

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
July 27, 2022
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room
Heppner, OR 97836

Present In-Person

Chair Jim Doherty
Commissioner Melissa Lindsay
Commissioner Don Russell
Karen Wolff, Board of Commissioner Staff

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance & Roll Call: 9:06 a.m.

Chair Doherty temporarily turned the meeting over to Commissioner Lindsay.

City and Citizen Comments:

Vice-Chair Lindsay asked for any comments from those attending by Zoom. None.

Vice-Chair Lindsay asked for any comments from those attending in person.

John Murray, Heppner: Directed his question to Commissioner Russell. He asked for a copy of a letter that Commissioner Russell wrote to OHA (Oregon Health Authority) in support of Boardman Fire. Commissioner Russell said Mr. Murray could request it from OHA. Mr. Murray said there is a Public Records request in to OHA, but asked if Commissioner Russell could help expedite the process. Commissioner Russell said that he does not keep copies of letters that he writes in support of various businesses. Commissioner Lindsay asked if it was on County Letterhead. Commissioner Russell said yes. Commissioner Lindsay requested a copy as well.

Open Agenda: Chair Doherty nothing. Commissioner Russell nothing. Vice-Chair Lindsay nothing.

Consent Calendar:

Chair Doherty requested to move the APs to Business Items.

Chair Doherty requested to move the Letter of Support to Business Items.

Chair Doherty moved to approve the following items on the Consent Calendar

- *Payroll Payables*
- *Minutes of July 20, 2022 Board of Commissioners Meeting*
- *Contract with Points Consulting o conduct Goal 9 economic Development and Employment Lands work for the Cities of Lone, Lexington and Heppner*
- *Extension of OHA IGA #170129 to December 31, 2022*
- *Property Tax Refund for Lumen Technologies, Inc.*

Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Business Items:**APs**

Chair Doherty suggests the final payout to a former employee be postponed until all county property has been received from the employee. Follow protocol and past practice. This is in regard to a County owned laptop. Discussion ensued.

Chair Doherty moved to approve the APs with the exception of the one payout to a former employee. Vice-Chair Lindsay seconded.

Commissioner Russell asked if this is the typical process for this type of situation. Lindsay Grogan, Human Resources Director (by Zoom) said yes. It is typical to withhold final payment until all property has been returned. In this situation the challenge is the physical distance between us. This employee was working remotely.

Unanimous approval.

Letter of Support

Chair Doherty supports helping our local businesses. He is concerned about the language around people with physical limitations. If that language is good, He is good. Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director provided some background information. Discussion ensued.

Chair Doherty moved to accept and sign the Letter of Support for the City of Boardman TGM (Transportation and Growth Management) Grant application. Commissioner Russell seconded. Unanimous approval.

Vice-Chair Lindsay turned the meeting back to Chair Doherty.

Auditor's Report

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

Cameron Anderson, Barnett & Moro, P.C. (by Zoom)

Mr. Ince introduced Mr. Anderson of Barnett & Moro, P.C.

Mr. Anderson reviewed the Morrow County, Oregon Financial Statements and Independent Auditors' Report dated June 30, 2021. He specifically pointed out the Opinions on page 7. Mr. Anderson also reviewed other pertinent information within the document. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Anderson stated that we did not make the deadline of December 31, 2021 for completing the audit. There have been discussions with the Board of Commissioners and the new Finance Director regarding how to prevent this from happening again. Discussion ensued. It was pointed out that the audit was completed prior to Mr. Ince becoming Finance Director.

Commissioner Russell commented this is a 'clean audit' with no exceptions. That is important in the accounting world.

Commissioner Lindsay asked if there was a Management Letter. Mr. Anderson said there is not one this year since it is so late.

Commissioner Russell moved to accept the audit by Barnett and Moro. Chair Doherty seconded. Unanimous approval.

Audit Engagement Letter

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

Cameron Anderson, Barnett & Moro, P.C. (by Zoom)

Mr. Ince said he had no particular comments.

Commissioner Lindsay asked if language has been added about the chain for requesting information in the future. Mr. Ince said no. Mr. Anderson said that in the past the questions usually went through the County Administrator. Mr. Anderson reviewed page 4 of the letter which this year includes "management and the board of commissioners" regarding internal control related matters. Commissioners were added to this sentence. Commissioner Lindsay is glad to see this change. The past audit was delayed because the auditors were waiting for information from Morrow County. The auditors were following the Engagement Letter which did not include commissioners in the communication. This new language will allow commissioners to be a part of the communications.

Commissioner Lindsay would like to have a commissioner involved in the exit interview in the future. Mr. Anderson agreed.

Mr. Ince explained that the Fiscal Year ending 2021 was the last year of the three year engagement RFP (Request For Proposals). Mr. Ince recommends we engage Barnett & Moro for one (1) year and then send out and RFP the following year.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve and sign the Audit Engagement Letter with Barnett & Moro, P.C. for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. Commissioner Russell seconded.

Commissioner Russell said the letter has two signature lines. He would like to have the Chair and the Finance Director sign the letter. Commissioner Lindsay approved of the amendment.

Unanimous approval.

Commissioner Lindsay brought up Christa Wolfe, Wolfe Consulting, LLC and her knowledge of Open.Gov. She would like the Commissioners to weigh in on whether to continue to use Christa's services. Commissioner Russell agreed. Chair Doherty agreed. Commissioner Lindsay agreed. Consensus approval to continue to use Christa Wolfe, Wolfe Consulting, LLC for finance consulting services.

Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) Letter

Tamar Mabbott, Planning Director

Ms. Mabbott said this letter regarding the Echo Solar Project is pretty pro forma for the county to submit to EFSC. OAR 345-015-0120 identifies standards for a project and Morrow County has provided comment on those standards.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve and have all three Commissioners sign the comment letter to Oregon EFSC regarding Echo Solar Project. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Unanimous approval.

Ms. Mabbott added that she is tracking that this is the first application under the new State Goal 3 rules.

Commissioner Lindsay said the lights at Wheatridge (Wind Project) are on all the time and there is no rain. Mike Gorman, Assessor will reengage with them later today.

Columbia Development Association (CDA)

Commissioner Doherty asked Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director for her input on a recent CDA meeting and discussion.

Ms. Mabbott said there is an MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) that has to be signed before the Army can turn over the property. At the end of yesterday's meeting it was agreed to develop and amend the current MOA.

Several irrigators showed up at the meeting and expressed concern. They asked the entities to not develop the water rights on the property, which are senior to their water rights. This would severely impact farms. The CDA has developed a technical work group to review and develop a policy.

Ms. Mabbott said the MOA is specific about best business practices and budget specifics will need to be reviewed. Kevin Ince, Finance Director will be looped in on this.

Ms. Mabbott advised we still don't know how roads or infrastructure will be managed.

Ms. Mabbott commented that there are two different audits out there with very different values of the land.

Ms. Mabbott stressed there are some environmental issues that are coming up and should be addressed before the transfer.

Commissioner Russell said the water rights out there are not adequate for industrial development. Other water access will need to be figured out. He said he would not hold up the transfer of the property to figure water out. It will depend on what business goes in out there.

Discussion ensued.

Foreclosed Property

Mike Gorman, Assessor

Mr. Gorman explained that he has had three (3) different inquiries about county owned foreclosed property. One (1) in lone, and two (2) in Irrigon. He is asking the Commissioners for direction on these three (3) properties.

lone former service station. Mr. Gorman said he has talked to DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) about an assessment of the underground tanks. Commissioner Lindsay said there is a great deal of interest in the property in the lone community. Commissioner Russell said the tanks may have been brought up to current standards through a past grant program. Mr. Gorman will request a letter of No Further Action from DEQ.

Commissioner Russell asked about another lone property on the list. It is very small. Mr. Gorman said it may not be really valuable and may not have to go to auction, however, that is not Mr. Gorman's decision.

Ms. Wolff asked about the Cain Lane properties. Mr. Gorman clarified these Cain Lane issues are portions of the road. Mr. Gorman suggested the county could come up with a solution for theses.

Commissioner Russell said he thought the Irrigon properties should be put up for auction. Mr. Gorman agreed, however, he does not have time to manage the process. Commissioner Lindsay asked what other counties do about managing foreclosed properties. Mr. Gorman said some have Property Managers, some have the County Administrator do it. They all do it differently.

Don moved to put the two (2) Irrigon lots that have had inquiries, Account 2979 and Account 8579, up for public auction and figure out how to get this completed. Commissioner Lindsay seconded.

Discussion ensued regarding how to handle all foreclosed properties. Mr. Gorman said he would help the Commissioners with these two lots, but something else will need to be figured out for future sales.

Unanimous.

Commissioner Russell asked Mr. Gorman to let the interested person about the small lone lot to get the ball rolling. He suggested the value of the property may be beneath the auction requirement. Send a notice adjacent land owners. Mr. Gorman will provide a list of adjacent land owners and then the Board of Commissioners can proceed.

Department Reports:

Road Report

Commissioner Russell reported that Eric Imes, Public Works Director is under the weather and not present. Commissioners reviewed the written report.

Loop

Katie Imes, Transit Manager (by Zoom)

Ms. Imes reviewed the written report she submitted. Discussion ensued.

Human Resources

Lindsay Grogan, Human Resources Director (by Zoom)

Ms. Grogan reviewed the written report she submitted. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Liaison Reports:

Commissioner Lindsay explained this is a new item. The intent is to give the Commissioners and opportunity to report.

Commissioner Lindsay reported that she has been signing small contracts for the Fair for judges. \$250 or less.

Commissioner Lindsay said we will need to do a work session for the Fair \$1M award.

Commissioner Lindsay advised that said the maintenance on the 21 Road has grown more than anticipated. This will be brought back for discussion.

Commissioner Lindsay reported that CCS (Community Counseling Solutions) has moved towards purchasing Columbia River Ranch. Demand on CCS continues to grow.

Correspondence:**Fair State Grant Award****OAPA Annual Conference Notice**

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director advised that she is the co-chair for this conference. She is asking if the county wants to be a sponsor. This is a soft ask. Commissioners asked for a formal ask and explanation at a future meeting.

GEODC invoice for Broadband Action Team Consultant.**Commissioner Reports:****Commissioner Russell**

Commissioner Russell explained that he has met with all Department Directors under his Liaison umbrella.

There are some issues with IT (Information Technologies) processes that go back to the CSEPP (Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program) program. IT is working on it.

Tony Clement, General Maintenance Supervisor is working with City of Heppner regarding an oil tank that is about to be pulled out of the ground at the museum/library building.

Commissioner Russell reported he has talked to Public Works as their Liaison, but not Roads, which is not under his Liaison umbrella.

Commissioner Lindsay

Nothing to report.

Adjourn 10:50 a.m.

Executive Session at 10:55 a.m. The Board of Commissioners do not expect to come back to make decisions.