

COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS
FEBRUARY 10, 2009
CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The Board convened in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 6th Floor, Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. Commissioners Mielke, Stuart, and Boldt, Chair, present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Commissioners conducted the Flag Salute.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nathan Webster, Executive Director/President, Dream Big Community Center, 15513 NE Third Circle, Vancouver, outlined the history of the organization. Mr. Webster stated that in 2008 the following programs were created and launched: Dream Big 101, Dream Big Essay Contest, and Operation Hope, all of which are directed towards kids in the 12-18 age group. He said they are working in schools and the Clark County Juvenile Court and this year they planned to become more interwoven within the community, launching and creating more programs. Mr. Webster said they are also working on opening their center in 2011. More information can be found on their web site: www.dreambigcc.org.

Stuart asked Mr. Webster what their timeframe was for getting a physical location.

Webster said that in the next month they were going to start looking at some organizations about doing a feasibility study and they would be holding a fundraiser at Esther Short Park on August 8, 2009 to raise some of the capital needed to at least break ground. He said they were also looking at some government grants.

Stuart mentioned that the Clark County Youth Commission had come up with some great designs for a community center and they could provide that information to Mr. Webster.

Webster said that would be great.

Stuart added that Elizabeth Hill and Kris Henriksen, Clark County Community Services Department, would be good contacts because they are very involved with the Youth Commission. He commented that what Mr. Webster is doing is great. *Stuart* referenced a recent Vancouver City Council meeting that he watched on CTV during which a young man spoke about wanting to raise a pygmy goat where he lives. Pygmy goats are not on the list of small animals a person can own, but he studied the code and did a great job presenting. *Stuart* said he was very frustrated to see that the young man was cut off numerous times by the council and treated like a child, although he was well prepared to present his issue before them. *Stuart* noted that he and council member Tim Leavitt would be contacting the young man to try and help him work through the process.

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Webster said the back of their business card says “You Provide the Dream, We’ll Provide the Tools” and that’s for the teenagers who don’t have the tools and people like Commissioner Stuart who will stand up for them.

CONSENT AGENDA

Boldt noted that Commissioner Mielke requested to pull item 1 (Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Agreement, Outdoor Recreation Account for the proposed Chelatchie Prairie Railroad Trail).

Stuart had a comment about consent item 2 (authorization for the County Administrator to sign an agreement granting permission to Williams Pipeline to enter Camp Bonneville to conduct a survey.) He said with as much ordnance as has been found within Camp Bonneville, he assumed Williams Pipeline understood the need to be especially careful while doing their work.

Bill Barron, County Administrator, stated that Prosecuting Attorney, Lori Volkman, has been working with Williams Pipeline and he believed the agreement emphasized the need to have a two-person team when working at Camp Bonneville.

Boldt referred to an article in The Columbian, which indicated that the pipeline would end in Hockinson, but didn’t say whether it would tie into the other line and people were wondering if there would be another terminal.

Barron said his understanding was that it was just going across the county to join into the main line that goes north and south.

There being no public comment, **MOVED** by Stuart to approve consent agenda items 2 through 10. Commissioners Boldt, Stuart, and Mielke voted aye. Motion carried.

Boldt asked staff to further explain consent item 1.

Bill Wright, Department of Public Works, stated that it was a project they have been working on for a number of years. Through a lot of work, primarily by Commissioner Stuart, they received a large Federal grant for the first segment of the project. The idea here is to have trails along the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad that can be used for recreational purposes, as well as commuting purposes for those who want to use bicycles. Mr. Wright stated that the grant application was prepared by Parks Department staff and was accepted by the state for nearly \$1 million. The grant would allow them to extend the first segment of the project into a longer segment.

Boldt asked where it started exactly—from the end of Fairgrounds Park or at the start of 219th?

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Troy Pierce, Department of Public Works, said it would be the park, but they would be speaking with the City of Battle Ground to find out what their master plan looks like.

Boldt asked if it would end at Battle Ground Park.

Pierce said yes, it would go up to 249th and then cut west up into the main entrance of Battle Ground Park.

Mielke said this seemed to fly into the face of their economic development plan. He said there's a reason they don't have walkways along railroads, which is that they don't mix well. Also, at one time the project not only included bicycles and pedestrians, but also equestrian access; however, horses and trains don't mix and in many cases people are killed just walking across the tracks. He said they're looking at \$2 million for this project, but there are safety projects all over the county where they need sidewalks. He said he would like to see the money spent some place else. He added that they are growing their railroad industrial base up that line and have a proposal for the very end of that line that is being considered and he had concern about the safety of the trail.

Stuart stated that the process began in November of 2005 as part of a public process to establish regional priorities for parks and trails. As part of that process, this became a regional priority to provide alternative opportunities to get from point A to point B rather than just a vehicle and in areas where there's not a lot of access to parks and trails. He said there was a continuous public process that came to a head in August of 2008 and there's a report that talks about how to avoid potential conflicts with railroads and provides examples of other rail-trail projects. He said a lot of work has been done to address concerns, including by the community who wants the project. As far as the money goes, *Stuart* said the REET money cannot go toward the sidewalk project or road fund projects; it's money that has been specifically set aside for parks and trails. Also, the grant that he worked to get, which was a Federal Enhancement Grant, couldn't go toward road projects, but only towards other types of projects that enhance the transportation system. He stated that this was money specifically set aside for enhancing people's ability to get out and walk, bike, and ride their horses. If you look at the overall trail plan, there is an equestrian component to this segment because the horse riding community indicated that it was a path that would be good for them. On the other hand, when they get to the high intensity areas they wouldn't have equestrian paths because of the potential for issues between horses and trains. *Stuart* asked staff to make sure to provide Commissioner *Mielke* with a copy of the August 2008 report.

Mielke reiterated that there is a big safety issue and opposition to it has been ignored. So whether the money is free or not, he would not support it.

Stuart noted that the train on the entire track can go no faster than 10 MPH and there are sidewalks next to roads where cars are going 40-50 MPH. He said if there are people walking, it's their job to make sure it's as safe as possible. It's also about making sure

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people have opportunities to get out and walk and bike, recognizing that people need to be aware of cars and trains.

There being no public comment, **MOVED** by Stuart to approve consent agenda item 1. Commissioners Boldt and Stuart voted aye. Commissioner Mielke voted nay. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS

Stuart said they were looking forward to the upcoming State of the County address.

Boldt joked that everyone says he's worth the price of admission.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Marc Boldt, Chair



Steve Stuart, Commissioner

Tom Mielke, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Louie Richards
Clerk of the Board

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