

Morrow County Court
February 24, 2016
Heppner, Oregon
Bartholomew Building Conference Room

Present

Commissioner Leann Rea
Commissioner Don Russell
Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer
Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director
Justin Nelson, County Counsel/District Attorney
Roberta Lutchter, Court Executive Assistant

Excused

Judge Terry Tallman

Audience

Mike Gorman, Assessor/Tax Collector
Gayle Gutierrez, Treasurer
Melissa Lindsay, Lexington
Greg Sweek, Heppner

Commissioner Rea called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

City and Citizen Comments – Ione/Lexington

No comments

Open Agenda

- Commissioner Rea requested flags be purchased for the Bartholomew Building conference room.

Department Report

The Loop – Morrow County Transportation

Anita Pranger, Coordinator

- Ms. Pranger forwarded a request from The Loop – Morrow County Transportation Advisory Committee to appoint Cynthia Navarro as a member representing Boardman and the Hispanic community. Ms. Navarro will serve the remainder of Citlali Pacheco's term.

Commissioner Russell moved to appoint Cynthia Navarro to The Loop – Morrow County Transportation Advisory Committee to represent Boardman and the Hispanic community, with the term to be February 24, 2016 – December 31, 2016. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

- Ms. Pranger provided ridership numbers for 2014 through January 2016, which showed a significant increase for the last four months (October – January).

- She then discussed the results of a Request for Quotes for a 14 passenger bus (includes two tie-down stations for wheelchairs). She said the bids will be reviewed by the Oregon Department of Transportation, but it appears it will cost \$55,856. Grant funds will cover the majority (\$36,000), and the rest will come from the Special Transportation Vehicle Reserve Fund, she said.

Commissioner Russell moved to accept the bid from Schetky Northwest Sales, Inc., for an Elkhart EC 14 Passenger Bus, with the specifications listed in the Request for Transit Vehicle Price Quote, in the amount of \$55,856. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

- Ms. Pranger reported the new toll free number is available for use and the prior toll free number will remain in effect until July. At that time, the Committee will look at call volume for each number and decide if another advertising campaign about the new number is needed.
- Ms. Pranger and the Commissioners discussed the need for temporary help when she is out of the office for more than a day (vacation, conferences, etc.). Ms. Pranger said there currently aren't the funds within her budget, but she plans to include a line for temporary help in the next budget. In addition, she said she anticipates new 5311 Grant funds (Rural and Non-Urbanized Areas) to her budget.

Old Business

Gilliam & Bisbee Lease

Jerry Sorte, Administrative Officer

Community Counseling Solutions (CCS) and the County reached an agreed upon monthly amount of \$1,900 for CCS to expand into the entire second floor. Discussion.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Lease Agreement with Community Counseling Solutions dated February 24, 2016, and authorize Judge Tallman to sign on behalf of the County. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

New Business

Northeast Oregon Water Association (NOWA) Funding Request

Commissioner Rea said she spoke with NOWA Director, J.R. Cook, about his request of \$25,000 and explained to him her reasoning behind a lower amount spread over several years. She said NOWA would like to be self-sufficient within three years, so she proposed \$5,000 for each of the next two years, and then possibly \$2,500 in the third year. Commissioner Russell said he agreed with that arrangement. Commissioner Rea also said \$6,000 needs to be reimbursed back to the Planning Department from the \$25,000 received from the close-out of the Umatilla Basin Water Commission.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the funding of \$5,000 to NOWA from the \$25,907.73 received from the close-out of the Umatilla Water Basin Commission; and consideration of an additional amount next year. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

Idaho Power Company – Morrow County Easement Consent Agreement

Jeff Maffuccio, Idaho Power Company (IPC)

Burke O'Brien, Public Works Director

Justin Nelson, County Counsel

Mr. Nelson said there have been ongoing discussions concerning the easement on Bombing Range Road and the large overhang IPC's power lines create over a shared easement by other utilities. He said there is no disputing Morrow County has seniority, but the Navy would like IPC to work with the County to resolve any issues. Mr. Nelson reviewed the concerns held by the County, Navy, and IPC, and how they were resolved.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Easement Consent Agreement with Idaho Power Company regarding an easement along Bombing Range Road, and authorize Commissioner Rea to sign on behalf of the County. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

Cooperative County/City Weed Policy

Dave Pranger, Weed Coordinator/Inspector

Burke O'Brien

Mr. Pranger provided background, as follows:

- County Code Enforcement Ordinances were adopted in 2015, including weed control enforcement. These ordinances excluded land within incorporated cities (Boardman, Heppner, Lexington, Ione, Lexington). However, the cities may be lacking in expertise to control noxious weeds. This led to a meeting with city managers to reach agreement on a mechanism for cooperation and control of "A List" weeds.

Mr. Pranger reviewed the draft Cooperative County/City Weed Policy. Minor clarifications were suggested and Mr. Pranger said he would return with a final draft for adoption.

Planning Department Miscellaneous

Carla McLane, Planning Department Director

Ms. McLane handed out packets for review that will be incorporated into the Economic Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Credit Card Policy and Department Invoice Review

Jerry Sorte

Rick Worden, Finance Department Director

Mr. Sorte explained he and Mr. Worden have been reviewing policies regarding credit cards and invoice processing. It was advisable to do this in advance of the transition within the Finance Department due to Mr. Worden's departure, he said. Discussion on these items, as well as a few others they both identified, will be brought forward next week, said Mr. Sorte.

Sheriff's Office Personnel Request

Sheriff Ken Matlack

Sheriff Matlack provided an update on staffing levels and possible future needs. He then requested permission to fill a vacant dispatch position from the pool of applicants maintained by the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Rea moved to authorize the Sheriff's Office to fill the open Dispatch position. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Break – 10:27 a.m. to sign and notarize previously approved Easement Agreement
Resume – 10:45 a.m.

Department Report

Surveyor Update

Stephen Haddock, County Surveyor

- Mr. Haddock discussed an emerging issue now that services like ORMAP (Oregon Map) and Google Earth are showing “supposed” property lines superimposed over aerial photos. He explained realtors and government agencies are using these products under the assumption the photos are correct and then often try to resolve the issues on their own. He speculated this will lead to more disputes in the future as the solutions attempted are based on incorrect/inaccurate information.
- Mr. Haddock said he reviewed a plat prepared by the Gilliam County Surveyor because statute specifies a County Surveyor cannot review his/her own work.
- Has not started the remonumentation project yet, but has assisted the survey firm working on the Boardman Tree Farm by providing direction and supplies to remonument the 26 public land corners in that area.
- Mr. Haddock provided a summary of actual hours worked as County Surveyor over the last three years. He said there were more hours in the beginning as he worked to complete the survey records, but it now averages about 30 hours per month. The \$3,000 per year he receives from the County breaks down to \$250 per month and this only covers about two hours of work. This has created a financial burden and liability on his business and he plans to request an increase in the next budget cycle. He said he won’t be able to run for the office of County Surveyor for the compensation he’s receiving. Karen Wolff, Human Resources Director, suggested his position be included in the upcoming review of Elected Officials’ salaries by the Compensation Committee. The Commissioners encouraged Mr. Haddock go through the process and said any reasonable budget increase would be favorably considered.

Claims

Commissioner Rea noticed a “pass-through” from the State of Oregon to CCS and asked if the County received any administrative fee reimbursement. Gayle Gutierrez, Treasurer, said the County does not, on this, or others like it related to Mental Health. Commissioner Rea asked Mr. Sorte to look into the possibility of an administrative fee reimbursement.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Payroll Payables, Immediate & Electronic; and HRA VEBA, both dated February 17th; and the Accounts Payable, dated February 25th, in the amount of \$383,830.61. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

Minutes

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the minutes of February 17, 2016, as presented. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the minutes of November 4, 2015, as presented. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

Department Report

Human Resources Update

Karen Wolff

Ms. Wolff explained, in detail, what she provides to the members of the Compensation Committee for their review of Elected Officials' salaries, and the process that takes place following the Committee's recommendations. The Committee is scheduled to meet March 15th, and Ms. Wolff said she would forward any written comments from Elected Officials to the Committee for consideration. Ms. Gutierrez asked if an Elected Official could view the packet contents sent to the Committee. Ms. Wolff said anyone who sends an email request will be provided the information. Discussion took place as to whether or not the Committee meeting is a public meeting or not, since no decisions are made, only recommendations. Mr. Sorte said he and Mr. Nelson would research the matter.

Sheriff's Office Personnel Request, continued

It was determined the position of Work Crew Supervisor lacked County Court approval.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve advertising and filling the Work Crew Supervisor position. Commissioner Rea seconded. Unanimous approval.

Administrative Officer Report

Mr. Sorte has been working on the following:

- Quotes for two new vehicles and will report back with the results
- Compiling an updated inventory list of furnishings in storage
- News release to clarify the change to the Judge's position that will take place after the next election, and why a candidate will run as Judge, but serve as Commissioner
- Reviewing recommendations regarding the heating and cooling system in the Courthouse

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Russell said he was unable to attend the Road Committee meeting earlier this month, so Public Works personnel met with him and provided the information from that meeting.
- Commissioner Rea recapped several meetings she attended, including the Planning Commission meeting, Senator Wyden's Town Hall meeting in Boardman, and a Workforce meeting in Baker City.

Recessed for lunch: 12:17 p.m.

Reconvened: 1:30 p.m.

County Planning Meeting

Rick Worden, Finance Department Director

Audience

Mike Gorman, Assessor/Tax Collector

Gayle Gutierrez, Treasurer

Melissa Lindsay, Lexington

Greg Sweek, Heppner

Much of the focus of the meeting was on ways to fund the Road Department without the use of General Fund dollars, which is statutorily prohibited. One suggestion was to move the \$600,000 “Rainy Day” amount budgeted in 2017/2018 in anticipation of revenue lost from the closure of the Coal Fire Plant to the Road Department. Commissioner Russell said he did not foresee the Coal Fire Plant closing, rather it may be used for biofuel processing to meet renewable energy needs/standards.

There was discussion on the importance of public understanding about how money flows through the federal, state, county and local systems, and the various restrictions tied to funds. To facilitate providing information, Mr. Sorte said an updated County website could make disseminating this kind of information easier for the County and the public. He said he is moving forward to obtain bids for a new website.

Mr. Worden discussed a document he compiled that showed several important figures:

1. Property taxes collected are in excess of what was budgeted by \$1,224,569.
2. The Beginning Fund Balance is \$878,128, which is also above what was budgeted.
3. Both amounts bring the total for unbudgeted resources in the General Fund to \$2,102,697.

Various discussions ensued.

Mr. Gorman said he would like to make a request to add a new position to his office. He said he would like to hire a Data Analyst at the “loaded” salary rate of \$85,000 (salary plus benefits). Commissioner Rea said the Court will discuss it and make the Budget Committee members aware of his request.

Commissioners Russell and Rea agreed funding the Rainy Day Fund from County funds, as opposed to Strategic Investment Program funds, would mean another \$600,000 for the Road Department.

The discussion turned to north end building needs. Commissioner Russell proposed a Road Department area near Boardman to save time travelling back and forth from Lexington. The site would need space to stockpile sand and gravel and power to plug in graders and sanders in the winter. He also asked the County look into the Blue Mountain Community College building in Boardman that will be vacant soon. He said the Planning Department could move into the building without extensive remodeling and there is the potential for expansion into adjacent lots. Additional discussions.

Adjourned 3:23 p.m.