

Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
August 9, 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

Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director
Richard Tovey, County Counsel
Kate Knop, Finance Director
Roberta Lutcher, Executive Assistant

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 9:03 a.m.

City and Citizen Comments

Aaron Palmquist, Irrigon City Manager

Mr. Palmquist provided an update on activities related to Irrigon and discussed new funding coming as a result of the recently passed Transportation Package. Mr. Palmquist and the Commissioners also discussed the Oregon State University Extension Service Districts being proposed in Morrow and Umatilla Counties. Mr. Palmquist said the City Council members and staff will listen to OSU's presentation next week and make a decision in September. There is concern over compression and how it impacts the other taxing districts, he said. Commissioner Russell and Mr. Palmquist agreed there are reasons to be skeptical that a signed agreement with OSU doesn't necessarily ensure funding to the Counties won't be decreased in the future.

Open Agenda Requests: Add: August 2nd regular and Executive Session minutes; Circuit Court Space Use Discussion; and Administrative Officer Project Update

Consent Calendar

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

1. *Accounts Payable dated August 10th; Payroll Payables, Monthlies dated July 27th; Payroll Payables, Immediates & Electronic dated August 2nd; Payroll Payables, Immediates & Electronic HRA VEBA dated August 2nd; August 2017 One-Time Retirement Taxes dated July 28th; August 2017 Retirement Taxes dated August 1st; 2017 Q2 SUTA/WBF Quarterly Payment dated July 27th; Void Check dated July 28th*
2. *Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes: July 26th Executive Sessions #1 and #2; July 28th regular meeting; August 2nd regular meeting and Executive Session*
3. *Sheriff's Office Purchase Pre-Authorization Request for Six Vehicles, total estimated amount \$159,842.*

Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Business Items

Request to Increase South Transfer Station Petty Cash

Kate Knop, Finance Director

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve the increase in the petty cash at the South Transfer Station from \$50 to \$100. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Administrative Officer Recruitment Update

Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer

Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director

Mr. Sorte said after individual conversations with the Commissioners, Kim Cutsforth emerged as a promising candidate. Ms. Cutsforth's experience as the former Heppner City Manager and current Executive Director of the Howard & Beth Bryant Foundation will be a good fit for this position, he added.

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve extending an offer of employment to Kim Cutsforth as the Interim Administrative Officer. Commissioner Russell seconded. Discussion: the Board agreed by consensus to Chair Lindsay working with staff on the temporary employment agreement. Unanimous approval.

County Administrator Job Description

Ms. Wolff noted the other members of the County Administrator Recruitment Committee were in attendance today (Commissioner Doherty; Mr. Sorte; Carla McLane, Planning Director; Sheryll Bates, Executive Director, Heppner Chamber of Commerce). The subject of whether or not the job description should include Budget Officer responsibilities was then debated. Chair Lindsay was in favor of the Board having the ability to designate a Budget Officer, while Commissioner Russell said it should be part of the County Administrator job description. Commissioner Doherty said it could always be added to the job description later, but he tended to agree with Commissioner Russell. Various discussions.

Commissioner Doherty moved to accept the job description with the changes discussed (remove overlapping job duties; change reference regarding the Administrator will represent the County and Board of Commissioners to media and others, to read the Administrator will represent the County; and remove Budget Officer responsibilities until the Board can discuss this with the incoming Administrator). Commissioner Russell seconded and asked for discussion. He then moved to amend the motion to retain the Budget Officer responsibilities in the job description. Chair Lindsay stated the amendment failed for lack of a second and the original motion was seconded to approve with the changes noted and remove the Budget Officer responsibilities. Commissioner Doherty clarified – pending the vision of the incoming County Administrator. Mr. Sorte said the Committee talked about it and this position, to be successful, needs leeway to reorganize within the broad scope of the overseen staff in order to be able to shift personnel between departments, without increasing FTEs (Full Time Equivalent). He said he'd recommend to include that to allow that type of organizational capability. Chair Lindsay requested the vote on the original motion and said they will then back-up to review the changes discussed. Aye: Commissioner Doherty. Nay: Commissioner Russell; Chair Lindsay. Motion failed.

Chair Lindsay requested the organizational chart be added and staff remove the Budget Officer section from the job description. After additional discussion, Ms. Wolff said she would revise the job description and return later in the meeting for review.

Shared Use of Second Floor of Courthouse

Judge Ann Spicer, Justice Court

Roy Blaine, Sixth Judicial District, Trial Court Administrator

At issue is a draft memorandum of understanding proposed by the State Circuit Court over the shared use of the second floor of the Courthouse by both the State Court and Justice Court. One option under consideration by the County has Judge Spicer's office relocating to the Bartholomew Building, taking over the Lower Floor Conference Room space. She said she would be willing to do that with the caveats agreed upon –

1. Access to the Courtroom for jury trials (Mondays or Tuesdays)
2. Access to the judge's chambers to meet with attorneys or for in camera items (a hearing held before the judge in private chambers or when the public is excluded from the courtroom. They are often held to protect victims and witnesses from public exposure, especially if that person is a child.)

Mr. Blaine said the only deviation concerns the space used by attorneys. He said he received direction from Salem that the judge's chambers need to be exclusively for Circuit Court judges because of the potential for confidential things being left in the room, for example evidence storage. Chair Lindsay asked if that is currently the practice and Mr. Blaine replied no, the Sheriff's Office takes custody of those items. He said a locking safe could be put in the judge's chambers.

Chair Lindsay said some of the information discussed today is new and the Board needs time to discuss it, particularly whether or not it's feasible to move Judge Spicer's office to the Bartholomew Building Lower Floor Conference Room. She said doing so concerns her since the public was promised the building would be available for public use. Commissioner Russell said he would like to find out who is using the Lower Floor Conference Room and how often. Commissioner Doherty said he would also like to take more time to evaluate the situation.

Break: 10:51 a.m.

Resume: 11:03 a.m.

Staff Reports

Planning Department Monthly Report

Carla McLane, Planning Director

Ms. McLane's report included updates on Senate Bill 1057 Enrolled (Marijuana Opt-Out); the opportunity to comment on Boardman to Hemingway amended preliminary Application for Site Certificate; and a recap of the work session recently held between the BOC and the Planning Commission regarding renewable energy policy planning.

Veterans Services Officer Report

Linda Skendzel, VSO

Ms. Skendzel reviewed her quarterly report of activity for April-June 2017. Additional funds anticipated in the Veterans Services Office were discussed, as were ideas for its use. Chair Lindsay commented she'd like to see additional outreach to veterans and additional training opportunities for Ms. Skendzel. Ms. Skendzel discussed the need for a part-time staff person in her one-person office. Commissioner Doherty asked about designating a Commissioner as the liaison between the Board and the Veterans Services Office.

Correspondence

- Energy Facility Siting Council Teleconference Meeting Notice and Agenda, August 18th

Business Items, continued

Surveyor Compensation Update

Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director

Ms. Wolff said the question at hand is whether the surveyor's compensation (fees plus \$36,000 per year) falls within the definition of an employee or an independent contractor.

Finance Director Kate Knop said because the County guarantees the Surveyor \$36,000 per year, our auditor indicated he should be considered an employee, and there should be withholdings.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner Russell said he would like this to be a contracted position and asked for exploration of that option.

County Administrator Job Description, continued

Ms. Wolff briefly reviewed the revised job description.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the revised County Administrator job description and to move forward with the recruitment of a new County Administrator. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Chair Lindsay expressed surprise that the Budget Officer duties remained in the revised job description. She said she was strongly opposed to it because it will delay what can be done this year while waiting for a permanent Administrator. She said the Finance Director has acted as the Budget Officer during Budget Committee meetings and it's unfair not to recognize that. Commissioner Russell said his view is everyone knows the Finance Director compiles the numbers for the budget, but the Finance Director does not have authority over Department Heads, whereas the Administrator would. It can be changed in the future if it doesn't work, he said. Vote: Aye: Commissioners Russell and Doherty; Nay: Chair Lindsay. Motion passed.

The Board authorized Ms. Wolff to move forward with the recruitment (not utilizing a third party recruiter), and to advertise the position at a wage range of \$95,000-125,000.

Staff Reports, continued

Administrative Officer Project Update

The Request for Proposals for Project Management Services resulted in one submission. Mr. Sorte said the Board could vet the response that was received or open up the process again. The Commissioners opted to open the RFP again and to not eliminate the company that responded.

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Russell attended the Columbia Development Authority meeting where Greg Smith reported they are on schedule to have the Umatilla Army Depot property turned over to the various entities in December. There are a few issues that may slow down that process, such as a possible cultural artifact. Representative Smith also informed Commissioner Russell that a three person committee will be formed to identify where to spend the \$3,000,000 coming to Heppner by way of the Transportation Package. The committee's recommendations will be presented to the Heppner City Council, according to Rep. Smith. Benton County Commission Chair Anne Schuster would like to restart the Sister County project and invited the Morrow County Commissioners to an Oregon State University football game on October 26th. While there, the Commissioners will tour Benton County, as well.
- Chair Lindsay attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for Blue Mountain Community College's Precision Irrigated Agriculture Center in Hermiston. She also attended meetings on solar eclipse preparedness and offered the use of the County's plotter to produce large signs. She asked the Board if the cost of \$150-200 could come from the Court Discretionary Fund.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve paying for the solar eclipse signs produced by Public Works from the Court Discretionary Fund, approximate amount \$150-200. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Chair Lindsay said she is working on a fund agreement with the Oregon Water Resources Department and will bring it forward for review. She said she also requested periodic updates from OWRD.

Comments Prior to Executive Session - Commissioner Doherty stated a decision is not anticipated.

12:33 p.m. - Executive Session: Pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(g) – To consider preliminary negotiations involving matters of trade or commerce in which the governing body is in competition with governing bodies in other states or nations, and Pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f)
- To consider information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection.

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

Adjourned: 12:42 p.m.