

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2023
Bartholomew Building Upper Conference Room
Heppner, Oregon

Present In-Person

Chair David Sykes, Commissioner Jeff Wenholz, Roberta Vanderwall, Roberta Lutcher, Justin Nelson, John Bowles, Aaron Moss, Sandi Pointer, Kristen Bowles, Ivy Adams, Lisa Pratt, Mike McNamee, Roy Drago, Corey Sweeney, Jordan Standley, Kevin Ince, Kevin Miracle, Mike Hughes, Ken Browne

Present Via Zoom

Gus Peterson, Lindsay Grogan, D. Orid, Ana Pineyro, Ana Maria Rodriguez, Theresa Crawford, SaBrina Bailey-Cave, Jaylene Papineau, Julie Baker, Erika Lasater, Shelby Gartside, Darcy Lynn, Patrick Collins, Robin Canaday, Yvonne Morter, Linda Skendzel, Benjamin Tucker, Kirsti Cason, Kelsey Crocker, Antonio Sierra, Karen Wolff, Eric Imes, Debbie Radie, Christy Kenny

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

City & Citizen Comments

Boardman resident, Kelly Doherty, speaking on behalf of Oregon Rural Action, “requested uploading of Zoom meetings with Spanish translation be officially put on the agenda for the next meeting for discussion and action. We’d also like to speak on the education and outreach position. Morrow County is responsible for the health of our community and we don’t think we want to wait for a grant fund from OHA (Oregon Health Authority). We think this position needs to be filled immediately. We’re lacking outreach. We’re lacking education. We don’t have any contacts. We really need to get the word out. We still have people that are still drinking the water and we still need to get the testing done on the filtration systems. It’s not being done and we really need to get that position up and running and I don’t think that we should wait for the grant funding. I think that Morrow County has enough funding to fill that position quite easily. Speaking as Kelly Doherty and not Oregon Rural Action, because Oregon Rural Action is a 501c and cannot endorse a candidate, so speaking on behalf of the 500 members that have signed the petition for safe rural water, community members, we would like to voice our support for Mike McNamee. He spoke out and believes that the #1 issue in Morrow County is the nitrate issue and we support that position, as well.”

Chair Sykes asked Ms. Doherty to put her request in an email to him so he knew exactly what she was asking and it would be considered.

Open Agenda: No items

Consent Calendar:

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

- 1. Minutes: January 25th, February 1st & 8th*

Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Public Hearing: Solid Waste Rate Increase Request from Waste Connections, Zone 1; Order No. OR-2023-2

Sandi Pointer, Public Works

Kevin Miracle, Sanitary Disposal/Waste Connections

Chair Sykes opened the Public Hearing at 9:04 a.m. and called for abstentions, conflicts of interest or ex parte contact with an opponent or proponent.

Commissioner Wenholz said he was the Commissioner representative to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) and attended the meeting where this came before them. SWAC recommended the rate request be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners, he said.

Chair Sykes explained how to offer testimony and called for the Staff Report.

Ms. Pointer provided the Staff Report and noted Commissioner Wenholz abstained from voting at the SWAC Meeting.

Mr. Miracle said he last appeared before the Board with a rate increase in November 2022. The 5.5% increase was approved but Waste Connections had not had a year with Sanitary Disposal yet. Since then, “we’ve gotten our feet under us more,” he said. He went on to outline the reasons for the increase, such as the increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), personnel costs and equipment costs.

Chair Sykes said he would take Mr. Miracle’s comments as testimony from someone in favor of the rate increase request and asked if anyone else wished to speak in favor. He noted there was a letter in the Agenda Packet in favor of the request from the Public Works Director, Eric Imes, acting as the Solid Waste Administrator. Chair Sykes asked for anyone opposed to the increase to speak. Hearing none, he closed the Public Hearing at 9:13 a.m.

Commissioner Wenholz said based on what he heard and the prices going up for everybody, as well as the recommendation from the Solid Waste Administrator, he was prepared to make a motion.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to approve Order No. OR-2023-2: In the Matter of Rate Increase for Solid Waste Collection by Waste Connections of Oregon, Doing Business as Sanitary Disposal. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Business Items

Deliberate and Appoint Candidate to Commissioner Position 1

Chair Sykes said the appointee would be sworn-in prior to the February 22nd BOC Meeting. He said all three candidates were solid citizens and good people, and that he based his decision on experience in government because he viewed that as important.

Chair Sykes move to appoint Roy Drago Jr., who has experience in governance from serving on the city council. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Discussion: Commissioner Wenholz said that was part of what he was going to base his decision on – that Mr. Drago has been elected twice to the Boardman City Council, has experience serving and has familiarity with public meetings and everything that goes along with it, and will have the time to devote to it. Any one of

the three candidates would have made a good choice but, he said, he based his decision on experience serving in a similar type capacity. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Chair Sykes encouraged all six candidates who applied to consider running when the position is open in two years. If interested in serving, come back and try again at the ballot box, he said.

Discuss Potential Broadband Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for the Creation of the Morrow County Broadband Action Team (BAT) Improvement Consortium

Aaron Moss, Morrow County Broadband Action Team

Mr. Moss provided an update on recent activities of the Team and discussed the proposed IGA between the County and the Port of Morrow to formalize the structure of the BAT. The Commissioners agreed to hold a joint Work Session with the Port in the near future. Chair Sykes thanked Mr. Moss for his work that has positioned Morrow County very well for possible grant funds, among other things.

Miscellaneous

Chair Sykes said the following item should have been listed on next week's agenda as the intention was to have all three Commissioners at the table for the decision: Business Item f – Recommendations to Forward to the Budget Committee Regarding Position Reclassifications & New Employee Requests.

Potential Changes in Deployment Plan for Office/Microsoft 365

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

Jordan Standley, IT Director

Mr. Ince explained the County budgeted to acquire Microsoft 365 G1 licenses but he and Mr. Standley recommended upgrading to G3 licenses. The G3 license offered additional features, functionality and, most importantly, enhanced cyber-security. The cost per year for the G1 license for employees will be \$19,050 and the G3 will be \$55,680. About \$18,000-\$20,000 can be made up of the \$36,630 price difference by software and other programs that will no longer be necessary, said Mr. Ince. It was recently brought to light that the insurance carrier and other certifying agencies require more than a G1 license, according to Mr. Standley.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to proceed with the G3 licenses versus the G1 licenses. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Budget Committee Appointment Request

The Commissioners expressed their preference to consider this appointment after the third Commissioner takes office.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to continue this to the February 22nd BOC Meeting. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Appointment Request – Morrow County Public Transit Advisory Committee

Commissioner Wenholz moved to reappoint Stephanie Case to the Morrow County Public Transit Advisory Committee; term to be February 8, 2023 to February 8, 2026. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Recommendations to Forward to the Budget Committee Regrading Position Reclassifications & New Employee Requests

Commissioner Wenholz moved to schedule the recommendations to forward to the Budget Committee Regarding Position Reclassifications & New Employee Requests to the February 22nd BOC Meeting. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Commissioner Wenholz stressed the reason for doing this was to have the third Commissioner involved.

Department Reports

- The Weed Department Quarterly Report was provided by Corey Sweeney, Weed Coordinator/Inspector

Correspondence: None

Commissioner Reports

- Brief reports of activity were provided

Signing of Documents

Adjourned: 10:05 a.m.