

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2022
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room
Heppner, Oregon

Present In-Person

Commissioner Melissa Lindsay, Commissioner Don Russell, Darrell Green, Roberta Lutcher, Robbin Ferguson, Emily Roberts, Nicole Mahoney, Justin Nelson, Mike Hughes, John Bowles, Aaron Moss, Lisa Pratt, Jeff Fox, Diane Kilkenny, Ken Matlack

Present Via Zoom

Chair Jim Doherty (attending from the Western Interstate Region conference), Rick Stokoe, Peggy Doherty, Marty Broadbent, Sandi Pointer, Ethan Solata, Jordan Maley, SaBrina Bailey-Cave, Cheri Rhinhart, Rob Naughton, Greg Sweek, Paul Gray, Katie Imes, Carrie Connelly, David Sykes, Patrick Collins, John Murray, Tamra Mabbott, Chery Eliason, Brian Doherty, Troy Bundy, Kirsti Cason, Karen Pettigrew, Torrie Triggs, Ana Pineyro, Yvonne Morter, Jaylene Papineau, Mike Gorman

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance & Roll Call: Vice Chair Lindsay called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

City & Citizen Comments: No comments

Open Agenda: No items

Consent Calendar

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

- 1. Accounts Payable & Payroll Payables*
- 2. Contract with the Department of Revenue for Assessor Map Maintenance; July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023; total cost \$30,000*

Chair Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Business Items

Boardman Fire Rescue District (BFRD) Request for Ambulance License

Carrie Connelly, Attorney for BFRD

Troy Bundy, Attorney for Morrow County Health District (MCHD)

Ms. Connelly said the request was a simple one – County support for BFRD’s application for an ambulance transport license. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is the agency vested with the authority to make the determination as to whether BFRD qualified to have that license. BFRD was not asking to modify the existing Ambulance Service Area (ASA) Plan. It’s standard in Oregon for County support for licenses in districts not included in an ASA. She referenced the letter submitted by Chief Mike Hughes outlining the rationale behind the request.

Commissioner Lindsay welcomed Ms. Connelly’s offer to review the request, point by point, which she did. Commissioner Lindsay then referred to the next items in the packet and asked MCHD to address their information.

Troy Bundy stated the request by BFRD was for the County to sign a document that says there is a documented need for the ambulance service. He then provided an overview of the ASA Plan and the EMS advisory committee section of the plan.

Discussion continued until County Counsel, Justin Nelson, noted further documentation was needed and clarification of what is documented need. He said he was still delving into things with OHA and suggested the item be tabled for a few weeks.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to table and bring back no later than June 8th, but it could be sooner. Chair Doherty seconded. Vote: Aye: Chair Doherty, Commissioner Lindsay. Nay: Commissioner Russell. Motion carried.

IT Services Contracts Review

Darrell Green, Administrator

Mr. Green presented a comparison of both contracts under consideration – one from the current provider, InterMountain Education Service District (IMESD) and one from the City of Hermiston. A question and answer session followed.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Hermiston for Ongoing Information Technology (IT) Services; term to be three years commencing July 1, 2022 and expiring June 30, 2025; \$20,800 per month; and authorize Chair Doherty to sign on behalf of the County.

Echo Solar Project Overview

Jeff Fox, Gallatin Power

Joe Torkelson, Pine Gate Renewables

Both representatives provided a summary of the proposed Echo Solar Project, which would encompass 10,900 acres, the majority of which is currently in dryland wheat. The project will straddle both sides of Highway 207 starting roughly at the Boardman/North Lex turn-off headed north. It will generate 1,250 megawatts (MW) alternating current (AC). The timeline for approval through the Energy Facility Siting Council was discussed, as were tax abatement opportunities. Chair Doherty requested an action item on the agenda in the near future as to what a tax abatement might look like and who should be on the negotiating team.

Break: 10:33-10:41 a.m.

Update – Mormon Cricket Control Efforts

Jordan Maley, Oregon State University Extension, Gilliam County

Mr. Maley reported the wet spring affected the activities of the Mormon crickets, which was good news for Morrow County. He talked about the surveys performed by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and said Gilliam County was prepared to spray 12,000 acres, a typical amount for them. He said he was cautiously optimistic about Morrow County and commended the Board for being proactive and prepared for a potential outbreak.

Update from Domestic Violence Services (DVS) Inc.

Robbin Ferguson, Interim Executive Director

Ms. Ferguson said she heard the Board wanted an update on what they do in Morrow County. Until 2020, DVS did not keep records in case they were subpoenaed by the court to reveal who was in their shelters. In 2020, DVS was granted privilege but they still do not gather that information. She said in 2021 there were 94 Morrow County residents who came in for services.

That does not include the number of people who called the hotline, which is open and staffed by volunteers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. She said DVS was trying to re-establish a presence in Morrow County following the pandemic, and that the office still serves people in Morrow County.

Broadband Update

Aaron Moss, Broadband Fellow

Mr. Moss said most of his time has been spent on the broadband infrastructure design process in order to obtain proposals from firms that do that work. He said the Broadband Action Team (BAT) recently launched its own website, www.morrowbroadband.org and he then listed some of its features including complete launch in Spanish. The web site includes access to the application to reducing cost to access and basic work and training tools for digital education. Mr. Moss said the members of the BAT helped 16 counties and more than 50 entities submit comments to the state asking that rules for grants prioritize rural and frontier communities. Mr Moss explained the upcoming grant requirements and the teams work to be ready when the Oregon communities grant applications are approved and open for access. Brief discussion.

Department Reports

- The Treasurer's Monthly Report was postponed one week.

Correspondence

- Flyer for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the Morrow County Government Center, May 26th, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Commissioner Reports

Abbreviated reports were provided.

Signing of Documents

Adjourned: 11:17 a.m.