



ADA COUNTY

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Ada County Responds to Public Records Ruling

Board reaffirms commitment to open and accessible government

BOISE – The Board of Ada County Commissioners remains committed to accessible, open and transparent government. We embrace opportunities to improve our processes.

While the Board understands Judge Deborah Bail’s decision that the county can be more transparent and timely in releasing public records, it is important to note that under the current board’s direction, internal improvements in process and procedures were already underway long before the judge’s ruling.

“We have already taken steps that are improving the way Ada County handles public records requests,” said Ada County Commission Chair Kendra Kenyon. “We have hired a Director of Communications, provided even more clarity on our website, and we directed our staff, and encouraged the attorneys, to be more open and timely in responding to public records requests.”

Commissioner Diana Lachiondo is encouraged by the media’s willingness to be partners in the important process of open government. “We believe media play a critically important role in both informing the public, and ensuring that government entities manage the business of government in an open and honest manner. We will continue to provide all media with public records to which they are given access under Idaho law,” said Lachiondo.

Commissioner Rick Visser says both the Idaho Press Club and all local and state government could benefit from clarity as it relates to attorney-client privileged information. “I agree completely with Commissioner Lachiondo as transparency and openness are paramount in government. In addition, I believe it would be mutually beneficial to both the press and to Ada County to ask for an appeal limited to the scope of the attorney-client privilege as stated in Idaho Code § 74-107(11). The Idaho Supreme Court has constitutional authority to interpret legislation, and further clarification would be a helpful guideline for the future.” The Board today decided not to appeal the judge’s ruling by a 2-1 vote.

In addition to a more streamlined and clear process being outlined for anyone who submits a public records request, training for public records custodians is currently being implemented county wide.

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