

**KITTITAS COUNTY
EC STUDY SESSION MINUTES
BOCC CONFERENCE ROOM, 205 WEST 5TH ROOM 108 - ELLENSBURG
Regular Meeting**

MONDAY	10:00 AM	June 27, 2022
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Board members present: Board members present: Laura Osiadacz, Chair; Brett Wachsmith, Vice-Chair; Cory Wright, Commissioner.

Others: Kady Porterfield, Event Center Director; Roylene Crawford, Kittitas County Fair Board; Lacie Dawson, KVEC Program Manager; several members for the public (Jim Pendley, Kevin Packard, Chris Holland, Heather, Jerry Jarnagin, John Camarata and others with no name given).

1. Call to Order at 10:00am

2. Citizen Comments (1 min. time limit)

- Jim Pendley: Regarding the railroad project: he's here for the kids. There are 6 people currently in the group, will need more kids to help build the group.
- Kevin Packard: Has been a resident for 8 years. He has 5 kids, and the railroad would be fun for them, and the fairgrounds is a natural place for it.
- Chris Holland: The railroad works well in asphalt areas, and he has worked to go over any technical issues the railway may cause.
- Heather: Has a 4-year-old child who would love to be a part of it.

3. Railroad Project Discussion

Kady Porterfield: The presentation of the program was great; it was presented originally pre-covid. Discussion with Commissioners began in early 2020. Fair Board met in March 2020 and was presented the project by Jim Pendley, Gary Bos, and a few other railroad group members. The Fair Board decided it should be forwarded to "Friends of the Fair" to research further while discussing funding and viability of the project since it needed to be ran through a non-profit. The project was sidelined due to COVID shutting us down later that month. In 2021, discussion with the Fair Board began again. They felt it may be good in the north lot, but not where it was currently planned. The Fair Board supports the railway concept, but not in the designated area. The Fair Board suggested looking at a different location in town that would have the ability to see this through. This project was sent to Friends of the Fair again as well, but Friends of the Fair was not in favor of supporting the project, and without the non-profit support the project is not possible.

APPROVED
8-16-22

The Fair Board met in May of 2022 and listened to the railroad group presentation again. The Fair Board still supports the idea, but just not at this location at the fairgrounds for the same reasons as discussed in 2021. Also, due to the amount and type of facility use year-round, the plan is currently not feasible to even construct. The grounds are available 9 days or less during the summer, which is when it would be most usable. It also would be hindered if we are to move forward with several capital facility projects in our improvements plan.

Commissioner Wright: What would challenges be during fair? – Kady: it would be a challenge during the weekend due to the large crowds, as well as a safety concern with it going through the area with the crowds, kids, livestock, and vendors. While the train goes very slow, kids will be jumping on and off the train while it is moving too.

Commissioner Wachsmith: Have there been any other locations considered? Jim Pendley: no, fairgrounds are the only high-profile place there is and funding would be an issue. The track could be rerouted to accommodate barn expansion.

Chair Osiadacz: In other places she's been (like Silverwood) the railway doesn't go through the crowds. Jim P.: they can work around the crowds and not run during the busy times. There is no other route suitable other than the one discussed.

Commissioner Wright: Appreciate the work on permitting. Did the Fair Board give the go-ahead to move forward? Kady: The Fair Board was supportive of looking into the project and told the railroad group that a commitment couldn't be made by them at the time because of it needing to go to the Friends of the Fair, so funding for the permit would have to be on the railroad group folks, if they wanted to proceed with the permitting process. There was no financial commitment made by the County (KVEC or Fair Board).

Heather: for the capital projects, are the buildings going to be in the same place? Kady: they will stay in the same place in general, but they will have a somewhat different overall footprint.

Commissioner Wright: The effort it appreciated. The fairgrounds is not a suitable location with the facility use and crowd control issues. Other areas of the county (Kittitas or South Cle Elum depots) would be good locations. Kittitas would be interested. There are too many issues going on at KVEC. He would be willing to support at a different location.

Commissioner Wachsmith: It's a great project for the kids, but it's too much right now.
Kady: Skykomish railroad shows how it could work in a smaller town. Chair Osiadacz:
people will travel to the location, like the one in Toppenish.

RR Rep: Kittitas would be a possibility, Cle Elum has too much snow.

Commissioner Wright: Would be willing to facilitate a conversation with the City of Kittitas. Chair Osiadacz stated there could possibly be lodging tax money and other grants available.

Heather: stated she came to the meeting to understand the project. After hearing the information it makes sense for it to be located somewhere other than the fairgrounds. Use of the Kittitas depot would be nice and a draw for Kittitas. She feels better about the project and understands the location issues now.

Chair Osiadacz: tourism and trying to get people to areas other than Ellensburg in the County is important.

Packard: Could the Kittitas Depot be used with the project? Commissioner Wright thinks it could be a possibility, but would need to have a conversation with the parks department. John Camarata works with the committee that is working on the Kittitas depot and would be willing to meet with the group.

Roylene Crawford: Kittitas depot is 1 min off of I-90, it would be a great draw for travelers.

Jim P.: Will have to look at feasibility of Kittitas area. Will need 110' circle at depot. The café train would have been the first of its kind in the country.

Commissioner Wright will set up a meeting with Kittitas City staff and group.

Roylene: the group did great work and appreciates the understanding of the location concerns. It's a great project, just not at fairgrounds.

4. General Event and Rental Updates

Everything is going well.

5. Self Promoted Events Business

- **Patriot Night Under the Lights:** ticket sales are increasing. Please share and push out on personal Facebook pages. We will open at 6:00pm, headliner at 7:00pm and fireworks to follow. Have checked in with KVFR – all is good for the fireworks.

- **Kittitas County Fair:** things are going well. The poster is being printed and we will have a lot of new regional/local talent. The carnival POP ticket prices will increase by \$5 this year. Livestock sale is coming along well. Roylene: only lost 4-5 supers out of 125, which is really good compared to most fairs.

6. Special Projects – no new updates at this time.

7. Budget Planning Discussion:

- Met with rodeo board on our projects; will likely have to use some of the Capital Improvement Fund money from our facility sponsorships to cover some of inflation on project costs.
- Cow Pen Project: we will purchase panels now and do labor to install the new pens in budget for next year.
- There was only 1 bid submitted to purchase the panels. Noble fit the specs perfectly; the other 2 companies couldn't fit the specs, so chose not to bid.

8. Approve Resolution to Award Bid for Purchase of Livestock Panels for KVEC

- Commissioner Wachsmith moved to approve the bid to purchase livestock panels. Commissioner Wright seconded the motion.
- Discussion: Commissioner Wachsmith expressed his appreciation for all the work that goes into bringing this project forward.
- Motion passes 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting adjourned at: 10:55am


Kady Porterfield

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**


Laura Osiadacz, Chair