

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
November 23, 2022
Morrow County Government Center, Don Adams Conference Room
Irrigon, Oregon

Present In-Person

Chair Jim Doherty, Commissioner Melissa Lindsay, Commissioner Don Russell, Justin Nelson, Roberta Lutcher, Brian Snyder, Tamra Mabbott, John Bowles, Mike Haugen, Eric Imes, Katie Imes, Todd Lindsay, Lisa Pratt

Present Via Zoom

Paul Gray, Nathen Braun, Jeff Wenholz, Kelsey Crocker, Linda Skendzel, Kevin Ince, Rick Stokoe, Julie Baker, Lindsay Grogan, Mike Gorman, SaBrina Bailey-Cave, Kirsti Cason, Samantha Ramirez, Heidi Turrell, Robin Canaday, Aaron Moss, Yvonne Morter, Bill Saporito, Ana Pineyro, Debbie Radie, Lisa Mittelsdorf, Patrick Collins

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance: 9:00 a.m.

City & Citizen Comments: None

Open Agenda: No items

Consent Calendar

Commissioner Lindsay requested to remove the November 11th minutes and the Accounts Payable.

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

1. *Payroll Payables*
2. *Minutes: November 16th*
3. *Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Discretionary Grant Application, Fiscal Year 2023-25 funding cycle for the Boardman/Port of Morrow Circular Fixed Route; \$302,000; and authorize Chair Doherty to sign on behalf of the County*
4. *ODOT STIF Discretionary Grant Application, FY 2023-25 funding cycle for the Heppner/Boardman Connector Fixed Route; \$302,000; and authorize Chair Doherty to sign on behalf of the County*
5. *Oregon Department of Emergency Management, Emergency Management Performance Grant No. 22-524; reimbursement for Project Costs between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023; \$65,584; and authorize Chair Doherty to sign on behalf of the County*
6. *Property Tax Refund: Aylett, et al., \$10,475.18*
7. *Property Tax Refund: Keven Haguewood, \$2,724.86*

Commissioner Russell seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Accounts Payable

Commissioner Lindsay asked Finance Director, Kevin Ince, about the following payment: American United Life Insurance – Rework DC (Defined Contribution) Plan, \$100. He said he would look into it and report back to her.

Commissioner Lindsay moved to approve the Accounts Payable, as presented. Commissioner Russell seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

November 9th Minutes

Commissioner Lindsay said she wanted to listen to the audio because she didn't think the statement attributed to her about contract-holders not being in Department Head meetings was accurate. She said her statement was that contracts needed to move to Mr. Ince for consistency.

Business Items

Intent to Award – Request for Proposals (RFP) for Water Coordinator

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director

Ms. Mabbott explained the County issued an RFP for professional services for water coordination. One proposal was received and reviewed by a committee consisting of herself, Commissioner Lindsay, Jacob Cain, Kevin Payne, J.R. Cook and Randy Jones, she said. An interview also took place and the committee agreed by consensus to award the contract to GSI Water Solutions, Inc. She said she would return with the contract after the end of the protest period, November 30th.

Commissioner Russell moved to authorize the Planning Department Director to announce the award and proceed with the contract for final review by the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Program Element 75: Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area (LUBGWMA) Services

Robin Canaday, Public Health Director

The new Program Element (PE) is intended to fund Local Public Health Authorities in Morrow and Umatilla Counties to hire one staff each. The staff will support the implementation of OHA's Public Health Workplan to reduce exposure to high levels of nitrates in domestic well drinking water found in the LUBGWMA. Ms. Canaday reviewed the types of services that will be provided – well water screening events for up to 4,500 wells, obtain water samples, access to OHA-funded water treatment systems, etc.

Chair Doherty said assurances were obtained from the state that the funds will not expire. They're building PE 75 as an ongoing concern, he said.

Chair Doherty moved to direct Public Health to work with Human Resources to implement and accept PE 75. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Update on Nitrate Emergency Fund Expenditures

Paul Gray, Emergency Manager

Mr. Gray provided the following breakdown of funds:

- Response (fuel, equipment, canopies, portable toilets, etc.): \$8,880.98
- Filters & Installation: \$57,309.75
- Advertising (Facebook, public relations consultant, etc.): \$15,463.86
- Water Delivery: \$24,436.15
- Temporary Employees: \$5,106.78
- Testing: \$13,804.89
- Total: \$125,002.41

Various discussions, including a lengthy back and forth amongst the Commissioners about the financial assistance from the Boardman Business Coalition headed by Debbie Radie. There was no resolution to the issues discussed or decisions made.

Oregon Department of Human Services Intergovernmental Grant Agreement #178249 – Water Deliveries

This IGA reimburses the County for all water deliveries from July 1, 2022-March 30, 2023. Chair Doherty said if the state “gets on board and starts taking over this,” the amount may suffice.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Oregon Department of Human Services Intergovernmental Grant Agreement No. 178249; effective when fully executed but may start on July 1, 2022 and expire on March 30, 2023; not-to-exceed amount \$55,000; and authorize Chair Doherty to sign on behalf of the County. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Request to Approve Patrol Lieutenant Job Description

Sheriff John Bowles and Undersheriff Brian Snyder

Sheriff Bowles asked to reclassify the Operations Lt. to Patrol Lt., saying the position was covered within the current budget. The Patrol Lt. would manage the Patrol Division and directly supervise the Patrol Sergeants.

Human Resources Director, Lindsay Grogan said it was an official reclassification but was outside the reclassification process because the Sheriff was asking to replace a position already funded with a lower budgeted position, so the money was there. It’s just asking to fund a new position with funds already budgeted for a higher classified position, she added.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Patrol Lt. Job Description with no additional budget appropriations. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Discussion: Commissioner Lindsay asked if the Operations Lt. position needed to be eliminated, and whether that should be part of the motion. Sheriff Bowles commented it would be eliminated. Ms. Grogan said the Operations Lt. would no longer be funded; it’s being transferred to a new position, in other word, replacing the position in the motion to show it will no longer be funded. Chair Doherty asked if Commissioner Russell wanted to withdraw his motion. Commissioner Russell said he was “ok” with the way it was, people understand it. The Sheriff said he was not hiring additional people. Chair Doherty said it was on the record. Commissioner Lindsay said she had this conversation with a different Department Head who wanted to promote someone and she explained there needed to be a job to promote to and that it would have to go through the reclassification process. She stated again her preference to eliminate the other FTE (full-time equivalent) if a position was being added. Commissioner Russell withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Patrol Lt. position and eliminate the Operations Lt. position. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Request to Purchase Dispatching Software

Katie Imes, Transit Manager, The Loop/Public Transit

Ms. Imes explained that a request for qualifications was issued and the panel that reviewed the responses recommended awarding the contract to Ecolane.

Commissioner Russell moved to award the contract for dispatching software and implementation to Ecolane in the amount of \$42,310; and authorize Chair Doherty to sign on behalf of the County. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Discuss National Association of Counties' Funding Request to State Associations for a National Center for Public Lands Counties

Chair Doherty said he was ambivalent on this topic and the Eastern Oregon Counties Association performed some of the same functions.

Commissioner Russell said Morrow County paid dues to EOCA through a formula based on the amount of PILT (payments-in-lieu-of taxes) funds received so he would prefer to pass. The Board agreed by consensus to not respond to the request.

Old Business

County Cistern

Eric Imes, Public Works Director

Mr. Imes said after assessing the situation, he determined the cylindrical cistern could be removed by his crew for about \$20,000. Crew availability might mean it won't take place until around April of next year. However, funding the work cannot come from the Road budget, he added.

Commissioner Russell said the Columbia River Enterprise Zone (CREZ) Board could earmark funds specifically to WCVEDG to reimburse the County, or provide the funds directly to the County with the 2022 money coming in to CREZ.

Because the cistern is surrounded by property owned by the Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group, County Counsel Justin Nelson, said to be sure to obtain that group's approval.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Public Works Director and crew getting the work done. If they are unable, the County will go out for an RFP and bring the results back to the Board. Commissioner Lindsay seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Department Reports

- The Road Department Monthly Report was reviewed by Mike Haugen, Assistant Road Master

Commissioner Liaison Reports

Chair Doherty asked GIS Planning Tech, Stephen Wrecsics, to address the Board on an idea for photos or artwork in the new Morrow County Government Center (MCGC) Building.

Mr. Wrecsics said a group of employees in the building have come up with some ideas for adding interest to the walls, which remained rather sterile. He showed the Board several historic

photos of the Irrigon area, including the Irrigon Rail Station. He asked two things: 1.) Could a committee be formed to bring forward ideas, and 2.) Could a source of funding be identified to pay for the resulting photos or artwork? Chair Doherty and Commissioner Russell expressed support for the effort and asked that the committee's findings come back to the Board. Commissioner Russell added he'd spoken to Mr. Ince and there appeared to be some money left in the MCGC building fund.

Correspondence

- Portland State University, Population Research Center, Preliminary 2022 Population Estimate for Morrow County: 12,315
- Notice from the Office of Governor Kate Brown: Frequently Asked Questions about Governor Brown's Marijuana Pardons

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Russell reported on last week's Association of Oregon Counties' Annual Conference in Eugene. He said Commissioners-Elect David Sykes and Jeff Wenholz travelled to and from the conference with him. He said he also took time during the meetings to introduce them to a variety of people from around the state.

Commissioner Russell spoke about the previous evening's weather event (ice) that resulted in at least 12 calls for an ambulance in a 90-minute period in the Boardman area. He said it overwhelmed the system and points out another reason why the Board should support Boardman Fire Rescue District's application for an ambulance license so when these events do occur, people can get help.

Sheriff Bowles said it overwhelmed the emergency systems in Morrow, Umatilla and Gilliam Counties.

Undersheriff Snyder said he was at the scene and had to wait just over an hour for medical response for two people trapped in a vehicle. All EMS (Emergency Medical Services) was overwhelmed but when Boardman had resources that couldn't be used, it was hard. We could have potentially had help on the scene and other scenes a lot quicker, he said.

Chair Doherty said he appreciated that but emails could be pulled up on such matters. Eighteen months ago some folks we were working with had the ability to sign an intergovernmental agreement under the Ambulance Service Area (ASA) Plan (Commissioner Lindsay clapped). They could have been operating the last 18 months, he said.

Commissioner Russell said the first thing is to have an ambulance license, it doesn't have anything to do with the ASA.

Commissioner Lindsay responded, "In your legal opinion, which is not a legal opinion. Three lawyers think differently," but she said she was happy to hear his.

Chair Doherty said 18 months ago, if they'd worked with partners in the IGA under the ASA, they'd probably have had the transport license 18 months ago. We need to bear that in mind, he added.

Commissioner Russell said the County hired Elizabeth Heckathorne as mediator and both parties agreed to that and now one party doesn't want to participate in that, for whatever reason.

Commissioner Lindsay said it was because Commissioner Russell bullied them out of the room just like he bullied her to shut up.

Commissioner Russell said he didn't bully anybody out of the room.

Commissioner Lindsay said that's what most people said.

Commissioner Russell said, "I was the only one that left the room. The Undersheriff is here and I talked to the representative from the Boardman Police Department and..." (Commissioner Lindsay laughed.) "...There was no bullying reported to me by the Undersheriff at the time, now Sheriff, but I wasn't in there so I don't know."

Commissioner Lindsay said that was the takeaway from the person who said they were bullied and they had the right to their feelings.

- Commissioner Lindsay reported on various panel discussions during the AOC Conference. She also went on to thank Karie Walchli, Morrow County Tourism Consultant, for the table she set up during the County Product Tasting event. Morrow County had one of the best exhibits, she said.

Chair Doherty said the Executive Session scheduled was being suspended. It may or may not come back in some form as we pursue the work down the road.

Signing of documents

Adjourned: 10:45 a.m.