

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2017
Port of Morrow Riverfront Center, Wells Springs Room
Boardman, Oregon

Present

Chair Melissa Lindsay
Commissioner Don Russell
Commissioner Jim Doherty
Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer
Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director
Kate Knop, Finance Director
Roberta Lutcher, Executive Assistant

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

City and Citizen Comments

John Wenholtz, Irrigon

Former Commissioner Wenholtz said he supported the County's idea to purchase a property outside Boardman to relocate the Irrigon Public Works yard.

Open Agenda Requests: Postpone Juvenile Department Report to August 16th

Consent Calendar

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the following items:

1. *Claims: Accounts Payable dated July 20th; July 2017 Retirement Taxes dated July 7th; 2017-2018 Workers' Compensation Premium manual check dated July 7th*

Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Business Items

Oregon State University Extension – Service District Proposal

Julie Baker, Morrow County Extension, Office Coordinator/County Leader

Phil Hamm, Station Director, Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center

Vern Frederickson, Frederickson Farming, LLC, Boardman

Mr. Hamm said the vote to form Extension Service Districts in Morrow and Umatilla Counties would be before the voters in May of 2018. He said the Service Districts would support four OSU units – Extension in both Umatilla and Morrow Counties; and the Experiment Stations in Pendleton and Hermiston (Columbia Basin Agricultural Research Center and the Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center).

Commissioner Russell posed several questions:

1. Oregon places a cap on taxes, and once that cap is reached, it incrementally reduces the amount each taxing district receives. How will this new taxing district impact the other taxing districts?

Mr. Hamm said city representatives have expressed concern, and while OSU knows the figures for Umatilla County, the figures for Morrow County are yet to be completed. OSU personnel will continue to work with the cities to resolve concerns but there hasn't been any real opposition.

2. What happens if the Service District passes in one county but not the other?

Mr. Hamm explained the Service Districts are independent of each other, and it wouldn't change what OSU does in the counties.

3. Are there any guarantees if it passes that the State of Oregon won't decrease its funding to OSU by that same amount and shift the burden to the counties?

Mr. Hamm said the other counties in the State that have Service Districts have developed memorandums of understanding with OSU to ensure that doesn't happen. Commissioner Doherty commented the Board of Commissioners has come to the conclusion the County will not step in to fund programs, services, etc., when that funding is reduced from State, Federal or grant sources.

Mr. Frederickson said the impetus for the Service District proposal is the necessity to have local funding for each Experiment Station. Growers have talked about taxing themselves for several years but decided it would be more reasonable to spread it across the entire community since everyone ultimately benefits from the facilities. Service Districts currently exist in 25 of Oregon's 36 counties, he said. Various discussions.

The Board directed staff to draft a resolution in support of the formation of an Extension Service District to be ready in the near future.

Rock Quarry Agreement with Turner Ranch, Inc.

Burke O'Brien, Public Works Director

Chair Lindsay recused herself from the discussion and vote as a primary stockholder in Turner Ranch, Inc.

Mr. O'Brien said this is a renewal of an existing agreement and his department anticipates crushing rock for use on roads this summer. Commissioner Doherty observed the location of this quarry would have been ideal for the Navy when it brought in rock for the Bombing Range from outside the County.

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve the Rock Quarry Agreement with Turner Ranch, Inc. for a period of five years commencing May 2017 and terminating May 2022 with optional one-year renewals for stock pile purposes up to 10 years. The County shall pay \$200 a year to stockpile the rock and 0.25¢ per solid yard of rock extracted. Commissioner Russell seconded. Aye: Commissioners Russell and Doherty; Abstained: Chair Lindsay. Motion carried.

Memorandum of Understanding – Sheriff's Office and Department of Interior Sheriff Ken Matlack

Sheriff Matlack said the MOU with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, stationed at Paterson Ferry, extends the Sheriff's Office VHF frequencies to their dual band radios in order for both entities to communicate. It also allows USFW to participate in law enforcements needs, which is a worthwhile endeavor, he said.

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for Law Enforcement Response with the United States Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Refuge System, Mid-Columbia National Wildlife Refuge Complex; effective when signed by both parties and shall continue until terminated. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Request regarding Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Funds

Sheriff Ken Matlack

Sheriff Matlack withdrew his request for a portion of PILT funds after he learned the Sheriff's Office hasn't received these funds in the past, as he thought they had. Mr. O'Brien said the funds the Sheriff's Office received may have been from forest subsidy payments and were about \$3,000-5,000. As staff tried to recollect the exact source of the funds, they came to realize some Federal funds may remain unspent because they are so narrowly restricted. Ms. Knop said she would look into it.

Fair Contract Approval Request

Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer

Mr. Sorte explained multiple Fair-related contracts are coming through the Board of Commissioners Office. He requested that he or the Commission Chair be authorized to sign them.

Commissioner Russell moved to authorize the Administrative Officer or Chair Lindsay to sign Fair contracts, as long as they do not exceed \$5,000. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Appointment of County Auditor

Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer

Justin Nelson, County Counsel, via telephone

Mr. Sorte said he found the Board of Commissioners (County Court at the time) created the position of County Auditor in 1982 through Ordinance MC-A-1-82. The function and duties of the County Accountant are listed in Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 210 and referenced in Ordinance MC-A-1-82, Chapter 2.08. He said the position is not currently assigned, and if the Board chooses to appoint someone, he would suggest it be the Finance Director.

Chair Lindsay asked staff the last time someone held this position. Karen Wolff (Human Resources Director) and Kate Knop (Finance Director) agreed it was in the 1990s when Lisanne Currin held the position.

Ms. Knop outlined the additional duties it would entail for her office and said a staffing increase would likely be needed.

The Commissioners determined to move forward with the appointment of County Accountant and to revisit the fiscal impact and staffing implications.

Commissioner Doherty moved to appoint the Finance Director (Kate Knop) to the position of County Auditor with the duties therein, and direct staff to report back with fiscal and staffing impacts. Commissioner Russell seconded. Mr. Nelson said the County Accountant would need to be sworn in within 30 days, and Ms. Knop meets the bonding requirement. The resolution will be presented next week, he added. Unanimous approval.

Department Reports

The Loop – Morrow County Transportation

Anita Pranger, Coordinator, The Loop

- Ridership numbers for April-June: 400 rides per month
- Total rides year-to-date: 2,529
- Total rides 2016: 4,453
- New handicap-accessible van arrived in Heppner
- The back window of a bus parked outside the Heppner bus shed was broken out by vandals; the Sheriff's Office was notified
- Morrow County Transportation is slated to receive approximately \$200,000 from the passage of House Bill 2017 (Transportation Package)

Break: 10:25 a.m.

Resume: 10:37 a.m.

Emergency Management Report

Undersheriff John Bowles

Undersheriff Bowles discussed the detailed list of meetings, exercises, trainings, and presentations he attended and offered since March. Many of the more recent meetings and presentations revolve around the solar eclipse on August 21st and how citizens and communities should prepare.

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Doherty said he attended the Regional Travel Shed Analysis & Transit Development Analysis meeting where Regional Transit Coordinator Frank Thomas made a presentation. Commissioner Doherty stated Morrow County needs to take advantage of the funding in the current Transportation Package and the fact that we've already completed our Transportation System Plan. Exciting things can happen with these dollars, he said. Commissioner Doherty relayed a recent experience of livestock being hit on the interstate and said he's looking into the livestock district maps, but they are very unclear in Morrow County and this needs to be resolved.

- Commissioner Russell attended the Boardman Community Development Association meeting and noted it and the Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group meetings are great ways to hear and share ideas. He contacted Gilliam County Judge Steve Shaffer to ask about that County's most recent Strategic Investment Program agreement, which he was very willing to provide.
- Chair Lindsay attended the WCVEDG meeting and a subcommittee meeting that is tasked with finding ways to refurbish worn out properties in south Morrow County. She reported on a meeting with Mike Ladd, Oregon Water Resources Department, North Central Region Manager, and commented a different intergovernmental agreement may be needed since the State funded them at a greater level than anticipated. They will no longer bill for Watermaster work on Buttercreek, she said. The points of diversion for the Heppner-Lexington Pipeline are currently being analyzed since all the applications were not submitted. Other meetings – Neighborhood Center Board; met with Kim Cutsforth and an engineer at the Gilliam-Bisbee Building.

Break: 11:10 a.m.

Comments Prior to Executive Session

Commissioner Russell said if a decision is made, it will be in open public forum.

11:22 a.m. Executive Session – ORS 192.660(2)(e) To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions

11:51 a.m. Closed Executive Session

11:52 a.m. – Resume Regular Session

Commissioner Russell moved to offer \$354,000 on the Taylor Transfer property, including the real estate and contents of the shop; contingencies to be added to the offer by Chair Lindsay and Mr. Sorte; and authorize Chair Lindsay to sign the offer on behalf of the County. Discussion: Ms. Knop said Public Works is willing to forego the sander building project to obtain this property. (At the April 2017 Budget Committee meetings, \$300,000 was put in Capital Outlay in the General Fund for a sander building.) Chair Lindsay said this property which is southeast of the Interstate 84-Port of Morrow interchange, in no way impacts the Road Department/Public Works facilities in Lexington. This would allow the Public Works maintenance yard in Irrigon to move to this location to better serve the needs in the north end of the County. Commissioner Russell agreed and said the goal is to move the yard to a more centralized location. Commissioner Doherty said this allows the County to move forward with a north end governmental complex, as well. Unanimous approval.

Comments Prior to Executive Session

Ms. Wolff said a decision is not anticipated outside Executive Session.

12:09 p.m. Executive Session – ORS 192.660(2)(h) – To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations.

12:41 p.m. Closed Executive Session – No decisions

Commissioner Doherty moved to postpone the third Executive Session listed on the agenda (Pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) – To review and evaluate the employment-related performance of the chief executive officer of any public body, a public officer, employee or staff member who does not request an open hearing). Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Adjourned: 12:46 p.m.