

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Emergency Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2020
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room
Heppner, Oregon

Present

Chair Melissa Lindsay
Darrell J. Green, Administrator
Undersheriff John Bowles
Karmen Carlson, Human Resources Director
Diane Kilkenny, Interim Public Health Director
Kate Knop, Finance Director
Roberta Lutcher, Executive Assistant
Melissa Ross, Administrative Lieutenant
Gregg Zody, Incoming Community Dev. Dir.

Glen Diehl, Justice of the Peace
Julia Finch, Victim Assistant
Ronda Fox, Finance Management Assistant
Mike Gorman, Assessor/Tax Collector
Derek Gunderson, Lead Appraiser
Gayle Gutierrez, Treasurer
Patricia Hughes, Deputy Assessor/Tax Collector
Eric Imes, Assistant Road Master
Justin Nelson, County Counsel
Debbie Peck, Child Support Enforcement
Matt Scrivner, Public Works Director
Linda Skendzel, Veterans Services
Richard Tovey, County Counsel

Via Electronic Means

Commissioner Don Russell
Commissioner Jim Doherty
Stephanie Case, Interim Planning Director
Bobbi Childers, Clerk

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance: 9:04 a.m., followed by roll call.

City & Citizen Comments: None

Open Agenda: Chair Lindsay read the following press release: “Morrow County Public Health Department has confirmed one individual has tested positive for COVID-19. Morrow County Public Health takes every precaution to protect every individual’s health information in regards to any reportable disease and as such, we will not be releasing any demographic information, including the town in which this person resides. The individual is currently hospitalized, out-of-state. We believe this to be a possible domestic travel related exposure. The individual was in Morrow County for a limited amount of time. OHA (Oregon Health Authority) investigative guidelines are being followed and any individual deemed to be at risk will be contacted. All precautions are being taken and there are no other confirmed COVID-19 cases in Morrow County.”

Undersheriff Bowles stated the investigation was ongoing and will take some time to complete.

Commissioner Doherty asked Undersheriff Bowles and Ms. Kilkenny to expand on the reasons for not releasing any demographic information.

Undersheriff Bowles said from an Emergency Operations Center standpoint, whatever information the Public Health Department wants released is what they ultimately release.

Ms. Kilkenny said the Public Health Department is charged with protecting the personal health information of everyone they serve. This virus victimizes people, they don’t ask for it. We want to make sure they stay where they can get healthy and we protect the public. We’re continuing our investigation and anyone deemed at risk will be contacted.

COVID-19 Preparedness

County Facilities – Courthouse

- Mr. Nelson reported the State Circuit Court in Heppner is primarily dealing only with in-custody cases and other cases with time constraints. Chair Lindsay said the County has been working with Circuit Court administrative staff to make sure the level of service for Morrow County is maintained and that they don't draw everything away to their closest hub. Undersheriff Bowles said court security has continued to be provided for the limited docket, and he encouraged Mr. Nelson to call him any time security is needed for the court.

Construction Projects within the County

- Commissioner Russell said PGE's Chief Executive Officer, Maria Pope, contacted him to provide an update. She said, as previously planned, RVs will be moving in to the power production facility in Boardman. She talked about what PGE is doing to protect its employees during this time of economic uncertainty. Regarding its customers, PGE will not be shutting off electricity or charging late fees or interest. PGE is curtailing any capital expansion plans that are not already under construction, he said. Commissioner Doherty brought up recent conversations by the Board about camping on private property by wind and transmission line project employees and the County's preference to have some oversight so illegal waste dumping doesn't occur, for example. He said the messaging needs to be consistent and that there are still some RV sites not at full capacity in the County that should be the first option.

County Employee Update

Draft versions of the following were reviewed:

1. COVID-19 Remote Work Agreement
2. COVID-19 Available to Work Agreement
3. Letter to Department Directors and Elected Officials from the Morrow County Board of Commissioners

Mr. Green explained the agreements were drafted with guidance from CIS and are being used by multiple counties. Ms. Carlson verified they were compliant with collective bargaining agreements. After reviewing each document in detail, a few changes were made and the following motions took place:

COVID-19 Available to Work Agreement

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the COVID-19 Available to Work Agreement with the changes made by Mr. Nelson (Mr. Green reviewed the changes). Motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the COVID-19 Available to Work Agreement with the additional changes currently viewed on the shared screen and read by Mr. Green. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

COVID-19 Remote Work Agreement

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the COVID-19 Remote Work Agreement as originally presented. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Discussion: Commissioner Doherty said this is a fluid situation and something we've never done before. This is a starting point and changes

might be needed once it's implemented. If so, staff will reconvene to review the documents for further editing. Unanimous approval.

Letter to Department Directors and Elected Officials

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the letter to Department Directors and Elected Officials Regarding Staffing During COVID-19 Restrictions. Commissioner Doherty seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Green asked if the statements in parentheses (1) and (2) should be tied to the agreements. Chair Lindsay offered a friendly amendment to have the Administrator make them connect. Commissioner Russell accepted the friendly amendment. Unanimous approval.

Chair Lindsay moved to allow the Morrow County Government team to make minor wordsmith changes, as they may come forward via the union, or otherwise, without changing the intent of the Board of Commissioners, and that being informed at the next meeting of the Board of Commissioners for input or changes to those decisions. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Mr. Green asked Ms. Carlson to send this information to the unions. She agreed and said the unions have been open to the process and she hadn't received any questions from the three unions.

Morrow County Government Command Center

- The group will continue to meet every Tuesday from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the Bartholomew Building, Upper Conference Room.

Minutes

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve the March 19th Board of Commissioners Emergency Meeting minutes and the March 23rd Board of Commissioners Emergency Meeting minutes. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Good of the Order

- Commissioner Doherty talked about a conference call with Representative Greg Walden and county representatives in an effort to bring together the needs of all 36 counties. The federal government is recommending Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) be sent to the Emergency Manager and that someone watch for the arrival to make sure it is actually received.
- Chair Lindsay brought up what she would normally call a minor concern but has become more important in recent weeks, and that is that many people in eastern Oregon can only receive Washington news from satellite providers. She said it would be nice if the FCC would do something about it.
- Commissioner Russell also participated in the conference call with Rep. Walden and said he learned that PPEs will be rationed to counties based on population size. He said he wasn't sure that one only of a particular item would do a lot of good, as in the case of Sherman County.

Adjourned: 10:40 a.m.