

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES  
KITTTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
AUDITORIUM/WEBEX  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**TUESDAY**

**1:30 P.M.**

**NOVEMBER 30, 2021**

Board members present: Chairman Brett Wachsmith, Vice-Chairman Laura Osiadacz, and Commissioner Cory Wright.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Greg Zempel, Prosecutor; Val Barschaw, County Clerk; Kristine Foreman, Human Resource Director; Chris Horner, Deputy Prosecutor; Jan McElroy, Legal Process Assistant III; Sarah Gann, Legal Process Assistant III; Stephanie Hartung, Deputy Prosecutor; and 9 members of the public.

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**COUNTY CLERK INVESTIGATION**

**COMMISSIONERS**

At 1:30 p.m. Chairman Wachsmith opened a Special Meeting to discuss an investigation of complaints against the Kittitas County Clerk, Val Barschaw.

Kristine Foreman, Human Resource Director, provided an overview of an investigation and report completed by the Seabold Group, an independent agency retained by Kittitas County, following multiple complaints submitted to her department by county employees regarding allegations of discriminatory behavior.

Chairman Wachsmith asked Ms. Barschaw if she would like to enter into an Executive Session with the Board in accordance with the RCW 42.30.110(f) To receive and evaluate complaints or charges brought against a public officer or employee. However, upon the request of such officer or employee, a public hearing or a meeting open to the public shall be conducted upon such complaint or charge. Ms. Barschaw said she was unaware of the process and declined the offer. She said she did not have any comments.

Commissioner Wright moved to have the Board to censure County Clerk Val Barschaw, and to approve a letter of censure to Val Barschaw, County Clerk, regarding the incident and to be read into the record. Commissioner Osiadacz seconded.

Chris Horner, Deputy Prosecutor, defined the word "censure" and said in context with the Board, it means expressing their disapproval of something. In this case it is the findings in the report that was issued by the Seabold Group, Inc. He said it was a "statement" and was not taking action other than the statement itself.

Commissioner Wright read the letter into the record. He said it was unfortunate episode and the Board has a duty to support their employees to ensure they have access to fair and equitable treatment at the workplace.

Vice-Chairman Osiadacz said she was deeply concerned when she read the report, mostly for the employees who had the courage to come forward to the Human Resources Department, as it's not an easy thing to express their experiences. Chairman Wachsmith said the Board would not condone a toxic work environment and was in favor of the letter.

Motion carried 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD**

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Julie Kjorsvik

  
Brett Wachsmith, Chairman