

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2017
Irrigon Branch of the Oregon Trail Library District, Community Room
Irrigon, Oregon

Present

Chair Melissa Lindsay
Commissioner Don Russell
Commissioner Jim Doherty
Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer
Richard Tovey, County Counsel
Roberta Lutcher, Executive Assistant

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 9:01 a.m.

City and Citizen Comments

Sue Oliver, Irrigon

Ms. Oliver spoke on several topics – she said she hoped the County was on top of the fiscal control issues discussed at recent meetings, and that the County shouldn't pursue the purchase of the Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) Building in Boardman until further analysis takes place.

Aaron Palmquist, Irrigon City Manager

Mr. Palmquist urged the Board to develop clear plans before moving forward. He also said when an office is relocated on a temporary basis, it often becomes permanent.

Open Agenda Requests: Add minutes of June 7th Board of Commissioners meeting; cancel Executive Session

Consent Calendar

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

- 1. Accounts Payable dated June 15, 2017; June 2017 Retirement Taxes dated June 5, 2017; June 2017 One-Time Retirement Taxes dated June 7, 2017; Payroll Payables, Immediates & Electronic dated May 10, 2017 and May 24, 2017; Payroll Payables, Immediates & Electronic HRA dated May 10, 2017; Payroll Payables, Monthlies dated June 1, 2017*
- 2. Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes: May 31, 2017 and June 7, 2017; Executive Session May 31, 2017*

Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Business Items

Use of County Easement for Heppner-Lexington Pipeline LLC Project

Brian Thompson, Heppner

Mr. Thompson said the project started in 2010 and the participants are working with NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service). He said he met with the County Court two times in

2012 and was given approval to use the County's easement. He also said the document one of the participants was completing for the County was never turned in. According to Mr. Thompson, the work is about one-third of the way up the pipeline, and he is back to request approval for use of the right-of-way.

Administrative Officer Jerry Sorte said a review of records could not find a decision being made by the Commissioners or a completed document, but we can work with County Counsel to finish the document and bring it back next week for review and approval.

Mr. Thompson said they are installing a locator line on the pipeline with GPS and will provide the County with that map. In addition, he said he proposed the idea to Mr. Sorte that the agreement include language that if other utilities want to come through, the easement could be expanded to accommodate the other lines.

Commissioner Doherty moved to allow Brian Thompson (Heppner-Lexington Pipeline LLC) to use the County's easement area and directed staff to create an agreement document that formalizes the approval, which will be brought forward on June 21, 2017. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Chair Lindsay said, to clarify, the final product will include GPS locators. Mr. Sorte added the County is not asking for reimbursement and will treat it as authority to use the easement with a requirement a GPS and tracer wire be provided. Mr. Thompson said NRCS indicated they are mapping it and already have the pins. Commissioner Russell said he liked the option of future use by other utilities.

Irrigon-Boardman Facility Planning

Mr. Sorte said the Board previously authorized staff to hire a project assistant for facility planning and confirmed its interest in slowing down the process to make sure it includes an opportunity for formal community input. He continued, the challenges the County faces are the immediate space and safety issues with the Irrigon Annex. At the present time, he said, the safety issues are being addressed.

Mr. Sorte explained a tour of the BMCC Building recently took place and it does have potential if the County wants to remodel it. However, a recent conversation with Boardman City Manager, Karen Pettigrew, brought to light the fact Boardman is interested in purchasing that building and has first right-of-refusal. If the City purchases it, the County might be able to lease a portion of the building, he said.

Commissioner Russell said his interest is to pursue the purchase or lease of that building because there are facility needs in north County. He said the County is not just looking to temporarily move offices, there is a genuine need for services and buildings to be updated in the entire north end of the County. He said the County will not get into a bidding war with the City of

Boardman, and that he would be interested in the building at the price quoted by BMCC President, Dr. Camille Preus, regardless of the appraisal since it has limited use.

Judge Ann Spicer commented she presently has serious safety concerns for her staff in the Irrigon Annex and if the Planning Department temporarily relocates, it will remove her “back-up” security. Discussion. Carla McLane, Planning Director, said she hadn’t thought through the security aspect and she wouldn’t want to put Justice Court in the position of not having back-up. She said she’d rather deal with a tightly packed building than relocate, as long as the design and construction process begins in the near future. She said she had conversations with previous County Courts going back more than a decade about the problems with the Irrigon Annex, and if action had been taken in the beginning, there would be a new building here now.

Commissioner Russell said the message he heard over the last few years was the building was unsuitable and needed to be addressed quickly, but this new perspective changes his opinion moving forward. Chair Lindsay agreed, and said this adds a big piece to the picture. She said she’s listened to this conversation for two years, but the Board’s basic philosophy needs to be in black and white. That philosophy can be changed based on what numbers come out. It’s time for our philosophy to be on the table so it’s clear to staff and so we don’t continue to run down five different roads. She continued, we need public input, and the numbers could change that, but if we don’t articulate our philosophy we’ll continue to run down this rat hole over and over and over.

Chair Lindsay moved to not purchase the BMCC Building; commit to building in Irrigon; find out what those numbers are and if they’re not palatable, reasonable or affordable, then the Board will revisit the issue. Commissioner Doherty seconded and asked for discussion. He said a blanket statement to not purchase the BMCC Building shouldn’t be made because there are still facility needs for existing offices in Boardman. He said he does want to try to keep services and offices in Irrigon intact but the County should get a project manager in and determine costs for a reasonable building that accommodates Irrigon services. That doesn’t mean we need to take the BMCC Building off the table, he said.

Commissioner Doherty said if the motion was amended to state the County is not buying the BMCC Building today to relieve the pressure on the Irrigon Annex and our focus remains here in Irrigon and we bring a project manager on board, but not include a blanket statement that we don’t buy the BMCC Building. Chair Lindsay said she agreed, we should continue the discussion.

Chair Lindsay amended the motion based on the suggestion and that we don’t tender an offer on the BMCC Building at this time, and it can remain for discussion, but the focus is on Irrigon and getting numbers. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Vote on original motion as amended: Unanimous approval.

Commissioner Russell stated the County will hire a project manager to go forward with a plan to build a building in Irrigon to house everything, depending on the cost figures.

Former Commissioner and Irrigon resident, John Wenholtz, thanked the Board for its decision today.

Commissioner Doherty requested future discussions on matters related to acquiring property be discussed in Executive Session.

Visa Credit Card Limit Increase

Kate Knop, Finance Director, via telephone

Ms. Knop said there's been a request to increase the Visa card used by the Assessor's Office from \$2,500 to \$5,000. She also said she is currently updating County Policy on several matters, including credit cards. After discussion, the Board expressed its preference to wait for Ms. Knop to bring the overall policies forward in the first quarter of the next fiscal year.

Commissioner Doherty moved to table the request to increase the Visa credit card limit from the Assessor's Office until the broader policies are brought forward by the Finance Department in the first quarter of the next fiscal year. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Barnett & Moro, P.C., Certified Public Accountants – Audit Engagement Letter

Kate Knop, Finance Director, via telephone

Ms. Knop said this is the second year of the three year contract with Barnett & Moro for the single audit for fiscal year 2017-2018.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Audit Engagement Letter with Barnett & Moro, P.C., Certified Public Accountants, and authorize Chair Lindsay and the Administrative Officer to sign on behalf of the County. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Purchase Pre-Authorization Request – Wilkinson Arena Fan

Pat Tolar, Fair Board member

Mr. Tolar explained the Wilkinson Arena becomes quite hot during the Fair and he began looking for solutions last year. He then reviewed the quotes for the fan and installation and noted the Morrow County Livestock Growers will donate \$5,000 toward the costs. Mr. Tolar said this project would be a good use of Building Reserve funds.

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve the Purchase Pre-Authorization Request from the Fair Office for the purchase and installation of a 24' brushless fan from NuEra in the amount of \$6,700, and installation by Doyle Electric for \$2,508.15 – total cost \$9,208.15. Commissioner Russell seconded. Discussion: Commissioner Doherty requested a future discussion on allowing the Administrative Officer greater leeway in approving purchase requests. Unanimous approval.

Park Campsite Fee Increase Recommendation

Greg Close, Parks General Manager

Mr. Close indicated there have been reductions in Park revenues from various sources but no request to increase fees for several years. He said Parks Committee members were polled as to whether or not campsite rates should be increased and they ultimately recommended a \$5.00 increase (excluding the privately contracted cabins and amenities such as barbecues and gazebos).

Commissioner Russell moved to accept the recommendation from the Parks General Manager and the Parks Committee to increase campsite rates by \$5.00 effective July 1, 2017.

Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Chair Lindsay asked Mr. Close about preparations at the Parks in advance of the solar eclipse on August 21st. He said the OHV Park will be fully staffed but he didn't foresee any issues other than traffic congestion. The OHV Park itself is not fully booked yet, he said. He outlined other measures taking place to accommodate the predicted crowds.

Electric Work at Fairgrounds/Rodeo Grounds

Burke O'Brien, Public Works Director

Mr. O'Brien provided new cost estimates for the electric work approved at last week's Board meeting. He said the amount discussed then was \$23,050. The updated figures presented by Mr. O'Brien's now stand at \$24,797.65 for the electric work by Doyle Electric and \$4,896.47 for a new pole and transformer from Columbia Basin Electric Coop, bringing the new total to \$29,876.11, a difference of \$6,826.11 from last week's numbers. Mr. Sorte asked the Board if it was still willing to move forward with the work.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve proceeding with the electric work at the Fairgrounds/Rodeo Grounds at the new amounts outlined. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Break: 11:00 a.m.

Resume: 11:07 a.m.

Second Reading and Adoption – Ordinance No. ORD-2017-1

Carla McLane, Planning Director

Ms. McLane provided the second reading by title:

“An Ordinance Amending the Morrow County Transportation System Plan Appendix B Table 1 High Priority Recommended Roadway System Projects, Table 2 Medium Priority Recommended Roadway System Projects, and Table 3 Bridge Deficiencies”

Commissioner Russell moved to adopt Ordinance No. ORD-2017-1 – An Ordinance Amending the Morrow County Transportation System Plan Appendix B Table 1 High Priority Recommended Roadway System Projects, Table 2 Medium Priority Recommended Roadway System Projects, and Table 3 Bridge Deficiencies, with the Emergency Clause putting the

Ordinance into effect on July 1, 2017 to facilitate recommended projects be available for work by the Public Works Department during the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Discussion: Commissioner Doherty commented the ordinance reading process seemed to be an exercise in futility and archaic. Ms. McLane agreed but offered these are the steps required by statute as Morrow County is a constitutional county as opposed to a home rule county. She continued, home rule counties determine their own procedures. Unanimous approval.

Planning Update

Carla McLane, Planning Director

Appoint Military Economic Advisory Committee Members (formerly Military Airspace Advisory Committee)

Ms. McLane provided the following background information:

- A previous County Court appointed the members of the Military Airspace Advisory Committee (MAAC) with the idea there could be a land-use solution to the issues, but it became clear that would not be the case. The people who attend these meetings are of the opinion the discussions held are of value and they want them to continue. The group shifted its focus to the economic component because there are two large areas of landmass in the region that don't pay taxes. The group discusses what economic benefit could be obtained from the military being in the area while still limiting its negative impacts. The group wants to find ways for renewable energy developers to work with the military and those connections are made with the group.

Ms. McLane said the committee member list does not specify term limits and bylaws could be worked on over time.

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve the Appointed Members List to the Military Economic Advisory Committee as follows:

Government:

Barry Beyeler, City of Boardman; Melissa Lindsay, Morrow County Board of Commissioners

Landowners:

Larry Lindsay; Jake Madison; Jerry Rietmann

Military:

Kimberly Peacher, Navy; Russell Gibson, Oregon National Guard

Power Generation:

Scott DeGeeter, PGE; Robert Guertin, Oregon Wind Farms; Laura Miner, Invenergy

Transmission:

Tom Wolff, Columbia Basin Electric Coop; Jeff Maffuccio, Idaho Power; Steve Meyers, Umatilla Electric Coop

Staff:

Carla McLane, Planning Director; Kymberli Erevia, Planning Outreach Coordinator

Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Appoint Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Steering Committee

Ms. McLane said the appointment request is similar except this group wants to expand its membership to include representation by the electric cooperatives.

Commissioner Doherty moved to appoint the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Steering Committee Members as follows:

Cities and Towns:

City of Boardman – Karen Pettigrew, Kevin Kennedy; City of Heppner – Edie Ball, and alternate pending; City of Ione – Rod Taylor, Kim Carter; City of Irrigon – Aaron Palmquist, Keith White; Town of Lexington – Janette Eldrige

Fire Departments:

Heppner Fire – Steve Rhea; Irrigon Fire – Larry Burns; Boardman Fire – Marc Rogelstad

Electric Cooperatives:

*Columbia Basin Electric Coop – Tom Wolff, Debbie Lankford
Umatilla Electric Coop – Geri Dickmeier*

Land Managers:

Soil & Water Conservation District – Janet Greenup

Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Proposed Establishment and Modification of Oregon Military Training Airspace (Redhawk Military Operations Area)

Ms. McLane informed the Board of the opportunity to still make comment regarding the release of the final EIS. She explained previous County Courts made comment on several topics but one of the County's concerns regarding the Fossil Radar Range was not addressed in the final document. She said the military already relies on the Fossil Radar Range and we want to make sure any increased activity will not put further limits on wind development. After discussion, the Board agreed the County should provide comment before the June 18th deadline and authorized the Administrative Officer to sign the letter.

Solar Eclipse Planning Discussion

The group decided it would be of benefit from an emergency response standpoint to be aware of the locations of impromptu campsites that emerge in the days surrounding the eclipse. To accomplish this, the Planning Department will work with other department on a free, voluntary registry, and work to get the registry information out to the public. Ms. McLane stressed this is not meant to be regulatory but to make the Sheriff's Office and Public Works aware of gatherings that could impact traffic, etc. Mr. Sorte said the point of registry can also be an opportunity to connect people with other resources, which can be a real benefit.

Chair Lindsay discussed a recent meeting on Solar Eclipse preparedness attended by a variety of entities. She said ODOT's planning is at a very high level and perhaps the County needs to set aside funds for the departments that might be impacted by this event. Commissioner Doherty

said he would suggest to Public Works and the area's farmers and ranchers that they be prepared in the event of fires. Commissioner Russell agreed and added traffic levels are also of concern.

Commissioner Reports

- Chair Lindsay said she is looking forward to this weekend's County College and noted only one more session will remain. She also said she met with Treasurer Gayle Gutierrez and several topics were reviewed, including the fact that the requested financial policies and procedures are moving forward.
- Commissioner Doherty said he attended Association of Oregon Counties meetings on Sunday and Monday, as did Commissioner Russell. The proposed transportation package was reviewed, he said, and many there disagree with one aspect or another, but collectively support it.
- Commissioner Russell said it appears the County's building inspector will sign-off on the Lost Valley Farm building inspection this week. Commissioner Russell also said he spoke to the Assistant Director of the Department of Agriculture and was told the State will not "go backwards" on the CAFO (confined animal feeding operation) permit for Lost Valley Farm. In another conversation, Commissioner Russell spoke to a Water Resources Department representative and learned the water rights under appeal will take about six to eight months to complete. If the State agrees with the dairy (Lost Valley Farm), environmentalists are likely to appeal, which will take another three years. Commissioner Russell also informed the Board that Gary Neal, Port of Morrow General Manager, declined to be a member of the Strategic Investment Program (SIP) negotiating team that was formed at the May 31st BOC meeting. Commissioner Russell relayed Mr. Neal's comment that Amazon may be attempting to pit the two groups against each other (SIP negotiating team and Columbia River Enterprise Zone) in order to get a better deal for themselves. Commissioner Russell proposed the idea of both groups putting forth members to form a third group. He further suggested Chair Lindsay, the Administrative Officer and the Assessor/Tax Collector represent the County, and Mr. Neal and Boardman City Manager Karen Pettigrew represent the CREZ on this new group.

Adjourned: 12:10 p.m.