

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Elected Officials**  
**July 15, 2015**  
**9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman David Stewart and Commissioner Marc Eberlein met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee, Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds, Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Prosecutor Barry McHugh, Chief Deputy Prosecutor Barry Black, Assessor Mike McDowell, Chief Deputy Assessor Richard Houser, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Chief Deputy Treasurer Laurie Thomas, Coroner Warren Keene, Deputy Clerks Meshell Missler and Theresa Atchley. Commissioner Dan Green was excused.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman David Stewart called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.
- B. Introductions:** There were no introductions.
- C. Changes to the Agenda:** Chairman Stewart added an item to the agenda as requested by Assessor Mike McDowell to discuss proposed salary adjustments. Chairman Stewart said this was a time sensitive issue because budget numbers were due soon.

Chairman Stewart made a motion to add the discussion of the proposed salary budget to the agenda. Commissioner Marc Eberlein seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Deputy Clerk Atchley called the roll:

Commissioner Eberlein:	Aye
Commissioner Green:	Excused
Chairman Stewart:	Aye

The motion carried.

- D. Old Business:** There was no old business discussed.
- E. New Business:**

**Countywide Internal Controls**

Clerk Jim Brannon referenced the memo and *Internal Control* booklet that was distributed to the Elected Officials via interoffice mail on July 6, 2015. Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee provided a summary of the booklet and said that Internal Controls are a combination of people, policies, and procedures. She said the Audit Team had developed a 20-minute baseline survey designed to highlight best practices and identify areas of risk. She proposed circulating the survey to all Elected Officials, all Chief Deputies, all supervisors, and anyone who has budget responsibility at the County, approximately 90 individuals. Ms. Raffee requested support from the Elected Officials to draft a cover letter regarding the survey and suggested launching the survey in Mid-August. Ms. Raffee advised that results would be shared with the Elected Officials at the November meeting. The Elected Officials supported the Internal Controls survey and the Auditor's office will draft the cover letter.

### **Merit System**

Mr. Brannon advised that as the budget process comes to a close the important issue of Merit Awards needs to be handled as the County can no longer issue gift cards to employees. He said Elected Officials would need to provide direction to the Auditor's office to move money into the A Budget (Personnel) so merit awards can be added to payroll and taxed; however, events for employees, such as a BBQ properly remain in the B Budget (Operations). Assessor Mike McDowell shared that the Assessor's office had developed several programs over the years that they consider essential to recognizing good performance among staff. Chief Deputy Prosecutor Barry Black referred to the IRS website on his laptop and concluded the law was vague. There was some discussion about De Minimis value and Mr. Black said the code, unfortunately, states that no dollar amount is specified regarding De Minimis value. Ms. Raffee said there is an Employee Bonus account code in the A Budget (Personnel) and mentioned that usually employees like cash, even if it was taxed. Undersheriff Dan Mattos said he understood that putting money in a paycheck, as it is taxable, and giving small items like a shirt with logo were acceptable. Mr. Brannon summed up by stating gift cards were no longer acceptable and asking Elected Officials to notify the Auditor's office of their merit system changes by month end. The Board approved the Assessor's office using existing gift cards, but to discontinue the use of gift cards next year.

### **Wellness Program Changes**

Ms. Reynolds presented information about ComPsych, the County's new Wellness provider effective August 1, 2015. She said ComPsych provides more services at a better value than the prior provider. Ms. Reynolds explained the new timeline:

- Annual Wellness Exam Due by September 30, 2015
- Health Risk Assessment Due by September 30, 2015
- Tobacco Cessation completed by December 31, 2015

Ms. Reynolds said that ComPsych provides aggregate data regarding health claims and this data could be shared with the Elected Officials. Sheriff Wolfinger suggested that important emails on health and wellness come directly from Human Resources rather than through Information Systems. Ms. Reynolds agreed and said she would bring this issue to the Board at another meeting.

### **Updating of County Records Request Forms**

Mr. Black informed the Elected Officials that the Public Records and Open Meeting Laws recently changed and advised that forms, in print and online, should be updated. Mr. Black was asked to provide a side-by-side table of the changes, and he stated he would provide this table to the Elected Officials.

**Added Item: Discussion of Proposed Salary Adjustments**

Mr. McDowell asked for a status update on the proposed salary increase of 4, 6, or 8%. Chairman Stewart advised that the proposed increase was 2% for employees and zero increase for Elected Officials. Chairman Stewart further stated that he supported a 6 or 8% increase as some people are 50% underpaid, some people are 18% underpaid, and some people are about where they need to be. Sheriff Wolfinger and Mr. McDowell said they had trimmed the budgets they presented to the Board anticipating salary adjustments. The Elected Officials also discussed adjusting the pay ranges and no decision was made. Commissioner Eberlein was concerned about maintaining fiscal solvency within the County and suggested cutting costs rather than increasing taxes.

Mr. Brannon reminded the group that the budget is still tentative and there are several more issued to be decided. Mr. McDowell discussed making sound business decisions that included tax increases, de-politicizing Elected Officials salaries, and proper equitable salaries. Ms. Raffee offered a viable option of bonuses for employees using fund balances and a minor permanent wage increase. She acknowledged that this would be a practical solution to an immediate need rather than a long-term answer.

Treasurer Steve Matheson mentioned concern about the difficulty in getting an item placed on the agenda and said he felt this was a Board of Commissioners meeting, not an Elected Officials meeting; he added that he had no authority to make decisions or recommendations in this meeting. Prosecutor Barry McHugh said he hoped this could be a meeting among equals.

Ms. Raffee invited all the Elected Officials to attend the Budget Meeting on Friday afternoon from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

- F. Staff Reports:** There were no staff reports.
- G. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. There was no public comment.

Chairman Stewart adjourned the meeting at 10:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

DAVID STEWART, CHAIRMAN

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Theresa Atchley, Deputy Clerk

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