

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Whitman County Planning Commission Date: Feb 2, 2022

Observer Reporting: Shelley Chambers Fox Length of Meeting: 1 hr 28 minutes

Members Present: Chad Whetzel, Dave Gibney, Brian Davies, Keith Paulson, Weston Kane, Matt Webb, Fred Wexler, Russ Jamison.

Absent:

Others Present (i.e., media, public): Staff: Alan Thomson, Whitman County Planner; Grace Di Biase, Whitman County Assistant Planner; Brandon Johnson, Public Works; Elinor Huber, Notetaker; Public: no public attendees

Content (What is being discussed):

Reports:

- a. **Forthcoming Administrative Use Permits** – Cell tower reconstruction for Whitman County Emergency Management Department located on Story Road. Ongoing, not complete.
- b. **Forthcoming Shoreline of the State Substantial Development Permits** – Helena Agri-Enterprises barge line pipe installation at Central Ferry, ongoing.

Old Business:

1. Discuss progress on the **updating of the Comprehensive Plan**.
 - a. The plan has been sent to the consultants for the purpose of fine tuning. We hope to have the plan back from the consultants and able to have a public meeting on March 16.
 - b. Reminder: **The most recent draft** of the Comprehensive Plan can be found at [Comprehensive Plan | Whitman County, WA](#)

New Business

2. The commissioners reviewed the **Planning Commission By-laws** article by article.
 - a. There was a discussion about the absence policy. Alan says that these tend to be excused so they have never reached 4 unexplained absences that would trigger removal.
 - b. Chad would like to **change the article V statement that says that meetings are held in the auditorium of the Public Service Building**. They would like to acknowledge that online meeting is a possible medium and that other rooms may be used since the county's space is currently being remodeled. The public will be notified in advance of the alternate location. Dave Gibney notes that meetings that can be both online and in-person are desirable because this would allow more public attendance.
 - c. Alan notes that the meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month but if **extra meeting time** is necessary, they also meet on the third Wednesday. This should be added.
 - d. Notices of the meetings are published on the website and in the Colfax Gazette.
 - e. The bylaws state that any **action takes the agreement of the majority of the 9 and not the majority of the quorum**. Sometimes this means that a decision needs to be unanimous if there are only 5 members at the meeting. Alan believes that is based on the Growth Management Act and required in County decision-making. Alan will verify this.

- f. **Tabling rules** require that the vote on amendments be taken at the next meeting. There was concern that this may not be feasible and the amendment would have to be brought forward again.
 - g. Article VI is about conflicts of interest.
 - h. The commissioners reviewed the rules that the Pullman Planning Commission uses for doing **public hearings**. They discussed adopting similar rules or whether there is a similar guideline that the county has already developed.
3. Next project is to update the **Shoreline Master plan** which will be done jointly with the towns and the unincorporated county.

Public Meetings of interest to League

1. The next Pullman Planning Commission meeting is on Wednesday, **February 16, 2022**.

Process & Protocol: (Observations about participants and procedures of the meeting) *e.g., Did the members appear to have done their "homework"? Yes Were members courteous to each other and the public? Yes. Was access to materials for certain agenda items available to you? Yes, the most recent copy of the Comprehensive Plan, agenda and supporting materials were sent via email. Next meeting: **February 16, 2022** assuming there are enough commissioners who can attend.*