

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2018
Irrigon Branch of the Oregon Trail Library District, Community Room
Irrigon, Oregon

Present

Chair Don Russell
Commissioner Jim Doherty
Commissioner Melissa Lindsay
Darrell Green, Administrator
Richard Tovey, County Counsel
Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director
Kate Knop, Finance Director
Roberta Lutchter, Executive Assistant

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 9:05 a.m.

City and Citizen Comments: No comments

Open Agenda: Request to move the Veterans Services Quarterly Report up on the agenda

Department Reports

Veterans Services Quarterly Report

Linda Skendzel, Veterans Services Officer

Ms. Skendzel reviewed her report of activity for the time period of October-December 2017. Commissioner Doherty pointed out Ms. Skendzel has worked hand-in-hand with Umatilla County Veterans Services Officer Glenn Scott and he commended them both, saying that kind of cooperative working relationship is very important.

Consent Calendar

Commissioner Lindsay requested to remove the January 24th Board of Commissioners Meeting minutes and the February 7th Business Meeting minutes. Finance Director Kate Knop provided an updated total amount for Accounts Payable due to the removal of an invoice: \$167,742.88.

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

- 1. Accounts Payable dated February 15th in the amount of \$167,742.88; Morrow County Retirement Contribution dated February 9th in the amount of \$1,000,000; February 2018 Retirement Taxes dated February 14th in the amount of \$18,767.41; Payroll Payables (3): Immediates & Electronic dated January 31st in the amount of \$144,262.74; HRA dated January 31st in the amount of \$2,750; Employee Final dated January 31st in the amount of \$118.83*
- 2. Fire Protection Consultant Contract with Dean Robinson, effective through the closure of the Parks, or on December 10, 2022 unless earlier terminated or extended.*
- 3. Fuel Contracts, all effective February 14, 2018 through February 14, 2021: Gasoline Contract with Devin Oil Company; Aviation Fuel Contract with Devin Oil Company;*

Diesel Contract with Devin Oil Company; Lubricants Contract with Hattenhauer Energy Co., LLC

4. *Federal Lands Access Program Match Agreement authorizing the project as eligible for Federal participation and setting forth the responsibilities of the respective parties to pave 0.5 miles of East Morphine Road between Highway 207 and the OHV Park; repair and re-gravel 10.35 miles of East Morphine Road between the OHV Park and Tupper Road; and authorize Chair Russell to sign on behalf of the County*
5. *General Maintenance Purchase Pre-Authorization Request for a dump trailer in the amount of \$6,999 from Trailer World – Woodburn, and authorize Chair Russell to sign on behalf of the County*
6. *Planning Department Purchase Pre-Authorization Request for a 2018 Jeep Cherokee Latitude in the amount of \$22,132 from Hermiston Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, using Building Permit Funds; and authorize Chair Russell to sign on behalf of the County*
7. *Appointment of Michelle Seeley to Planning Commission Position 9, Boardman, term effective immediately through December 31, 2021*
8. *Appointment of Buck Elliott to the Morrow County Fair Board, term to be February 14, 2018 through December 31, 2021*
9. *Appointments to the Road Committee as follows, all terms to be February 14, 2018 through February 14, 2021: Representing Ione – Donna Rietmann; Representing South County – Frank Osmin; Representing North County – Karen Pettigrew; Representing North County, At Large – Aaron Palmquist. Alternates: Heppner – Gerry Arnson; Lexington – Kyle Robinson; Ione – Joe Rietmann; South County – Kim Cutsforth; South County, At Large – Bob Nairns*

Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Unanimous approval.

Changes to the minutes listed in the Consent Calendar were discussed; they will be revised and brought back for review.

Business Items

Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for Non-Represented Employees

Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director

Kate Knop, Finance Director

At the Board's request, Ms. Wolff and Ms. Knop returned with an in-depth analysis of the long-range implications of possible COLA increases for the County's 25 non-union represented management level employees.

Ms. Knop reviewed three spreadsheets she produced showing Budget History & Forecast from 2013-2023. She said the changes would not be material, but it goes back to the Board's fiscal responsibility...and what is best going forward. She also reviewed a graph showing Total Budget vs. Personnel Budget 2013-2023. After Ms. Knop's explanation of the graph, Commissioner Doherty said it really is "telling" in that it illustrates very little change, given all the factors presented.

Commissioner Lindsay expressed discomfort at “rubber stamping” a three-percent COLA increase just because it’s been done historically, and said a more realistic number is needed going forward.

Commissioner Doherty asked that a conversation take place regarding step increases – history, how they are structured, and future implications.

Ms. Wolff talked about Wasco County’s recent change to a “pay for performance” structure, calling it a complete cultural shift for them. She offered to gather additional information from the person who assisted Wasco County through that process.

Commissioner Doherty moved to approve a Cost of Living Adjustment for all employees not covered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement, and not Elected Officials, to be three-percent for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Unanimous approval.

Department Reports

Planning Department Monthly Report

Carla McLane, Planning Director

Ms. McLane’s report covered the following topics:

- Affidavit for the Partial Abandonment of a Ground Water Certificate for Registration – West Extension Irrigation District is requesting the Board sign the affidavit to remove certain older ground water rights from portions of a County road. After discussion, the Board asked that additional information be presented next week.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Region 10 Newsletter article on Climate Adaption and Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- Army Corps of Engineers Mid-Columbia River Regional Master Plan and Integrated Environmental Assessment - Ms. McLane will have a letter for review next week requesting Cooperating Agency status.
- Bureau of Land Management Great Basin Wide Programmatic Environmental Impact Statements – Planning staff will monitor this project but the County is not seeking Cooperator status at this time.

Break: 10:24 a.m.

Resumed: 10:33 a.m.

- Buildable Lands Inventory and Housing Analysis Request for Proposals – informational only, action pending.
- Letters from Umatilla Electric Cooperative to Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, U.S. Representative Greg Walden, and U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley requesting assistance with the U.S. Navy on Easements

Correspondence

- Announcement from Eastern Oregon University (EOU) – Four EOU Students Join EOU Small Business Development Center. The interns are Patrick Collins, Heppner; Elizabeth Basa; C.J. Kindle, Heppner; and Abi Drotzmann, Hermiston.
- Letter from Assessor/Tax Collector Mike Gorman to the Special Districts notifying them of a Public Hearing to discuss Community Service Fee distribution regarding the Strategic Investment Program agreement with NextEra Energy for the proposed Wheatridge Wind Project. It will take place Wednesday, February 28th, 1:30 p.m. at the Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room.

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Doherty discussed a possible increase in dues by the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC). He said AOC is probably the strongest political body in Oregon and hasn't seen a dues increase in many years. He explained AOC leadership believed they had \$800,000 in reserve but recently learned a prior bookkeeper, who was the only person with access to the accounts, apparently was not paying things from the appropriate accounts. A forensic audit will take place at a cost of \$25,000-50,000 but AOC could end up in the negative. He said while this may have been an honest mistake, he brings it up because he remains concerned there are instances in Morrow County where just one person reviews some financial transactions. He said he would like to have "two sets of eyes" on everything and requested an upcoming agenda item on the County Accountant position discussed in 2017. Chair Russell said it is always good to have a second set of eyes on transactions, and the lack of it in some cases has bothered him. Commissioner Lindsay said the staff increase request, along with efficiencies and analyses have to be a part of the discussion and decision, as well.
- Commissioner Lindsay discussed meetings she attended with Ms. McLane, representatives of the Bonneville Power Administration, and others pertaining to the Navy and the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line. She also attended a meeting of The Loop - Morrow County Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Lower Umatilla Basin Ground Water Management Area.
- Chair Russell reported on a ground-breaking ceremony he attended for the multi-use sports park in Heppner; and AOC Legislative Session meetings in Salem.

Miscellaneous

The Commissioners discussed the need for a sound system for the room in which the meeting was taking place (Library's Community Room) and the poor acoustics due to the high ceilings, etc. The Board said the County appreciates the use of the space, and would be willing to help with the costs of a system so people can hear the meeting. Sue Oliver, who was in the audience and is a member of the Friends of the Irrigon Library, said she believed the Library District agreed to pay for and provide acoustic panels, and that they also have funds for audio-visual equipment.

Adjourned: 11:21 a.m.