.

And yet, at the September 26th informational meeting, the County didn't tell the public that they knew response times could increase and insurance rates could rise. With an emphasis on recreation, not public safety, the County even proposed closing the road to traffic. When someone at the meeting asked if our community's first responders had any input, it was Commissioner Ozias who took the microphone and gave an explanation. County staff felt it was more appropriate for a Commissioner to answer that question, not the Fire Chief who was in attendance and had been speaking to Commissioner Ozias moments before.

The "Towne Road" disaster has exposed severe leadership, procedural, and ethical problems that have opened the public's eyes. As a consequence, confidence in the integrity of the government, and the Commissioners, is eroding. At the last meeting, Commissioner French reminded the gallery that Board Meetings are for the Commissioners, not for the people. What is for the people? When are we allowed to participate? Who represents our interests when it comes to public safety?

County government's role isn't to propagandize and repackage information.