

COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS

**Adams County Courthouse
Ritzville, Washington
Regular Meeting**

August 26, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.
(Tuesday)

Call to Order

Chairman Garza called the meeting to order.

Present:

Chairman Miguel A. Garza
Vice-Chairman Jay R. Weise
Commissioner Dan C. Blankenship

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Garza led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment – None

Board Updates

Commissioner Garza reported attending a function in Othello on Thursday, hosted by Innovia Foundation; perusing vouchers, and fielding questions on the proposed salary ordinance.

Commissioner Blankenship provided an update on the Broadband project, noting two additional Internet Service Providers (ISP) are interested in providing service to the area. Additionally, the state has published the BEAD awardees and is now open for public comment.

Commissioner Weise provided updates on county policy; step placement language; and the proposed salary ordinance. Weise noted he also attended the Othello event, noting Innovia is a non-profit working in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho.

Approval/Addition of Agenda

Commissioner Blankenship moved, Weise seconded, to *approve the agenda as presented*. **Motion carried.**

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Weise moved, Blankenship seconded, to *approve the consent agenda as presented*. **Motion carried.**

Minutes

Approve Preliminary Minutes of August 12 and 13, 2025

Vouchers

Approve Vouchers audited and certified by the Adams County Auditor as required by RCW 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 and recorded on a listing, which was made available to the Board. These vouchers were listed as follows:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>
001	\$ 84,826.67
001I	\$ 60,727.79
103	\$ 1,623.62
103A	\$ 132.51
104	\$214,310.80
112	\$ 2,690.31
123	\$ 2,475.00
130	\$ 836.97
108	\$ 2,229.78
115	\$ 7,634.66
321	\$ 420.00
401	\$ 4,447.31
501	\$ 2,553.32
590	\$ 79,741.38
TOTAL	\$464,650.12

Correspondence – None

Public Defense Grant Application

The Board provided **consensus authorization for the Chairman to sign Washington State Office of Public Defense 2026 RCW 10.101 Grant Funds Application.**

Opioid Settlement

The Board provided **consensus authorization for the Chairman to sign, via DocuSign, Washington State Allocation Agreement Governing the**

Allocation of Funds Paid by the Purdue Bankruptcy, Sacklers, and Certain Opioid Manufacturers. CL-1768839

Board Discussion/Decision Items

Human Resources

Manager Campbell provided updates on the promotion/transfer policy, noting edits will be made prior to bringing the document back before the Board.

Public Works

Director O'Brien provided updates on maintenance, noting activities include pre-level in the Othello area, painting stop bars, and vegetation management.

Engineer Yaeger reported a culvert outlet was hit on Cunningham Road and the damage is causing erosion on the road shoulder. The damage is being addressed today

Broadband Project

Director O'Brien noted installations are taking place throughout the area. Four (4) ISP's have signed contracts.

O'Brien reported on pricing for locating Broadband lines that are underground. Based on the recommendation of the Public Works Department, the Board provided **consensus authorization for O'Brien to sign up with a locate company that will provide locates on a monthly, rather than annual, fee basis.**

Engineer Yaeger provided updates on Schoonover Road project; Rodeo Lake project; and, Sackman Road bridge project.

Herman Road Safety Project (CRP-203)

Commissioner Blankenship moved, Weise seconded, to *authorize the Chairman sign Professional Services Agreement between Adams County and Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. for the design phase services for the Herman Road Safety Project (CRP-203) in the amount of \$148,510.93.* **Motion carried.**

Solar Development

Jay Kehne, Associate Director, Conservation Northwest, provided a presentation, noting the environmental conservation group was founded in

1989, to protect, connect and restore wildlands and wildlife from the Washington coast to the British Columbia Rockies. The group became interested in solar development when the Badger Mountain project went in.

The following topics were reviewed:

- Sagelands Heritage Program Objective.
- Shrub-Steppe Wildlife.
- Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA).
- Climate Commitment Act (CCA).
- Clean Energy.
- Utility Scale Solar.
- What is at risk from utility scale solar development in Washington's Shrub Steppe.
- Permitting pathways.
- Process: Solar Siting.
- Renewable energy.
- Least Conflict Solar Siting on the Columbia Plateau.
- Solar Development Suitability in the Columbia Plateau.

The goal of the group is to modify the process that will enable counties to have a say in where solar projects are sited, noting a preference of project evaluation and public engagement prior to permitting, making it more of a local process. Additionally, Kehne is proposing an agreement that offsets the tax burden shift with a community benefit agreement.

Master Optical Fiber and Facilities Lease

Commissioner Blankenship moved, Weise seconded, to *authorize the Chairman sign Master Optical Fiber and Facilities Lease, upon receiving a notarized copy, between Adams County and Rodeo Internet, LLC, an internet service provider (ISP), that operates or intends to utilize the portion of an optical fiber system and facilities within Adams County.*

Motion carried.

Master Optical Fiber and Facilities Lease

Commissioner Blankenship moved, Weise seconded, to *authorize the Chairman sign Master Optical Fiber and Facilities Lease, upon receiving a notarized copy, between Adams County and NoaNet, Inc., an internet service provider (ISP), that operates or intends to utilize the portion of an optical fiber system and facilities within Adams County.* **Motion carried.**

Executive Session

At 11:45 a.m. Chairman Garza announced the Board would recess into Executive Session for fifteen (15) minutes under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) – “To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation...”. No action is anticipated. Prosecutor Flyckt was present.

At 12:00 p.m. the Board reconvened from Executive Session. No action was taken.

Other Business – None

Permanent Minutes Signed

August 5 and 6, 2025

Recess @ 12:00 p.m.

Reconvened @ 1:00 p.m.

Capitol Path Consulting

John Culton, along with Kyla Shkerich Blair, reviewed the following agenda items for the 2026 legislative session:

Rural Transportation and Infrastructure Investments

- Maintain and increase critical investment in rural infrastructure funding accounts such as Public Works Assistance Account, Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB), Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, Community Development Block Grant for rural communities and others.
- Increase funding and access to ensure match funding for federal BEAD program.
- Increase funding for public safety needs including, but not limited to, support for hiring and retaining officers as well as capital investments.
- Preserve and increase dedicated funding for rural county roads programs such as:
 - Bridge Load Rating Grant;
 - Rural Arterial Programs; and
 - County Arterial Preservation Program.
- Passage and funding for HB 1098 – Creating a County Local Road Trust Account.

Economic Development

- Maintain and increase Community Economic Revitalization Board funding.
- Increase workforce development opportunities in rural counties.
- Increase Associate Development Organizations.
- Green Energy.

Rural Government Efficiency

- Support for state funding for trial court indigent public defense services (HB 1592/SB 5404).
- Funding for rural county coroners and medical examiners (SB 5089).
- Authorize a county Board of Equalization to employ a hearing examiner that resides outside the county, in which the board members reside, under certain circumstances.
- Funding for auditor duties and mandates regulated by the state.

Culton noted that now is the time for the county to compile a list of federal funding requests for the 2026 session.

Ordinance Setting Salaries for Elected Officials; Rescinding Ordinance No. O-01-08 and Ordinance No. O-01-2011; and, Amending Adams County Code Chapter 2.10

The process followed by the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials was reviewed. No action was taken pending additional consideration.

Adjournment @ 3:00 p.m.

Submitted:
s/Patricia J. Phillips, CMC
Clerk of the Board

Edited and Approved:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ADAMS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
s/Miguel A. Garza, Chairman
s/Jay R. Weise, Vice-Chairman
s/Dan C. Blankenship, Commissioner