

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2023
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room
Heppner, Oregon

Present In-Person

Chair David Sykes, Commissioner Jeff Wenzholz, Roberta Lutcher, Sandi Pointer, Corey Sweeney, Ben Tucker, Gus Peterson, Mike McNamee, Roy Drago Jr., John Bowles, Brian Snyder, Gina Wilson, Tamra Mabbott, Chris Brown, Mark Browning, Jordan Standley, Justin Nelson, Mike Gorman, Greg Close, Robin Canaday, Aymie Haslam

Present Via Zoom

Kelsey Crocker, Karen Pettigrew, Paul Gray, D. Orid, Erika Lasater, Stephen Wrecksics, SaBrina Bailey-Cave, Brandi Sweeney, Rick Stokoe, Alexandra Hobbs, Linda Skendzel, Christy Kenny, Ray Akers, Eric Kodesch, Lisa Mittelsdorf, Ethan Salata, Deona Siex, Bill Saporito, Shelby Gartside, Glen Diehl, Katie Imes, Kandy Boyd, Debbie Radie, Yvonne Morter, Jennifer Jenck, Kirsti Cason, David Lawlor, Jasmine Garcia

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

City & Citizen Comments: None

Open Agenda: No items

Consent Calendar

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

1. *Minutes: November 9, 2022*
2. *Beneficiary Agreement – Willow Creek Terrace Assisted Living to receive a one-time disbursement of \$150,000 in American Rescue Plan Act/Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to mitigate financial hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic*

Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Public Hearing: Planning & Zoning Map Amendment to Add a New Rock Quarry to the Goal 5 Inventory; Applicant: Morrow County Public Works

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director

Eric Imes, Public Works Director

Chair Sykes opened the Public Hearing at 9:04 a.m., called for potential conflicts of interest, and described how to offer testimony.

Commissioner Wenzholz said, for the record, he was on the Planning Commission when it was recommended this be advanced to the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Mabbott said she checked with land use counsel and he did not see any conflict.

Chair Sykes called for the Staff Report, which was provided by Ms. Mabbott. She also said today was considered as the first reading, with the second reading to take place March 15th, with an effective date of June 15th. Chair Sykes then called for input from the applicant, which was offered by Public Works Director, Eric Imes. Chair Sykes asked if there were any others in favor of the application who wanted to speak. Hearing none, he called for anyone in opposition to the application or anyone with questions or concerns to speak. Hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 9:13 a.m. for the Board to deliberate.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to adopt the Findings and approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, the Zoning Map Amendment and the Conditional Use Permit Application. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Ms. Mabbott clarified the second reading would be February 22nd and that the dates were listed correctly in the Findings and draft Ordinance.

Business Items

Update from Blue Mountain Community College

Mark Browning, President

Mr. Browning said he had a big thank you for Morrow County because it was in the lead for dual credit enrollments for high school students. There were 211 from Morrow County and Riverside High School was the leading contributor. These numbers were up significantly year-to-year, and overall enrollment was up slightly from Winter Term 2022 to Winter Term 2023.

Mr. Browning said the funds Morrow County disbursed from the unanticipated Amazon funds were used to save a program in Morrow County that was going to close. The program was retooled and is working well in customized workforce training through the BMCC Morrow County Workforce Training Center in Boardman. He also discussed efforts to close the distance barrier for some students. Those efforts include improving online connectivity; and bringing training programs to people and locations. He said they've been taking equipment simulators in enclosed trailers to various locations. Mr. Browning introduced Chris Brown, Morrow County's elected representative on the BMCC Board of Education. A brief question and answer session with the Commissioners took place.

Presentations from Commissioner Position 1 Candidates

Gus Peterson, Roy Drago Jr., Mike McNamee

The Board heard presentations from each of the candidates who applied for Commissioner Position 1. They were then asked a series of questions by the Commissioners. Chair Sykes explained the Board would make the selection on February 15th and the new Commissioner would attend his first meeting as Commissioner on February 22nd.

Position Reclassification and New Employee Requests

Lindsay Grogan, Human Resources Director

Ms. Grogan said Department Directors and Elected Officials would present their own requests. The Board opted to hear the requests, take them under consideration for one week, and then decide at the February 15th BOC Meeting what will be forwarded to the Budget Committee.

Sheriff John Bowles requested to reclassify one Dispatcher position to a Civil Deputy position. He also requested three new Patrol Deputies.

According to the spreadsheet provided in the Agenda Packet by HR*, the budget impact for the reclassification: \$240 per month; and for the three new Patrol Deputies: \$459,585.

*(Note: the totals include salary and benefits, in most cases.)

Kevin Ince, Finance Director, requested the Accounting Clerk be reclassified to Accounting Technician. The spreadsheet from HR listed the budget impact as \$346 per month.

Greg Close, Parks General Manager, requested an additional Park Ranger. The total cost for this position, according to the spreadsheet: \$95,363. Mr. Close noted Park employees are grant funded.

Sandi Pointer, Public Works Management Assistant, requested a Janitor position be added to replace those services currently provided by a contractor. She said the County pays about \$120,000 for the janitorial contract and a full-time employee with benefits would be below that. Total cost listed in the spreadsheet: \$81,736.

Eric Imes, Public Works Director, requested a new Administrative Assistant. Total cost listed in the spreadsheet: \$87,860.

Corey Sweeney, Weed Coordinator, requested a part-time Assistant Pesticide Applicator. Total cost listed in the spreadsheet: \$24,397-\$26,237.

Judge Glen Diehl requested to change the part-time Court Clerk I to full-time. Total difference listed in the spreadsheet: \$38,470.

Mike Gorman, Assessor/Tax Collector, requested to promote the Assessment & Tax Office Clerk to Assessment & Tax Office Specialist. Total difference listed in the spreadsheet: \$2,816.

Mr. Gorman also requested an additional Appraiser I. Total listed in the spreadsheet: \$100,862-\$106,182.

Robin Canaday, Public Health Director, requested to add a Health Equity Coordinator. Total listed in spreadsheet: \$111,674-\$121,647. Ms. Canaday explained this will be funded by a grant from the Oregon Health Authority through June 30th. OHA staff have discussed further grants for the next grant biennium but they haven't come forward with specifics, she said. Mr. Ince commented the County had not received the funds yet, nor any agreement or amendment from OHA, which meant there was no mechanism in place for reimbursement.

Ben Tucker, Manager, Morrow County Transit/The Loop, requested to add a part-time Transit Driver II position. Total listed in the spreadsheet: \$16,607.

Spreadsheet Total for All Requests: \$899,936

County Phone System Replacement Procurement

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

Jordan Standley, IT Director

Mr. Ince explained these costs were budgeted and were within appropriations. He said he and Mr. Standley followed intermediate procurement processes in obtaining bids and in making the recommendation to the Board.

Mr. Standley said the system they recommended would be owned by the County and IT would support it. The other bidders were for hosted systems and he said it was prudent to leverage the County's IT Department to support the system. Discussion.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to authorize the IT Department to proceed with procurement of the CrossTalk phone system, as recommended. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Ordinance No. ORD-2023-2: Changing BOC Meetings to the First & Third Wednesdays

Justin Nelson, County Counsel

Mr. Nelson said the Ordinance changed regularly scheduled BOC Meetings from four per month to two; updated County Court references to Board of Commissioners; and allowed for locations to alternate to different cities and locations.

Commissioner Wenholz said the intention going forward was to hold the meetings on the first Wednesday in Heppner and the third Wednesday in Irrigon but he understood the flexibility in the verbiage. Unless circumstances warranted a change, this will be the normal rotation, he said.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to approve Ordinance No. ORD-2023-2: An Ordinance Setting Meeting Schedule for the Morrow County Board of Commissioners. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Wheatridge East Wind, Amended Strategic Investment Program Agreement (SIP), Increase 450 MW to 500 MW

Aymie Haslam and David Lawlor with NextEra Energy reviewed the requested changes. They included the increase from 450 MW to 500; increase the number of towers yet to be built from 150 to 200; and all 500 towers will now be in Morrow County instead of some being in Umatilla County.

Mr. Gorman said this was the second amendment to the original SIP and the amendment will apply to the remaining years of the 15-year agreement and will not extend it.

Mr. Nelson said the annual fiscal impact to the County will mean an increase of \$400,000.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to approve the Amendment to the Amended and Restated Oregon Strategic Investment Program Agreement for East Wind Portion of Wheatridge Facilities. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Request to Issue a Request for Proposals for Labor Attorney Services

Lindsay Grogan, HR Director

During the discussion, Chair Sykes noted there was no particular reason for issuing an RFP now, except that no contract or agreement can be found for the current labor attorney who has been providing those services since the 1980s.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to approve the issuing of a Request for Proposals for Employment/Labor Attorney Services. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Department Reports

- The Probation & Parole Semi-Annual Report was presented by Gina Wilson, P&P Officer
- The Tourism Semi-Annual Report was provided by Karie Walchli, Contracted Tourism Consultant
- The Finance Department Quarterly Report was provided by Mr. Ince
- The written Treasurer's Monthly Report was reviewed, as submitted by Jaylene Papineau
- The Planning Department Monthly Report was provided by Director Tamra Mabbott

Correspondence

- Flyers for three "Goal 9: Economic Development" Townhall Meetings in Heppner, Lexington and Ione. The meetings will be facilitated by Points Consulting in partnership with the Morrow County Planning Department

Commissioner Reports

- Chair Sykes said an Interim Administrator was hired and her first day will be February 15th. He said he hoped everyone would give Roberta Vanderwall a nice Morrow County welcome.

Signing of Documents

Adjourned: 12:20 p.m.