

**Morrow County Court Meeting Minutes**  
**January 4, 2017**  
**Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room**  
**Heppner, Oregon**

**Present**

Judge Melissa Lindsay  
Commissioner Don Russell  
Commissioner Jim Doherty  
Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer  
Kate Knop, Finance Director  
Justin Nelson, County Counsel  
Roberta Lutchter, Executive Assistant

**Audience**

Leann Rea, former Commissioner  
Mike Gorman, Assessor/Tax Collector  
Gayle Gutierrez, Treasurer  
Shelley Wight, Public Health

**Call to Order:** 9:01 a.m., followed by pledge of allegiance

**City and Citizen Comments:** No comments

**Agenda Additions/Changes:** Discussion - Attendance at meetings by Commissioners.

**Discussion – Attendance at meetings by Commissioners**

Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer  
Justin Nelson, County Counsel

The Court members relayed their preference to be able to attend other meetings to learn about various organizations, even if another Commissioner might also be in attendance. Mr. Nelson discussed his memo which puts forth a more conservative approach since that constitutes a quorum, but added the decision was theirs to make. He said as long as the Commissioners are not actively participating in a discussion that could later come before the Court, or are not deliberating to a decision at these other meetings, then they are not in violation of anything. Mr. Sorte said if a quorum of the Court is in attendance, the County has an obligation to notice them as public meetings, make sure the location is handicap accessible, and that minutes are being taken. As long as the County Court Office receives adequate notice from the Commissioners, these things can be done, he said. Various discussions ensued.

**Robinson Partition Plat, File Numbers LP-S-452 and R-S-040**

Carla McLane, Planning Director

Ms. McLane said the plat is before the Court because it includes a Road Dedication. By signing, you're accepting that road on behalf of the public, however, it is not a County road, she explained. Public Works reviewed that portion and it meets County standards, she said.

*Commissioner Russell moved to approve Partition Plat No. 2017-1 (A Replat of Parcel 2, Partition Plat 2012-5, located in the W ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 35 T2S, R26E, W.M., Morrow County, State of Oregon) from Mrs. Merlyn Robinson, Heppner. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.*

## **Business Items:**

### **Election of Chair**

Mr. Sorte

After discussion, the Court agreed by consensus to rotate the Chair position, with the Vice-Chair then moving to Chair after one year, and directed staff to draft the necessary resolution. As to determining the Chair, Commissioner Russell said Judge Lindsay ran for the Judge position and if she is comfortable with being the Chair in her first year, the position should be hers.

*Commissioner Doherty moved to assign Judge Melissa Lindsay as the Chair and Commissioner Don Russell as the Vice-Chair for 2017. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.*

### **Designation of Newspaper – Order No. OR-2017-1**

Mr. Nelson explained the “blanket” Order covers publication requirements for multiple Departments and situations.

*Commissioner Russell moved to approve Order No. OR-2017-1, In the Matter of Designating an Official Newspaper for Publication of County Public Notices. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.*

### **County Court Transition to Board of Commissioners**

The Court agreed by consensus to become known as the Morrow County Board of Commissioners effective January 9, 2017.

### **Surplus of The Loop - Morrow County Transportation Bus**

Anita Pranger, Coordinator, The Loop

Mr. Sorte

Mr. Sorte said the County does not have its own policy for disposing of unneeded equipment, including vehicles. In the past, we’ve sent items to State Surplus or conducted in-house sales through Public Works, he said. He also discussed a few examples of how other counties dispose of surplus property. Discussions took place on the process used to establish the value of the bus and options available to the Court.

*Commissioner Doherty moved to offer the bus previously declared as surplus, identified as a 2002 Freightliner Starcraft 25-passenger bus, VIN 4UZAAZAL22CJ77242, to the Port of Morrow for \$15,000. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.*

## **Road Committee Vacancy**

Burke O'Brien, Public Works Director

Mr. O'Brien provided background information on the history and make-up of the Road Committee. The Court expressed a preference for three-year staggered terms and for establishing an Alternate position. Staff was directed to amend the Road Committee Bylaws to incorporate those changes.

*Commissioner Doherty moved to appoint Brian Thompson to the Morrow County Road Committee. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.*

*Commissioner Russell moved to appoint Joe McElligott to the Morrow County Road Committee as the At-large Alternate; and that he would be allowed to vote at the next meeting of the Road Committee on January 12<sup>th</sup> in the event a vacancy is determined. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.*

## **Department Reports**

### Finance Department Quarterly Report

Kate Knop, Director

Ms. Knop said her goal is to provide Finance Department Reports on a quarterly basis. Since this was the first such report with new Commissioners present, she provided basic information about her department and explanations about her accompanying documents (Pooled Cash; Quarterly Fund Report; Revenue Chart; Expenditure Chart). The Commissioners expressed some concern over Treasurer Gayle Gutierrez being the only employee with online access to the State Treasury Pool account, which is where funds are transferred from to support the County's financial needs. It was noted one other person has access when Ms. Gutierrez is out unable to be in the office (Marilyn Childers). Judge Lindsay asked what would happen in the event both Ms. Gutierrez and Ms. Childers were unavailable. Judge Lindsay and Commissioner Doherty agreed there should be more than one back-up for the Treasurer, and Commissioner Russell added someone in the Finance Department should be able to fill-in when the Treasurer is out of the office.

## **County Counsel Report**

Mr. Nelson

- Working with the Parks Department on grazing permits and a memorandum of understanding.
- Working with Public Works to ensure the notice of surplus vehicle sales will contain the proper legal language.
- Working with legal counsel for the City of Heppner on an intergovernmental agreement for judicial services.

## **Administrative Officer Report**

Mr. Sorte

Mr. Sorte reviewed his written report which provided updates on numerous projects, including website development; north Morrow County facility planning; Rodeo Committee organizational structure; Fiscal Year 2017-2018 budget preparation and long-range planning; County fee schedule evaluation; ordinance regarding road right-of-way permits; County smoking policy draft; Sister County discussions with Benton County.

### **Claims**

*Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Accounts Payable dated January 5<sup>th</sup> in the amount of \$66,847.07. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.*

### **Minutes**

*Commissioner Russell moved to approve the minutes of December 7, 2016, with correction. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.*

### **Correspondence Reviewed**

- Sheriff's Office Report for December 2016
- Memo from Ms. Knop on the Internal Revenue Service 2017 Standard Mileage Rate for Business that was sent to all staff.
- Agenda for the January 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Morrow County Parks Committee (1:00 p.m., Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room).
- Minutes from the past four monthly meetings of the Morrow County Citizens Economic Development Task Force and agenda for its January 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

### **Commissioner Reports**

- Commissioner Doherty said he plans to attend the Boardman Community Development Association meeting on Friday and the Heppner Chamber of Commerce meeting on Thursday.
- Commissioner Russell said he'll be attending these upcoming meetings - Public Health Local Community Advisory Council; Heppner Chamber of Commerce; Columbia Development Authority; Morrow County Parks Committee; and an Association of Oregon Counties meeting in Salem.
- Judge Lindsay said she attended the Morrow County Citizens Economic Development Task Force meeting and there were good discussions concerning housing. She said she plans to attend the Morrow County Advisory Board for Community Counseling Solutions meeting on Friday at Lakeview Heights.

**Adjourned:** 11:30 a.m.