

**Trout Lake Community Council
Meeting Notes - Final
In person at The Grange
March 4, 2025
6:00 – 8:35 pm**

Council Meeting:

Topic	Council Lead	Start Time
Regular Council Meeting called to order	Daina	6:00
Council members present - Lucas King, Daina Bambe, Joanna Turner, Pat Arnold, Tom Binder, Dave Wampler, Aaron Schmid, Jim Lambert		

Community members present - 24 - Dennis Hartley, Todd Andrews, Glenda Hollenbeck, Sara Arnold, Jack Fee, Jerry, Nancy White, Nina Pocna, joanne parker, joanie and

Agenda Review	Daina
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Looks good

Minutes review:	Daina
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February 4, 2025

Motion - Tom, 2nd - Dave, All in favor

Guests:	Daina	6:05
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County Commissioner Todd Andrews: Priorities he is working on, status of the County and opportunity for public Q&A from the community

Positives - Timber dollars, tourism, landfill has kept taxes low (22yrs \$11mil general fund and more into special community projects)

Concerns - Fire mitigation/danger (increased risk and cancelled homeowners ins). Comp plan/sub area plans - that's 2 yr journey and has to be done. Long-term budgeting, the lack of which has created some problems: i.e. Skamania County has had to lay off numerous people because of similar issues. Short term rentals, lack of affordable housing. Code compliance, solar, battery storage - a lot of companies want to come in and develop solar projects on the eastside of the county (20+ K acres potential). Solar advisory group has 4 more meetings, 15 voting members are going to those solar meetings and will come up with recommendations; impact fees. Lack of sufficient childcare is a big issue - state regulations have made it difficult to run a childcare business. Communication (broke down post covid) and the commissioners want to hold more town hall meetings, creating a county info flyer.

Q&A:

What happened to zoom meetings for Thursday commissioner working sessions and the meetings have been moved downstairs where there's no zoom there? Dept heads are uncomfortable with talking publicly about things because they were getting attacked by public attending meetings. Trying to repair relationships and build bridges between departments. They were spending a lot of time putting out fires that weren't necessary.

The commissioners are relatively new, Lori has the most seniority and she was elected 2 years ago. Therefore, no institutional history on the BOCC.

Q: Many residents had a significant appraised value increase (one had \$200K) for property taxes, homes in TL are a lot higher than Goldendale. Ans: Call Billy the assessor if you have questions. County gets .12 cents , .13 to public works - most goes to the state and schools. 1% cap on what taxes can be raised but not assessed value. We are the lowest taxed county in the state of WA (one other is similar), Solar farms - won't impact the west end, but the east end. will bring tax dollars and will change how land is assessed. Similar to wind mills. Solar development doesn't bring in many jobs, all are located on private land. Gas tax funding for road maintenance is going down because people are buying hybrid cars.

Q: Lost landfill contracts - how do you make up for that? Ans: Loss wasn't too bad, filled in the gap with other trash contracts.

Jeff Hunter, Klickitat County Public Works Director: Status of Guler Park improvement projects and staffing (if any) at the park. Also, information on any public works projects in the Trout Lake area. 6:43

Jeff has been here since 2008, came with Gordy Kelsy from Thurston County to get public works back on track.

Roads, parks, facilities - biggest org in the county. Roads - levy rate is smallest in the state because of the landfill so our road taxes weren't increased - they were reduced. Retirements has happened and many positions were not filled right away. Currently they are down 1 person on the westside. Have 6 new people - steep learning curve.

Parks and Rec: each community has something, park/community center etc. Applied for and received an RCO (Recreation Conservation Office) Grant last year - chip sealed/patched roads, fixed gazebo, general maintenance. The plan this year is to fix restrooms (showers, toilet issues), improve plumbing, install a new coin-operated machine for showers. In 2026 they have scheduled to fix the fencing

Q: Danger trees in the Park (one fell across the fence onto private property). Ans: Hazard trees are removed every year - try not to be too aggressive. 4 or 5 last year, they will repair damage from the tree that fell. They want to preserve the trees in the park as long as possible, but also need to provide for safety.

Q: Fires: great to match the county burn ban, but fire pits encourage use, can you remove the fire pits? Ans: they are a safety mitigation when folks do light fires. Idea: locking fire pit covers in use during burn ban season.

Q: Fee increase last year resulted in less use. Ans: they were raised to get it more in line with other providers in the area, but probably won't be raised this year. Use was down but it could have been because of the fire.

Q: Can we have a lower rate for hikers? Maybe a designated group site for hikers? The Store is willing to sell permits/tags (recommend \$10) that can be attached to tents. Ans: The County may be interested in that partnership.

Q: Culverts - get blocked during flow events and they need to be cleaned out last year. Ans: They were not maintained due to less staffing. Road crew will be doing it this year.

Q: Senior/Community center - could the county give the land back to the heir and then divide it? Maybe, depends on what the heirs want to do with it. The donation was the entire park including the road. If the County is relinquishes the Park, that includes the road which

will not be maintained. Also, previous grants that the County has received for the park may have to be paid back. The proposed 2 acres for the senior/community center is located on the drainfield for the restroom and shower facilities and the County probably doesn't want (or can afford) to put in a new drain field. According to the original deed, the County would have to give the entire thing back and then the community potentially loses the park. If the County gets the park back minus the 2 acres, someone is going to profit from getting the 2 acres (meaning likely private ownership of the senior center/housing). If the county has to put in a new drain field - then the taxpayers are paying for it. The county can't give it to a developer - the only one who can do that is the heirs. He doesn't want to see 2 acres chopped off and then just sitting there for years until public funding is available for the facility. The successor could choose not to give it back. Comp plan will include parks. We can't get RCO (rec and conservation office) construction grants without a comp plan. Recreation comp plan for the county working with the planning dept.

Catherine creek, Coyote wall etc aren't on County owned lands but are in the county so included in the park/rec plan. Doesn't include the salmon, but includes trails etc. will work with the community council.

Q/Comment: Need a vegetation mgmt plan to replace trees as they are cut. Western Larch, which is less of a fire danger, also need to manage invasive species.

Tourism as an economic dev piece, the parks would support this.

Community involvement in county facilities is much needed and appreciated: Dallesport - community center needed a new ceiling - the county replaced the ceiling and bought the paint, community members helped by painting the ceiling. In Wishram they wanted a flag pole with lighting. The community has someone raise and lower the flag when it needs to be at half mast.

In Trout Lake - there will be a community fire risk reduction/clean-up project at the Park on May 3rd 10 am - 1 pm, with potluck at noon.

Comprehensive Land Use Planning

Pat

7:35

Next learning session – economic development exercise; update on advisory committee letter, community meetings, etc.

Councils are in the process of connecting and organizing around the comp plan. (High prairie is only one not participating)

Rob is on solar planning group

Public County planning meeting TL 4/10 at the grange, others in Goldendale, White salmon, Bickleton, Dallesport/Murdock.

4 planning commission meetings and then there will be a rough draft.

Council members sent a letter to the BOCC to set up an advisory committee with a place for each council to have a member.

Councils have a lot of interests in common - parks, water planning etc.

Comp plan - Evan (long range planner, new to the county so no knowledge of KC), 1979 plan is online (population when it was completed was 13K people).

Comp Plan 101-12 Handout, summarizes state guidelines (2024) for partial planning counties and table of contents from 1979 KC comp plan

Treasurer's report Tom 7:58

No change

Council documents on Google workspace Joanna 7:59

Dave - trouble getting all the docs

Daina can resend email with some attachments.

Process/Flow?

Joanna puts agenda in google drive, Daina edits afterwards,

Daina will email final directly to Dave

Motion lucas - do our best to put all docs in google drive starting 1/1/2025, Joanna 2nd - all in favor (includes letters etc)

Program of work & Round Robin (if time allows) All 8:15

Next Meeting - April 1st - Zoom? - pat will take notes if were in person

May meeting - Joanna gone, Lucas

Pat - house bill 1399 on floor of legislature. Voted on 3/12 or sooner. Bill outlines certification requirements for law enforcement officers, extends requirements to law enforcement overseers, fairly controversial - includes background checks and same certifications as staff. includes that law enforcement officers must enforce state laws. Section regarding volunteers - they can't perform law enforcement functions (including detaining folks and carrying firearms, pursuits etc).

Joanna - Mental Health/suicide prevention trainings - 6 county wide starting in March in Lyle.

Jim - The Forest Services Little White Salmon Fire Risk and Resiliency Environmental Assessment status? Daina - have not seen a published Decision on the project, will check with the District Ranger.

Lucas - Private charity endowment is doing a trial in KC for fire danger modeling/assessment starting in west part of county and then moving to central and eastside. FACT is doing great work. Lots of exciting things are happening.

Daina - Need for wildfire risk mitigation work on private lands to help folks keep insurance and/or get reductions - can the County help in this effort with the state?

Lucas - State Fire Ratings Bureau scores impact that as well. Because we don't have any paid firefighters/staff, we are at the higher risk category. There would need to be an increase fire levy to have a paid position assigned to our fire district.

Pat - wrote to Miles from The Conservation Fund to ask about agriculture projects - none this year in the budget.

Multiple groups have written Undercanvas asking what has happened with the promised donation of 30 acres in the White Salmon corridor to the Forest Service? Undercanvas said they are still open to doing so.

Travis - vote to add Aaron to board, did we get a letter to Jaime? Daina will follow up

Adjourn 8:35

Motion - Lucas 2nd -Tom , all in favor

Update from Klickitat PUD - April?

Commissioner Zoller – invite to April meeting?

Comprehensive Land Use Planning: Learning sessions 101 – ongoing;

Quarterly – Update from Keaton Curtice

Program of work topic each month

Other future topics: Affordable building lots – planning challenges and issues

Climate change - a continuing conversation

Short-term rentals discussion