

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 50
FRANKLIN COUNTY
Commissioners' Proceeding for February 23, 2009

The Honorable Board of Franklin County Commissioners met on the above date. Present for the meeting were Rick Miller, Chairman; and Brad Peck, Member; Fred Bowen, County Administrator; and Mary Withers, Clerk to the Board. Bob Koch, Chair Pro Tem, was absent as he was conducting director interviews for Greater Columbia Behavioral Health (GCBH).

LOBBYIST

Lobbyist Jim Potts spoke with the Board by speaker phone regarding current issues in the state legislature.

OFFICE BUSINESS

Secretary Patricia Shults met with the Board. Present in audience: Roger and Linda Bailie.

Consent Agenda

Treasurer Tiffany Coffland joined the meeting. She answered Mr. Peck's question about item #3 on the Consent Agenda. Mr. Peck said he is not 100% comfortable with citing an RCW to extinguish liens but he doesn't think it's a big enough issue to spend more time on. He said if we ever get asked, we'll just explain.

Motion - Mr. Peck: I move approval of the consent agenda for Monday, February 23, containing three items:

1. Approval of **Resolution 2009-078** authorizing destruction of two Swintec typewriters, Model Number 8016, Serial Number 66300279, and Model Number 8014-S, Serial Number 81312295, as identified on the *Franklin County Storage – Salvage* form received from the Sheriff's Office, in conjunction with RCW 36.32.210 (inventory).
2. Approval of **Resolution 2009-079** salvaging an Eversan hockey scoreboard with player penalty panels, Model 9785, display size 20' x 4' x 3", as identified on the *Franklin County Storage – Salvage* form received from TRAC, in conjunction with RCW 36.32.210 (inventory), and authorizing the TRAC General Manager to sell the equipment on EBay for a minimum sale price of \$1,000.
3. Approval of **Resolution 2009-080** authorizing cancellation of uncollectable personal property in the amount of \$52,457.71, as identified in the December 2008 list received from the Franklin County Treasurer.

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Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor.

Vouchers

Motion – Mr. Peck: I move for approval of 2009 vouchers in the amount of \$144,300.45 as listed: Current Expense warrants 12949 through 13002 for \$64,366.98; Current Expense warrants 13003 through 13179 for \$8,407.90; Courthouse Facilitator warrants 13180 through 13181 for \$956.05; Clerk LFO Collection Fund warrant 13182 for \$300.00; Current Expense warrants 13183 through 13221 for \$22,759.73; and Current Expense warrants 13222 through 13248 for \$47,509.79. Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor. (Exhibit 1)

PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Planning Director Jerrod MacPherson and Planner Jeremy Underwood met with the Board.

Public Hearing: Short Plat SP 2009-03, an application by Jubilant LLC to short plat approximately 149.33 acres (gross) into three lots. As proposed, Lot #1 is approximately 145.84 acres in size, Lot #2 is approximately 1.61 acres in size, and Lot #3 is approximately 1.88 acres in size. The property is located in the Agricultural Production 20 (AP-20) Zoning District.

Public Hearing convened at 9:30 am. Present: Commissioners Miller and Peck; County Administrator Fred Bowen; Planning Director Jerrod MacPherson; Planner Jeremy Underwood; and Clerk to the Board Mary Withers. Present in audience: Roger and Linda Bailie and Troy Woody.

Mr. Underwood reviewed the information on the Action Summary (Exhibit 2).

Mr. MacPherson showed a copy of a 2007 aerial photograph with parcel overlay. He reviewed the conditions of approval. The well is actually located across the road on the south side of Sohm Road so there is an off-site water supply and the property owners have an agreement to use the water. It is a community well.

He pointed to the legal delivery points for irrigation water and said the applicant will work with South Columbia Basin Irrigation District (SCBID).

Mr. Miller asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the short plat.

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Roger Bailie, 618 East Ash in Connell, Washington. He said there don't seem to be any extenuating circumstances that need clarification so I would appreciate you moving forward with the plat.

Mr. Miller asked twice more if anyone would like to speak in favor of the short plat. There was no response.

Mr. Miller asked three times if anyone would like to speak against the short plat. There was no response.

Motion - Mr. Peck: I move that we grant preliminary approval of Short Plat 2009-03 subject to the seven findings of fact and six conditions of approval. Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor. This is Resolution 2009-081.

TRAC

TRAC Manager Troy Woody met with the Board. Present in audience: Tri-City Herald Reporter Joe Chapman.

Broadcast Email and Follow up

Mr. Woody told the Board about two new tools that TRAC is using to help determine how effective email is from the TRAC web site. MagnetMail is being used as a message tracking system. It will help TRAC staff as they make determinations of when to send out emails.

We get requests constantly for calendars. Now we'll be able to do that.

Travel to Wenatchee

Mr. Woody plans to travel to Wenatchee to check out a new arena. It may be similar to what TRAC's arena may become. Mr. Peck said to be clear, it is one of many options we might consider.

Delay Travel to attend International Association of Assembly Manager (IAAM)

Conference

Mr. Woody will not attend the IAAM conference this year because of the economic situation.

Update

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Home and Garden Show numbers were up last weekend. The final figures are being compiled.

Tractors

Mr. Woody told the Board about tractors at TRAC. There is almost \$30,000 in the capital vehicle fund. We intend to find a used skid steer. The market value is expected to be between \$10,000 to \$20,000. He asked for the Board's consensus approval. Mr. Peck said if it's within your budget and authority and you think it's the right thing to do, go do it. Mr. Miller agreed.

Mr. Bowen asked does the Board want to be made aware of trips and equipment purchases every time when the budget has already been approved?

Mr. Miller said I like to know about things like that but it's not something we're going to turn down because it's in the budget. We don't want to micromanage all these things but it's nice to know.

Mr. Peck said my preference is that we not get into the nuts and bolts of your business and we delegate the authority and empower you to run that business and if you need support and help, talk to Mr. Bowen, and if it's outside his authority, talk to us.

Mr. Miller said he wants to know so he can answer any questions he receives. He said the notification can come through the county administrator.

Accidents at TRAC

Mr. Peck asked Mr. Woody to instruct people doing security work at TRAC to be prepared to handle emergencies by calling 9-1-1 immediately due to an incident at the Home Show over the weekend.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

County Administrator Fred Bowen met with the Board. Present in audience: Joe Chapman.

Letter to Governor Gregoire regarding impact funds for Coyote Ridge Corrections Center and Tri-City Herald article

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Mr. Bowen said Mr. Miller asked him to ask about the progress on the letter and article today. Mr. Peck said I know you're waiting for feedback from me on the text of the letter and I'll get that today.

Mr. Bowen received a two-week extension to turn in the article to the Tri-City Herald. Mr. Miller said the article is for a newspaper progress report and the draft basically covers only the issue of jail expansion and need. He asked that some more points of progress be included in the article. Some items mentioned that might be included were the economic situation in the state, roads, TRAC and GWMA. Mr. Peck said he will work to prepare the article.

Benton-Franklin Community Action Committee (CAC)

Mr. Bowen asked for direction from the Board on what his continuing involvement should be with Human Services (HS) and the CAC. He had been assigned to work with Human Services Director Carrie Huie Pascua to work on a specific report which has now been completed. A bi-county meeting is being scheduled to review the report. He asked how involved the Board wants him to be on a continuing basis. There are grant funds involved.

Mr. Miller said he thinks it's good for Mr. Bowen to be a messenger back and forth just so that we know what's going on. Mr. Bowen talked about the relationships involved. He said the Board needs to decide whether HS is going to be the contract manager for CAC. The contract was written between the two but contract monitoring has not been occurring. HS is the contract manager for the contract funds regardless of who is administering the funds.

Mr. Bowen restated his question: Are we going to have HS do contract management with CAC over Franklin County's funds? Mr. Peck will meet with Mr. Bowen to review the information and report back to the full Board.

Sheriff's Office: E-Ticketing

Mr. Bowen said the actual cost to add some components to E-Ticketing is \$1923.06. The Board approved the sheriff's request last week for about \$1200. Mr. Bowen has authorized Information Services to proceed with the project.

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Mr. Peck said he talked with Sheriff Lathim who explained a scanner can be used to scan items such as a driver's license and prevent other agencies from having to manually enter information, saving a lot of time and improving accuracy of records. It does not have anything to do with collection of fines at the roadside.

Mr. Bowen said District Court was asking for the second component so people could pay quickly through a credit card process.

Mr. Peck said I do not have a problem with the \$1923. Mr. Miller agreed.

PUBLIC WORKS

Engineer Tim Fife met with the Board. Present in audience: Joe Chapman.

Easy Street

Mr. Fife said Easy Street at Fanning was closed because of a problem with the siphon projects. When the old structure was taken out, it cracked and started leaking. It was a cement-based type of pipe that was very fragile. The best way to continue is to cap it off and then reattach it back later. The road closure was done with verbal approval from the Board.

Sheriff's Vehicles

Mr. Fife gave the Board a letter regarding the option of extending the life of sheriff's vehicles by rebuilding engines and redoing chassis instead of purchasing new vehicles (Exhibit 3). It pencils out to a yearly cost savings of about \$3300 a year for each car. He asked for guidance from the Board regarding which way we should proceed. There are a number of cars up for replacement that were purchased in 2006. Mr. Fife said his office doesn't care which way we go. We would like to try one or two vehicles. The savings of \$3300 a year would be for a minimum of three years and maybe four years.

Mr. Fife answered Mr. Peck's question about depreciation.

Mr. Peck asked if there are any safety issues. Mr. Fife said we would not want to do any that were damaged structurally such as in an accident. Mr. Fife does not believe safety would be compromised because we would be replacing the whole undercarriage. The engines have a three-year warranty.

Mr. Peck said it's commendable that you're looking at this idea.

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Mr. Miller said if we can save money and it works, yes, and if there isn't a safety problem. I don't have a problem with trying it if it will save some money.

Mr. Bowen said you have six vehicles due to be replaced this year. He asked Mr. Fife when the deadline is to order new vehicles. Mr. Fife said the end of March. Mr. Bowen told the Board that the county tried to buy into the equipment rental and replacement which meant by the time the six vehicles were ready to be replaced, we would have had the funds to replace them without having to tap Current Expense funds. However, throughout the years we've managed to work our way out of the equipment rental and replacement amount so the funds to buy six vehicles currently would come directly out of Current Expense. He told Mr. Fife to not buy the six cars without Board input. The budget may not handle buying six cars this year. Mr. Bowen said the Board will need to make a decision by the end of March about whether you want to buy six new cars. Mr. Fife said if you don't, then we'll start having problems like engines going down and broken parts. Mr. Fife responded to Mr. Peck's question about the history of the purchases.

Judith Gidley and Debra Biondolillo joined the audience.

Mr. Peck said he supports the notion of trying to rebuild two or three of the cars and see if it turns out, as long as we can do it without compromising safety and we're reasonably convinced it will be worth doing. Mr. Miller agreed.

Mr. Fife said there is some savings from not buying new vehicles and some from not transferring electronic equipment.

The Board had **consensus agreement** to rebuild some cars. Mr. Fife is thinking to have three vehicles rebuilt as a test.

Economic Stimulus Projects

Mr. Fife said the economic stimulus projects list has changed again following a message he received this morning. He was asked to submit two more projects from Franklin County. He added the Road 68 overlay project which is from where Powerline Road intersects with Road 68 and going south.

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Mr. Fife believes Franklin County's projects are shovel-ready. He answered the Board's questions about some of the projects on the list.

Tiffany Coffland and Daniele Carlson joined the audience.

Recommendation: Survey Equipment Upgrade

Mr. Fife requested approval to purchase survey equipment to upgrade our existing GPS unit. The Franklin Regional Information System (FRIS) is buying a GPS unit that will go in Kahlotus to fill in an area that needed some additional GPS service. It's a station that everybody can talk in to and be used to triangulate to get survey grade information. Mr. Fife said we have two receivers. One is a base station. Now we have some redundancy. We would like to turn one receiver into a rover. We want to get equipment to turn the extra base station into a rover so we can run two stations. The cost is less than a fifth the cost of a used rover. The Board reviewed the recommendation information. Mr. Fife explained briefly how the base stations and rovers work. He answered Mr. Peck's question about overtime.

Motion - Mr. Peck: I move that we approve purchase of the subject upgrade from GeoLine Positioning under Washington State Contract 06906, total price \$7155.60 including tax. Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor. (Exhibit 4)

Certification of Road Levy

Mr. Fife asked for approval of the Certification of Road Levy as required by the County Road Administration Board (CRAB). He obtained the figures directly from the Assessor. It is a report that is required every year with the Chairman's signature.

Motion – Mr. Peck: I would move that the chair evaluate this document and if he deems it appropriate, sign it. Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor. (Exhibit 5)

TREASURER

Treasurer Tiffany Coffland and Daniele Carlson met with the Board. Present in audience: Joe Chapman, Judith Gidley and Debra Biondolillo.

2009 Uncollectable Listing

Ms. Coffland explained the process for distraint proceedings. She said next year, for clarity we'll prepare two separate uncollectable property tax lists.

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Tax Title Property Requested for Re-Sale

People have made applications to purchase four properties. The parcels were brought to the Board previously last year. The Board reviewed the information presented by the Treasurer's Office (Exhibit 6)

Parcel 110-230-036: Ms. Coffland said the Board had concerns earlier because this property did not have access. The surrounding property owners did not want to purchase the parcel. The person who wants to purchase feels she will be granted access. Ms. Coffland said the Prosecutor's suggestion was to have some sort of release saying the person purchasing this knows there is no access and they will try to get it themselves. It will be sold as is, where is, with no guarantees. The property was received in the foreclosure sale in 1986. Mr. Peck and Mr. Miller did not have any objections to selling the property.

Ms. Coffland said the properties will be sold at public auction. We have a list of people we will contact to notify of the sale.

Parcel 112-282-156 (Nelson property). The county has owned the property since 2003. Ms. Coffland would recommend selling it. It has a building on it that used to be a doctor's office. We have a personal property lien attached to the property. The IRS has sent a release of lien that was recorded. The neighbor wishes to purchase it and is willing to offer \$35,000 for the property. Other people may be interested. It would be sold as is, where is, with no guarantees. Mr. Peck said he has no concerns or issues with this one either. Mr. Miller agreed.

Parcels #113-503-076 and 113-503-067 are both undeveloped properties. A person wishes to purchase both properties.

Ms. Coffland asked the Board to approve the sale of the properties and set a minimum selling price. The paperwork the Board reviewed showed suggested minimum selling prices.

Motion – Mr. Peck: I would move that we grant said approval and establish as a minimum selling price the amounts that have been offered as a minimum selling price.

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Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor. These are Resolutions 2009-082, 2009-083, 2009-084 and 2009-085.

Current Expense Cash Flow

Ms. Coffland gave a report on Current Expense cash flow figures. She may have to ask for a loan next month for cash flow purposes.

2009 Tax Statements

2009 Tax Statements are a bit late because of working with two tax collection computer systems since Franklin County is testing a new computer system. The Treasurer's Office has been verifying the statements before mailing them to make sure the statements are absolutely correct. Even though notices have not been mailed, the Treasurer's computer system is working so tax payments can be received now.

COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE (CAC)

CAC Executive Director Judith Gidley and Debbie Biondolillo from CAC's Supportive Housing Department met with the Board.

House Bill 2163, Homeless Housing Act

Ms. Gidley gave a brief history of development of the 10-year plan.

The Point In Time homeless count has been completed.

Ms. Gidley reviewed the fourth quarter report of the second year (Exhibit 7). She said we're now in our third year of the five-year contract with Franklin County.

The plan said we would develop what was called Home Base connections, a one-stop process of homeless people having one place to go. We coordinated with satellite agencies connected by the internet as well as in homeless management information system (HMIS). She said the HMIS was implemented in 2002 when we got our first HUD grant.

The report is a quarterly report and also includes full-year information. It includes information about other aspects of work done by the CAC. Donations have been received from organizations such as the Richland Rotary, Evergreen and Meadow Park Apartments. Donations have included monetary donations which have been used to purchase Welcome Home kits, reduced rent, and providing of furnishings in apartments.

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Ms. Gidley explained a program called the 2080 program. When a family comes in that's homeless and they are working but they don't have the money to get into a place, we will pay the first month's rent and deposit, then less over the course of months until they pay 100% on their own. It is one of the most successful programs we have.

We do utility deposits as well if necessary.

Mr. Miller asked about yearly homeless revenue amounts that are spent.

Ms. Gidley said we felt by spending no more than \$150,000 each year, it leaves a cushion for the next year so we'll always have funds available. Mr. Miller asked what a realistic number is. Ms. Gidley said it is about \$170,000 to \$179,000 for Franklin County.

Recessed at 11:30 am.

Reconvened at 3:40 pm.

MINUTES

Motion – Mr. Peck: I move approval of Commissioners Proceedings for February 9, 2009. Second by Mr. Miller. 2:0 vote in favor.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR (continuing)

Request for approval to increase Prosecuting Attorney's budgeted salary amount of \$124,619 by \$1623.89 for a total of \$126,242.89 to accommodate the County's 2009 COLA increase effective January 1, 2009

Mr. Bowen requested approval of a 3% increase of the half of the Prosecutor's salary that is paid by the county effective January 1, 2009. The other half of the salary is paid by the state. If there is a state increase, it comes in at the end of June. The other county officials and county employees received the 3% increase for the 2009 budget year on January 1. The total increase to the county would be \$1623.89. If the state does do an increase in June, that would be up to the state and the county would receive that portion.

Mr. Peck asked does this apply to all elected official salaries? Mr. Bowen said all the other elected officials have already received a 3% COLA increase. A resolution was done specifically talking about the other elected officials. The Prosecutor is outside of that resolution because of the funding split between the state and the county.

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Mr. Miller said he does not see any reason why he should not get it if the other elected officials have received it.

Mr. Bowen responded to Mr. Peck's questions about how the salaries were established.

Mr. Peck is concerned about giving a COLA at this time when a COLA was given only six months ago in July.

Mr. Peck said he doesn't see any need to do a salary adjustment at the same time as the state. If the salary already was reviewed and set in July of last year, he is not opposed to giving him exactly one-half of the COLA for that year. In principle, he doesn't think that the full year's worth of COLA is due. If the salary had been set January 1, then there would have been a full year to approve cost of living impact. Otherwise, it's not fair to other employees.

In response to a question by Mr. Bowen, Mr. Peck said the PA salary was reviewed and updated and set on July 1. If it had been set on January 1, he would have experienced a full 12 months of cost of living increase which has been equated for other county employees to be 3%. But cost of living between July 1 and the end of the year is only six months and unless you could demonstrate that the cost of living went up more dramatically in the second half of the year than it did in the first, logically you would split it in halves.

Mr. Peck asked why are you going to pay him a full year's cost of living when he only had six months' worth of cost of living? The increase should have considered the cost of living at that point and now the next six months is where his cost of living was increased.

Mr. Bowen said the county's contribution did not increase in July. The state's contribution increased in July. Mr. Peck said but the county evaluated and set his salary in July and it was up-to-date at that point. Mr. Bowen said no.

The Board reviewed the proposed resolution. Mr. Bowen asked the Board is he entitled to receive a 3% increase on the county's contribution only? Mr. Peck gave an example.

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Mr. Peck said, "I'm opposed to a 3% cola." **Motion** - Mr. Peck: I would move for a 1-1/2% increase. Anything else, you'll have to wait until Commissioner Koch returns. Mr. Miller said, "Let's wait."

Mr. Peck said it's not just the issue of a half-year pay increase, full-year pay increase, it's the notion that we're talking about highly compensated elected officials, we're talking about a position that just saw roughly a 20% to 25% pay increase, we've got unions and other employees with whom we're negotiating and saving every penny that we can, and in the face of those considerations I'm just not comfortable with 3% for a year.

Mr. Miller said I see your point and that's why it makes it tough. It just isn't as easy as it could look.

Bond Refinancing

The county has had two separate bonds for about 15 years. Mr. Bowen has given the Board members refinancing information for the limited and unlimited bonds. With the limited general obligation bond, there is a potential for savings of \$89,242 over the next six years. The savings also includes the cost of issuing the bonds.

The Board reviewed the refinancing information.

Mr. Bowen said the total net savings is estimated to be almost \$175,000 over the next five years.

Mr. Peck said it looks to him from this chart that for the majority of the years (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008), rates have been lower than they are now. He said he is not an expert on the bond market. His review of the information suggests to him that we're not at a five-year low; we're closer to a five-year high.

Mr. Peck said the Board could talk to the bond agent or alternatively get a second opinion from another bond counsel.

Mr. Bowen attempted to reach Bond Agent Jim Nelson by phone but he was unavailable.

Board of Health Budget Committee

Mr. Bowen asked if the Board wants him to continue to represent the Board on the Board of Health Budget Committee.

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Mr. Miller said there was a reason for Mr. Bowen to be appointed. He does not have a problem with Mr. Bowen continuing on the committee.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Peck both feel the county's best interests are served by having Mr. Bowen continue to serve on the committee.

Mr. Miller told Mr. Bowen at this point to continue on the committee. The Board may discuss the appointment further.

Executive Session at 4:29 pm regarding RCW 42.30.140(4) contract negotiations expected to last 10 minutes.

Open Session at 4:37 pm. No decisions were made.

Budget Committee Meeting Follow-up

Mr. Bowen showed the Board a paper listing the Budget Committee's concerns. He asked for Board approval to set a budget hearing as early as possible in March for the Budget Committee to meet with the Commissioners to review the 2009 budget. There is currently a \$500,000 shortfall. We anticipate there could be other budget shortfalls. We want to review it to see if there is other action we should take fairly soon.

The Board **gave approval** for Mr. Bowen to set a public hearing to review the 2009 budget.

Travel

Mr. Miller said he feels Mr. Peck made a good decision to not travel to Washington, D.C., for the NACo conference. It was not a budgeted amount. Mr. Miller said he is wondering if as leaders we shouldn't lead by example. He would like to reconsider attendance at the NACo conference. It would cost about \$6000 for Mr. Miller, Mr. Koch and Mr. Bowen to attend. There would be a cost of about \$600 to cancel.

Mr. Peck thinks we ought to send one individual and ask them to come back and share as much of what they can gather in that time. He realizes one person can never collect as much as four people would.

Mr. Bowen said he instructed staff last week to put a hold on his attendance. Mr. Miller said he is thinking of putting his attendance on hold. Mr. Bowen said he thinks somebody should go because it's important but does not think all of us need to go.

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Mr. Peck thinks maybe Mr. Miller should go because of criminal justice issues and his service on a committee. Mr. Miller said he just attended a retreat so he is unsure how much will have changed. He will call to find out more about the criminal justice issues that will be considered at the NACo conference.

Mr. Peck said he would have no problems supporting Mr. Miller, Mr. Koch or Mr. Bowen attending.

Mr. Bowen said it is important to also talk to the Bureau of Land Management regarding access to Juniper Forest.

The Board agreed only one person will attend. Mr. Peck said he chooses to defer to the Chairman's decision about who will attend.

Adjourned at 4:47 pm.

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There being no further business, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned until February 25, 2009.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Chairman

Chairman Pro Tem

Member

Attest:

Clerk to the Board

Approved and signed March 4, 2009.