

**Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes**  
**January 25, 2023**  
**Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room**  
**Heppner, Oregon**

**Present In-Person**

Chair David Sykes, Commissioner Jeff Wenholz, Roberta Lutcher, Jaylene Papineau, Kevin Ince, Andy Huwe, Karen Wolff, Justin Nelson, Robin Canaday, Bobbi Childers

**Present Via Zoom**

Paul Gray, Lindsay Grogan, Deona Siex, Lisa Pratt, Mike Gorman, Karen Pettigrew, Erika Lasater, SaBrina Bailey-Cave, Kaleb Lay, Kelsey Crocker, Heidi Turrell, Christy Kenny, Tamra Mabbott, Rafael Romero, Linda Skendzel, Ana Maria Rodriguez, Debbie Radie, Aaron Moss, Jim Doherty, Ana Pineyro, Kelly Doherty, Yvonne Morter, Raymond Akers, Lisa Mittelsdorf, Jonathan Tallman, Bill Saporito, B. Delgado, Brenda Profitt, D. Orid, Angie Burke

**Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance & Introductions:** 9:00 a.m.

Chair Sykes thanked County Counsel, Justin Nelson, for adding the feature to Zoom that allowed for foreign language transcription.

Mr. Nelson said he tested it yesterday with representatives from Oregon Rural Action and the Public Health Department and it worked pretty well. He then explained to those online how to enable the transcription option within Zoom. Mr. Nelson said the notation on the Board's agendas about requesting interpreters applied to those with hearing or visual disabilities.

Chair Sykes asked participants to email their impressions about the service following the meeting.

**City & Citizen Comments**

Veterans Services Officer, Linda Skendzel, informed the Commissioners about a funding opportunity through the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs related to suicide awareness. She said the funds needed to be used before the end of the fiscal year and she was in contact with partners at Community Counseling Solutions to work toward that end.

**Open Agenda** – No items

**Consent Calendar**

*Commissioner Wenholz moved to approve the following items in the Consent Calendar:*

- 1. Minutes: December 28, 2022, January 4, 2023, January 11, 2023*
- 2. Property Tax Refund, Meenderinck Land Company LLC, \$4,482.45*

*Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.*

**Business Items**

Letter of Support, Grant Application to the Oregon Department of Transportation, Community Paths Program

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director

*Commissioner Wenholz moved to sign the letter of support, as presented by Ms. Mabbott in the Agenda Packet. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.*

#### Transition from Emergency Phase to Recovery Phase of the Nitrate Emergency; Change of Command

Robin Canaday, Public Health Director

Ms. Canaday said the County moved out of the emergency phase and into the recovery phase, therefore, her department would take over. She said Public Health was collaborating with various agencies. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) will take over funding for well testing, filtration systems and research and data gathering using a voucher system. There have been “kinks” in implementing the voucher system, said Ms. Canaday. The Oregon Department of Human Services will do water delivery for folks who qualify. She said she was assured the funding will continue through June and then there will be more information to come after that.

Ms. Canaday then spoke about the application process for the \$1.7 million congressionally directed spending; the new position that will be funded by OHA for outreach and education; the joint work with Umatilla County and other agencies; and then and asked for a Commissioner to be involved with these efforts.

Since the nitrate issue will be an ongoing effort for quite some time, Ms. Canaday said she was working with the Planning Department on long-term planning.

After Chair Sykes confirmed Ms. Canaday had reviewed the application for the \$1.7 million, he then asked if it specified how money would be spent. She said she would share the application process with him on another date. He said that will determine the direction for the study or process, which was designed to guide further mitigation of the nitrate issue in both counties so the application might be important for input on how funds will be spent. He agreed with her request that a Commissioner representative would be important, and Commissioner Wenholz offered to act in that capacity.

#### Interim County Administrator Position

Three applications were received. The Commissioners received input from Human Resources Director, Lindsay Grogan, on the typical review process by her office, as well as from Mr. Nelson, who confirmed the ability to conduct interviews in executive session. The Commissioners asked Ms. Grogan to move forward with the process.

#### Permanent County Administrator Position

Commissioner Wenholz discussed the three proposals he obtained from executive search firms.

*Commissioner Wenholz moved to engage Prothman to do the executive search for the County Administrator position. Chair Sykes seconded. Discussion: Commissioner Wenholz said the anticipated costs were \$17,500, plus another \$5,000 for other expenses. Finance Director, Kevin Ince, said as an intermediate procurement, some additional steps needed to take place and Commissioner Wenholz had gone through those steps. He said funds existed through the General Fund or the Board of Commissioners budget. Vote: Unanimous approval.*

### **Department Reports**

- Clerk, Bobbi Childers, provided a verbal quarterly report
- Assistant Road Master, Mike Haugen, reviewed the Road Department Monthly Report
- Ms. Grogan provided a verbal quarterly report
- The written Surveyor's Quarterly Report was reviewed, as submitted by Matt Kenny, Contracted Surveyor
- Ms. Canaday reviewed the Public Health Quarterly Report

**Correspondence:** None

### **Commissioner Reports**

The Commissioners provided brief reports of activity.

### **Signing of Documents**

Chair Sykes said the Board would meet in Executive Session at 11:30 a.m. and he did not anticipate returning to the regular meeting as a decision was not anticipated.

**11:30 a.m.: Executive Session:** Pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(h) – To consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed

**12:15 p.m.: Closed Executive Session:** No decisions

**Adjourned:** 12:16 p.m.