

The agenda was light for the Washington County Council at their first meeting of 2012. There was a reorganization, several appointments to local boards and they had to spend some money.

The money spending was a result of low funds in the county's 911 fund. The council approved \$36,000 to help with operating costs.

In the past, 911 has been funded primarily through phone taxes, which is regulated at the state level. Councilman Merwyn Fisher expects that to be a hot topic in the current legislative session, because the money the county receives is declining because more people are opting out of land line phones and using their cell phones for everything.

"Our hands are tied," Fisher said. "We can't raise the fees and there are some in the legislature who will be working to change that. We just don't have the extra money to pay the extra."

Fisher said citizens should expect to hear more about the financial crunch in the 911 fund during the coming year.

The board also did some reorganizing. Ben Bowling was unanimously selected as the council president and David Hoar was selected as Vice President.

The council also voted to retain Mark Clark as legal counsel.

In addition to the new officers, the council appointed a number of people to various boards and members to a new Employee Review Board.

Randall Bills was the council's appointment to that board, which will be responsible for overseeing the county's personnel policy, which began on Jan. 1, 2012.]

Mark Manship and Scott Nale were re-appointed to the redevelopment commission.

Bowling was re-appointed to the River Hills Economic Development District and Josh Anderson was re-appointed to the Property Tax Board of Appeals, according to Fisher.

Fisher said Hoar was also re-appointed to the plan commission.

Fisher said there were a few open seats that were not filled and they are seeking interested people in the community to fill those positions.

One of those is the Delaney Park Board. The seat is vacant because Migon Marshall stepped down.

The other opening is the ABC.

Fisher said anyone interested in serving on either of those two boards should contact the auditor's office at 883-4805.

The council's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 6 at 8:30 a.m. in the county government building.