

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2022
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room
Heppner, Oregon

Present In-Person:

Chair Jim Doherty
Commissioner Don Russell
Commissioner Melissa Lindsay
Karen Wolff, Board Staff
Justin Nelson, County Counsel

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance 9:00 a.m.

City and Citizen Comments

Debbie Radie, VP Operations, Boardman Foods

Ms. Radie explained that she is the leader of the Business Coalition. She thanked the Commissioner for funding the testing of water samples in the county. The Business Coalition was formed to support the needs of residents at a time when the State could not address those needs. There is \$121,000 in an account with BCDA (Boardman Community Development Association) for water filters. These funds pay for filters and their installation. The business community is very supportive of the needs of Morrow County residents.

Chair Doherty agreed.

Open agenda

Commissioner Russell had nothing to add.
Commissioner Lindsay had nothing to add.

Consent Calendar

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Consent Calendar, consisting of: Accounts Payables; Minutes September 21, 2022; Minutes June 28, 2022; 7th Amendment to OHA Agreement For The Financing of Public Health Services; and ODOT Agreement #35390 Covid Relief Discretionary Grant. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Unanimous approval.

Business Items

Water Coordinator RFP Proposal
Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director

Ms. Mabbott reviewed the draft RFP (Request For Proposal). This has been vetted by County Counsel. Also discuss funding.

Commissioner Lindsay said this has been built as just a Morrow County position, rather than a shared Morrow County/Umatilla County position. She would like to do a 12 – 24 month review of the position and see how it is working.

Chair Doherty said there are several water projects in Morrow County that could benefit from this position. When asked, Kevin Ince, Finance Director said that ARPA funds could be used for this position. No budget adjustments needed.

Commissioner Russell suggested a one (1) year contract with an option to extend for another year.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve the Request For Proposals (RFP) for a Water Coordinator and build in options to extend the contract if desired. Commissioner Russell seconded. Discussion. Unanimous.

Road Use Agreement With Amazon Data Services

Eric Imes, Public Works Director

Commissioner Russell declared he has a Potential Conflict of Interest due to his financial interest in a company named Windwave, a provider of fiber optics, as advised by the Ethics Commission.

Mr. Imes reviewed the provided documents. Justin Nelson, County Counsel explained that we have worked through a lot of Road Agreements over the last several months and this is a current template for Road Agreements.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve the Morrow County Road Use Agreement with Amazon Data Services, Inc. as presented. Chair Doherty seconded. Commissioner Lindsay aye. Chair Doherty aye. Commissioner Russell abstain. Motion carried 2-0.

Purchase Preauthorization V-Plow

Mike Haugen, Assistant Road Master

Mr. Haugen explained that the Road Department is trying to get prepared before a big snow storm. This will go on one of our graders.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve the Purchase Preauthorization for a Henke 12' Folding V-Plow for \$32,330.00. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Highly Rural Transportation Grant

Katie Imes, Transportation Manager

Ms. Imes explained that this is an annual grant through the Department of Veterans Administration. Ms. Imes reviewed the provided documents.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the State of Oregon, Oregon Department of Veteran's Affairs 2022-23 Transportation of Veterans in Highly rural Areas Grant Agreement – Morrow County Grant No. [VS_0171] and authorize Chair Doherty to sign on behalf of Morrow County. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Discussion. Unanimous approval.

Old Business

Purchase Preauthorization Minivan

Katie Imes, Transportation Manager

Ms. Imes explained that she was requested to bring this item back to the Board with additional analysis of total costs. Ms. Imes reviewed the provided documents. Commissioner Lindsay said her questions have been answered.

Commissioner Russell said the fuel economy was a big issue for him. Commissioner Russell asked replacement schedule. Ms. Imes said ODOT recommends replacement after 150,000 miles.

Discussion.

Chair Doherty moved to approve the purchase of the 2022 Sienna – LE AWD 8-passenger Hybrid CVT for \$39,235.00. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Administrator/Chief of Staff Position

Lindsay Grogan, Human Resources Director

Ms. Grogan explained that she reached out to the Commissioner-elects for their input. This was shared with the Commissioners in an earlier email. There have been a few changes to Chief Of Staff job description.

Chair Doherty moved to move forward with Chief of Staff position and direct Human Resources to post the position. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Discussion.

Commissioner Russell prefers an Administrator. If the incoming Commissioners want an Administrator, it would be a disservice to bring on a new employee as a Chief of Staff. Commissioner Russell offered his spot on the Interview Team to another Elected Official or a Commissioner-Elect. Commissioner Russell explained that he will no longer be a Commissioner when this position is filled.

Chair Doherty aye. Commissioner Lindsay aye. Commissioner Russell nay. Motion carried 2-1.

Ms. Grogan reviewed her recruitment plan. Will start local.

Commissioner Lindsay said she would like to do something in the interim, next week. Chair Doherty agreed. Chair Doherty will meet with Ms. Grogan to determine a path forward for Interim Chief of Staff.

AOC Product Tasting

Karie Walchli, Tourism

Suspended for technological issues.

Department Report

Sheriff Department Monthly Report

The Commissioner reviewed the written report and accepted by consensus.

Fair Quarterly Report

Ann Jones, Fair Secretary

Ms. Jones reviewed the written report, which was accepted by consensus.

Sheriff Report - continued

Commissioner Russell asked to go back to the Sheriff Report. Commissioner Russell believes we would be remiss to not note that the Sheriff is resigning. Commissioner Russell wants Human Resources to look at the potential for nepotism.

AOC Product Tasting

Karie Walchli, Tourism

Ms. Walchli updated on plans for the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Annual Conference Product Tasting. She is doing both Umatilla County and Morrow County tables. Has ordered some Swag. Has a lot of plans for this event.

Liaison reports

Commissioner Lindsay - Nothing to report.

Chair Doherty - Nothing to report.

Commissioner Russell said his conversations were about Administrator vs. Chief of Staff positions.

Correspondence

The Board reviewed the letter from Sheriff Matlack advising the Board of his intent to retire November 1, 2022. The Board said they appreciate his services. Ms. Grogan will contact the Sheriff about a day to recognize him.

Reviewed remaining correspondence.

Commissioner Russell said there is a letter of interest for the Sheriff position from Mark Pratt.

District Attorney Update

Justin Nelson, District Attorney

Mr. Nelson provided an oral report. Things seem to be going well. Translators and translating have been and will continue to be a challenge.

Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Russell reported on the dedication of Wheatridge Wind, Solar and Storage Facility. Portland General Electric asked Commissioner Russell to say a few words for Morrow County.

The ASA mediation group met again on Monday. Commissioner Russell was surprised and disappointed that Commissioner Lindsay called the mediator in the meeting and said “If Commissioner Russell was in the meeting, the meeting was to be shut down.” It put the mediator in a difficult position, so Commissioner Russell stepped out.

Commissioner Lindsay clarified that those were not her words. Commissioner Russell said that is what was relayed to him immediately following the phone call. The mediator told Commissioner Russell that she was being put between a rock and a hard place and she should not be put in the middle of county politics. Commissioner Russell agreed with the mediator. Commissioner Lindsay agreed with the mediator as well.

Commissioner Lindsay explained that at the prior ASA mediation meeting it was decided in ground rules there would be no Commissioners or Board of Directors at the actual mediation. She received several texts and phone calls from both sides asking why Morrow County was not following our mediator’s ground rules and why were the rules changing. Commissioner Lindsay asked Ms. Heckathorn to call her because of those concerns. Commissioner Lindsay’s goal was to keep everyone at the table and in the room and having the conversation. Commissioner Lindsay stated she did not say “Shut it down” or “Kick you out.” Commissioner Lindsay said she did not intend to offend Commissioner Russell or slight him in any way. If the rules were going to change, it should come back to the Board for discussion.

Commissioner Russell said Commissioner Lindsay’s actions spoke pretty loudly.

Commissioner Russell said he understands he is the lead on this. Commissioner Lindsay said the minutes do not reflect that.

Commissioner Russell left the meeting at 10:43 am.

Commissioner Lindsay - no Commissioner Report.

Adjourn 10:44 am.