

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
Mason County Commission Chambers, 411 North 5th Street, Shelton, WA
December 4, 2017- Special Meeting

1. Chair Shutty called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. Coroner Wes Stockwell led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Roll Call Present: Commissioner District 1 - Randy Neatherlin; Commissioner District 2 – Kevin Shutty; Commissioner District 3 – Terri Drexler.
4. 2018 Budget Hearing
Frank Pinter, Support Services Director, presented the 2018 budget information for the Board's consideration.

Judge Meadows urged the Commissioners to add back in funds in order to run District Court as requested. If there is any reduction, they will not be able to adequately serve the public.

Brenda Hirschi asked for an explanation of using the Roads banked capacity so property owners understand the impact. She asked if the entire amount of banked capacity is needed.

Tom Davis stated that to some degree he supports the budget. Mason County is a timber defined county and very little property tax is generated through forestry. He believes there could be more developable property. He is happy the Board addressed an economic decision by raising the Road Levy. The biggest concern is how the taxes are used. The only place to go for quick cash is taxes and fees. He doesn't believe a sales tax increase inhibits business because it's a small amount spread over a large area. He expressed hope for the future of Mason County and encouraged the Commission to get behind the Shelton Hills project.

Monty Ritter stated as a member of the Parks & Trails Advisory Board they have worked on updating the parks fees that will come before the Commissioners. The Parks Board is concerned with funding and the potential of closing parks. Because RCO funds have been used for some park improvements, the facilities must stay open.

Cmmr. Drexler asked if the Parks Board has looked at and studied overnight camping. Monty talked about the potential rate increase.

Leslie Peterson pointed out that the citizens overwhelming voted down the tax increase in Prop 1; she understands expenses have been reduced. This budget is a stop gap to help the county get back on steady footing.

Rob Drexler stated he has changed his mind. He was dead set against the tax increases; he believes in living within our means and didn't believe the County was trying hard enough. He agrees he needs to pay for what he uses and supports the budget as presented. He wishes it was less. The budget is a stop gap and if we don't work together to fix it, we will be in same place next year. He hopes new roads will be built.

The 2018 Current Expense budget is increased over the final 2017 budget as adjusted.

Cmmr. Neatherlin stated the Road Levy that was adopted in November is not a 1% increase, it's a 9.79% increase to include banked capacity. He believes the Commission is supportive of Shelton Hills. Believes a lesser amount of banked capacity could be taken. Agreed we need to look at Parks fees although to allow camping, we need to consider the expenses it would take in order to make this happen. He supports taking only what you need and not all you can get. He doubts he will vote for the budget as proposed.

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
December 4, 2017 - PAGE 2

Cmmr. Drexler asked Cmmr. Neatherlin what road levy increase he supports. She thought it was \$650,000 increased for a potential levy shift.

Cmmr. Neatherlin stated he supported \$400,000 if no tax increase and no increase to Diversion. Cmmr. Neatherlin supports 1% in banked capacity, no increase in Diversion, \$400K levy shift and increase the revenue for unexpended budget authority by \$200K.

Cmmr. Drexler reviewed other increases in revenue. \$200K Timber Trust; \$200 DNR; \$200K unexpended budget authority and \$45K increased sales tax.

Cmmr. Drexler stated she is concerned with taking the entire road banked capacity. We need to know if a levy shift will harm the City's Metropolitan Park District. Total of \$841,000 is a concern. There are functions that need financial support. She doesn't think they are ready to adopt the budget today. Supports the stop gap budget and then go back to voters with a more refined request and define where the money will go. She supports using the additional tax to supplant criminal justice services and then other essential county functions would be supported by Current Expense. Any ballot issue needs good public education. She supports the \$500K additional traffic diversion to offset potential cuts in Sheriff's office. As far as the Road's banked levy capacity diverted to a levy shift, she would like more discussion.

Cmmr. Shutty concurred the budget today is not a final budget. It's close but not there. This is his first year in office and he stated he has been told this reminds staff of years past where we have been here on December 31 to adopt. His opinion is there is no reason to not adopt the budget before Christmas break. He inherited the 2017 budget that required mid-year reductions that has been difficult to departments. It was difficult to go to voters and to listen to a list of needs compared to a list of resources and they are not close to one another. Coming into office this year has been very difficult to get people to understand we need to change how we do business. We need to assess where the budget leaves the county. He appreciates the support for the balanced budget resolution; appreciates support to form a citizen led budget committee; we need to have a more thorough vetting of priorities. As we stand today, the budget is not finished and the elected officials and department heads need to come together. He applauds Cmmr. Drexler for working with the Sheriff. He will not be able to accept the notion that in one budget we can live within our means when we have not done that for years. The offices have not fully grasped the impact of the mid-year budget reductions.

Cmmr. Neatherlin clarified that this budget is not a reduction in spending. Hopefully we come back with one that does. If we buy down impact to the City, it is a payment to use money making it a lot more expensive. He hopes we will have more revenue in 2018 and hopes the budget is more realistic in order to maintain. He supports budgeting the same if not less than 2017.

Cmmr. Drexler/Cmmr. Neatherlin moved and seconded to continue the public hearing to December 5, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. to allow additional public to weigh in. Motion carried unanimously. N-aye; S-aye; D-aye.

Cmmr. Drexler believes the budget won't be ready to adopt until December 19.

5. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS
December 4, 2017 - PAGE 3

ATTEST:



Melissa Drewry, Clerk of the Board

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MASON COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Kevin Shutt, Chair



Terri Drexler, Commissioner



Randy Neatherlin, Commissioner