

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 15, 2020
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room
Heppner, Oregon

Present In-Person

Chair Melissa Lindsay
Commissioner Don Russell
Commissioner Jim Doherty
Darrell J. Green, Administrator
Roberta Lutchter, Executive Assistant

Matt Scrivner, Public Works Director
Jeff Wenholz, Irrigon

Via Electronic Means

Justin Nelson, County Counsel
Sandy Toms, Boardman Mayor

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance: 8:00 a.m.

City & Citizen Comments: None

Open Agenda: No items

Consent Calendar

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the following items in the Consent Calendar:

1. *Accounts Payable, April 16th, \$323,188.90 including Visa APs, April 16th, \$13,925.49*
2. *Minutes: January 29th*
3. *Appointment of two individuals to both the Special Transportation Fund (STF) Advisory Committee and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Advisory Committee, with all terms to expire December 31, 2022:*
 - a. *Katie Imes, Special Transportation Coordinator (replacing Anita Pranger), representing Public Transportation Service Provider*
 - b. *Gregg Zody, Community Development Director (replacing Carla McLane), representing Local Governments, including Land Use Planners*

Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Business Items

Morrow County Government Command Center Update

Chair Lindsay said the Command Center Team did not meet this week because of Budget Meetings. At recent meetings, she said the team discussed the need to develop a government operations plan. To that end, Administrator Darrell Green researched plans from other jurisdictions to use as a template. Chair Lindsay suggested the Association of Oregon Counties should be a resource for providing templates to counties, especially when these unique situations occur. Commissioner Doherty, who also serves as AOC President, agreed and said AOC does have a legal staff.

Department Reports

The following written reports were reviewed:

- Juvenile Department Monthly Report, prepared by Director Christy Kenny
- The Loop Quarterly Report, prepared by Katie Imes, Coordinator
- Emergency Management Quarterly Report, prepared by Undersheriff John Bowles

Correspondence

- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife Livestock Depredation Reports, January-April 2020

Commissioner Reports

- Chair Lindsay said she planned to place the Port of Morrow’s enterprise zone recommendation on next week’s agenda. She then asked if it should be in executive session under the citation for negotiations since it turned into a negotiation as opposed to a partnership. She said the Port has done this and they’re coming out with combined comments. County Counsel Richard Tovey said it might be possible under the “matters of trade or commerce” citation. Commissioner Doherty asked Commissioner Russell, as the liaison to the Port, to make sure the Port isn’t having executive sessions relative to this subject because he “had zero interest in going into executive session because...this pie belongs to all of us.” Chair Lindsay said the County has worked hard to not use executive sessions and to conduct business in a transparent way. She said she would schedule it as a regular business item. Commissioner Doherty said it was important to note the Port has chosen not to move forward with an enterprise zone. He said the Port suggested otherwise when they spoke to the City (of Boardman) the other day. The Port can apply and, to date, they’ve opted not to. Commissioner Russell said that was not a fair statement. The Port opted not to apply under the Morrow County restricted conditions...two entities can’t come to agreement, the Port and the County, and to throw it all on the Port is short-sighted. Chair Lindsay said she would list the topic on the agenda.
- Commissioner Doherty next brought up the transmission line route proposed by Umatilla Electric Cooperative (UEC), the negotiations surrounding the intersection at Olson Road and Wilson Lane between the County and the Catholic Church, and Amazon’s data centers. He said the colossal disaster of a data center on Olson Road continues. He met with UEC, which was days away from taking the property of several constituents. UEC chose a route that goes around County property but doing so “added heartache to our constituents.” If the State (Public Utilities Commission) allows this, he said he hoped the Board would join him in foregoing that property and not allow this on the constituents. Commissioner Doherty said he had a conversation this morning with a constituent who said UEC can safely go a different route. When the Board discussed this with UEC, it was for an end-user; now it’s for the greater good. One is an allowed use, one is not, he added. The planning that went into this has been atrocious and during the meeting with UEC when this was mentioned, the whole room said that was a huge understatement. When these things are done on the backs of constituents, he said he wasn’t on board, adding it had nothing to do with being non-business friendly and everything to do with planning. A year ago, the Port of Morrow said they shouldn’t have handed it to the City, but they didn’t weigh in. We’ve had a battle for a year...and they keep not weighing in...but there is still time to re-engage. There is no amount of money in the world to justify what was preparing to take place, he concluded. Chair Lindsay said she would bring this forward as a formal discussion. Commissioner Russell said he had a conversation with the same constituent but it was a completely different story. He was told the reason the electric line was not coming across the County property was at a constituent’s request.

Signing of documents

Adjourned: 8:20 a.m.