

Notes from Water Committee Meeting - 9 am, Wednesday, June 18, 2025

In Commissioner Pickett's absence, Commissioners Richards and Holy asked Commissioner Sarmiento to run the meeting. Commissioner Holy will take notes.

Call to Order – 9:01 am

Action – Motion to approve minutes – Commissioner Richards. Commissioner Holy seconded.

Action – Motion to approve agenda – Commissioner Richards. Commissioner Holy seconded.

Public Comment –

Laurie M. – The agenda states “regarding County water management” – Wanted to know what management they are to perform. Concerned if the committee wants the Dungeness Rule to apply to the entire county. Frustrated that she feels like she's getting no response to her concerns.

Business – Discussion on how to proceed

Commissioner Richards – confirmed that we will not be trying to enforce the Dungeness water rule county-wide. He added additional information to the amendment the committee was previously working on. He submitted it for discussion, review, and editing.

Commissioner Sarmiento – noted that one change Commissioner Richards made was to have the specialist submit info to the county administrator vs. the county commissioners.

Commissioner Richards – in order to keep this position apolitical, he came up with bidding process reviewed by 9 individuals who would rank bids and the commissioners would choose between the top 3 bids. This is a lot cheaper than doing nothing.

Commissioner Sarmiento – noted that the bidding process could have flaws, as the personal services contract could be awarded to the highest bidder.

Commissioner Holy – noted that the bidding process was a creative way to solve the problem, but it might be too complex to put in the charter.

Commissioners agreed to go back to the version created at our last meeting and work through it, per Commissioner Sarmiento's suggestion. They discussed the fact that the second version may be weakened by not including the hydrologist language, and that the biggest change is an ad hoc committee of 9 versus 7.

Commissioner Richards – favors 9, because he sees a need for an odd number, a need for a citizen who is a member of the tribe and reps from the West End. He ran it by Mr. Corrado for advice and additions.

The Commissioners decided that the bidding process was a fluid idea, which would solve the problems associated with making sure that this individual is someone who can act independently from political or biased oversight. They agreed to keep the hydrologist/description of expertise language from the version provided in the June 9th email from Commissioner Pickett, and to keep the second sentence from Commissioner Richard's version.

Commissioner Sarmiento – presented her research about how other counties handle the water steward issue. She will include her findings in the report made to the Commission at the June 23rd meeting.

Commissioner Sarmiento – stated that the committee now needed to discuss the bidding process and how many people we want on the committee

Action – Motion to strike the language about the specialist reporting to the BOCC – Commissioner Holy. Commissioner Sarmiento seconded.

Commissioner Sarmiento – suggested that we keep the number of ad hoc committee members at 7.

Commissioner Holy – suggested that we could take out the language about a person with knowledge of the forest industry and the person with fish and wildlife interests, because those are already represented by the DCD.

Commissioner Richards – suggested 7, with the DCD selecting two members and the BOCC selecting two members.

Action – Motion to strike words independent, nonpartisan – Commissioner Sarmiento. Commissioner Holy seconded.

The Commissioners discussed the need to keep this person independent, and ultimately agreed that the bidding process was a better option to having the BOCC hire the individual. Commissioner Richards reinforced the idea that the charter includes nine implementing ordinances already, and all the language he has written regarding implementation should stay in the amendment.

Commissioner Holy – suggested that in order to keep the charter language concise, we should present our charter amendment calling for a committee to approve the specialist, but that all the rest of the language in Commissioner Richards' version should be used to

draft recommendations to the county commissioners as to how they should implement the charter amendment.

Discussion of what to present at the Monday meeting

Action – Motion to strike the sentence after “through a personal services contract bidding procedure”, and put the rest into a draft recommendation to the BOCC – Commissioner Sarmiento. Commissioner Holy seconded. The vote was 2 to 1 in favor of the motion, with Commissioner Richards casting the dissenting vote, due to the fact that he wants to include the language creating an entity vs. an individual, and he thinks we need to specifically limit the cost.

Next Steps

Commissioner Sarmiento will present a report to the CRC on Monday, June 23rd, including presenting Draft 1 of the amendment to create a water specialist, a draft of a recommendation to the BOCC with the remaining language from Commissioner Richards’ version, and a report about how other counties handle similar issues. She will create the drafts, making sure to underline everything and have no strike-outs. She will also welcome feedback from the rest of the CRC as to ideas about the bidding process and language which should be included in the actual charter amendment, and which should be better included as a recommendation to the BOCC.

Public Comment

CGH (Carrie) – Creating the amendment and then the recommendation is a bad idea. Not being intentional is like writing a blank check to the BOCC, and BOCC does not uphold the charter. She wants to hear more info about how to fund the position with no property tax increases.

Tony Corrado – Thinks the committee has come a long way. Agrees that we should keep the language in the charter about the ad hoc committee and how to implement it. He thinks the recommendations for bids will speak for themselves, and we will not need to state a cap in the charter.

Scheduling Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 25th at 9 am in Room 160

Action – Motion to adjourn – Commissioner Richards – 11:31