

MINUTES
UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Meeting of October 16, 2019
9:00 a.m., Room 130, Umatilla County Courthouse
Pendleton, Oregon

Commissioners Present: Chair George Murdock, Vice-Chair John Shafer, and Commissioner Bill Elfering

County Counsel: Doug Olsen

Members and Guests Present: Robert Pahl, Chief Finance Officer; Tom Fellows, Public Works Director; Human Resources: Jennifer Blake, Director; Paul Chalmers, Assessment & Taxation Director; Sherry Muhs, Hermiston; Pat Maier, Hermiston; Alisha Southwick, UCo Health Deputy Director; Leah Lopez, OHSU Nursing Student; Mark Tanner, Facilities Manager; Mark Morgan, Hermiston Assistant City Manager; Phil Wright; 911 Dispatch: Kathy Lieuallen, Eva Van Beek, Nicole Kellas, Karen Primer, Hannah Foster; Gail Nelson, Econ. Dev. Director; Undersheriff Jim Littlefield

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Murdock called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He reminded those present that the meeting is a public forum. It is being video and audio recorded and minutes will be taken. Comments will become part of the meeting record. If persons wish to speak before the Board, please come to the podium, identify yourself and state where you live in order to be heard on the record – also note if you are speaking on behalf of others. He noted there is a point for public input before business items for other than agenda items.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Shafer.

Awards/Correspondence/Recognition. Commendations were presented by Commissioner Elfering for 1) Dispatcher Hannah Foster and for 2) Dispatcher Eva Van Beek for great work staying calm and helpful during 911 emergency calls. Capt. Kathy Lieuallen also came forward to make comments and presented citations to each. Photos were taken. Secondly, Commissioner Elfering recognized Search & Rescue responders coming back from a meeting on 10/5 in Union County who helped a motorist who had crashed his vehicle into a river under a bridge. Thank you Dwight Johnson and others!

Minutes – Commissioner Shafer moved to approve the Board minutes from the meeting of 10/02/19. **Seconded by Commissioner Murdock. Carried, 3-0.**

Additions to Agenda – none.

Public Comments – none.

Business Items

1. **Creation of Position.** Mark Tanner, Facilities Manager, presented. The request is for a new position. This would be adding a .5 FTE employee in maintenance, plus .5 FTE at Public Works (duties split summer work in Administrative Services/Maintenance and winter in Public Works). General fund share (or half) = \$33,307; effective 11/1/19. The position would replace the seasonal position currently budgeted in maintenance. The position will be reviewed annually. **Commissioner Shafer moved to approve the creation of the new position. Seconded by Commissioner Elfering. Carried, 3-0.**
2. **Maintenance Payable - Tektoniks.** Mark Tanner, Facilities Manager, presented in Dan Lonai’s absence. This payable is for asbestos removal associated with the remodel at Pendleton High School (school-based health center). Doug Olsen added it is the County’s responsibility due to our actions at the school based health

center. **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the payment of \$5,613.32. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**

3. Maintenance Payable – Overhead Door. Mr. Tanner presented. This is also for request for approval of a payable. An overhead door was replaced at the maintenance building. This will include the down payment, or ½ = \$3,806.05 as a deposit to start work, and the total of \$7,612). This was done to eliminate the open space. **Commissioner Shafer moved to approve payment. Seconded by Commissioner Elfering. Carried, 3-0.**
4. Election Payable – Ryder Elections Services. Mr. Olsen presented in Dan Lonai’s absence. This payable is for ballots for the upcoming election; a routine yearly expense. (Total = \$12,394.48 to Ryder Elections Services). **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the payable. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
5. Box Culvert Purchase. Tom Fellows, Public Works Director, presented. Approval is sought for the purchase of a culvert for Gettman Road. Two bids were received from a previously approved RFP. He recommends approval to purchase the aluminum box culvert from Eastern Oregon Rentals & Sales in the amount of \$55,696. **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the purchase of the culvert. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
6. Wheel Loader Purchase. Mr. Fellows presented. Upon issuing an RFP approved previously for the purchase of a wheel loader, five quotes were received. He recommends purchase of a 2018 John Deere loader from Papé Machine = \$150,200. It is on the Public Works equipment list, and budget is available. **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the purchase of the wheel loader. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
7. Snow Blower Purchase. Mr. Fellows presented. Only one proposal was received from RFP issuance. This is to purchase a snow blower attachment from Modern Machinery for \$51,325. **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the purchase of the equipment. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
8. Public Health Accreditation. Alisha Southwick, UCo Health Deputy Director, presented. With the department’s strategic plan finished, they now can apply for the accreditation process consisting of gathering documents. In a year from now, a site visit will be schedule and accreditation would be approved at that time. The fee will be paid out of the UCo Health budget, which is available and a formula split will be used. \$14,000 is the 1-time application fee with an annual fee after that. This has been an ongoing process for about five years. Accreditation will make UCo Health more competitive for state and federal funding opportunities. **Commissioner Murdock commended the long-term hard work and he moved to approve formal letter of support and to approve \$14,000 fee payment. Seconded by Commissioner Elfering. Carried, 3-0.**
9. Public Health Billing Services Contract. Ms. Southwick presented. They have had this open position with no luck attracting a qualified applicant. They are looking to enter into contract for this billing/coding service. The position has been vacant since August. An estimate of revenue increase hoped for is +.6.99% or about \$220,000. Budget is available. This would amend the existing contract with Greenway Health for electronic health record program to include “Greenway Revenue Services” to allow billing services at a cost increase of 6.99% of revenues. Commissioner Murdock noted difficulty in hiring and keeping qualified billers/coders. A contract is a good option and it would be beneficial to use electronic provider service for improving revenue. **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve contract. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
10. Creation of Position – Public Health. Ms. Southwick presented. The legislature approved budget providing \$15 million, thus making it possible for funding this new full-time health educator position (Range 25) based on a formula activated by health modernization in the last biennium. Commissioner Murdock noted funding

is on the upswing. The state is being reminded about its contributions to budget (like the federal and local government have provided). **Commissioner Murdock moved to approve creation of position. Seconded by Commissioner Elfering. Carried, 3-0.** In addition, Ms. Southwick introduced a guest nurse from OHSU, Leah Lopez, who is shadowing the Health Department for a short period.

11. Enterprise Zone Agreement. Mr. Olsen presented. Approval is sought for an agreement with developer in Greater Hermiston Enterprise Zone. This would be a 15-year tax abatement with agreement with Amazon Data Services. With tax relief, the developer, in turn, will make payments in lieu of property taxes to be split equally between the County and City of Hermiston. Additional payments were outlined. The subject property is in the Stanfield School District, but Amazon would make a donation to the Hermiston School District due to the impact of employees with children attending those schools.

Patricia Maier, Hermiston. Talked about tax dollars and they are regulated with funds to certain things split out. She also talked about increases; however, this particular tax generated funds will not be split. Mr. Olsen explained, the fee paid for the payment in lieu of \$25 million on tax roll will be divided among the special districts in the taxing area based on each entities tax rate. It is not on the tax roll, but will be paid to those districts as if it would be. The developer will contribute an additional amount to the Hermiston School District. The reason for the payment is that employees from Hermiston would have children attending Hermiston schools. Ms. Maier went on to talk about employment, construction, etc. She also talked about being transparent. Commissioner Murdock agreed with that. He added that Enterprise Zones and SIP agreements are business incentives to attract location of business. Businesses can go elsewhere. The “gift” equates to 2% of the budget for the City of Hermiston and the fire district. She suggested if the gift is declined, could they be asked to pay the taxes? Commissioner Murdock pointed out the only way any school district can benefit generally, is with a corporate gift and not tax revenue.

Mark Morgan, Hermiston’s Assistant City Manager and also administrator of the Greater Hermiston Enterprise Zone, thanked the Commissioners, Mr. Olsen, Paul Chalmers (Assessment & Taxation Director) and Robert Pahl (Chief Finance Officer) for working in partnership to create this Memorandum of Understanding. And, the company appreciates the efficiency of the agreement as well. All want Umatilla County to be attractive to businesses. This is a great investment here and all over the world -- incentives make part of a company’s decision to locate.

He noted after Hermiston’s 10/14/19 council meeting, they are giving away exactly zero; it is tax revenue they wouldn’t have had. Fee payments for \$25 million in assessed value are to be split among taxing districts. All fee payments vs. taxes coming in, would equate to the company being the largest taxpayer in Hermiston. He also pointed out it is misleading that the company is not paying anything; they truly are.

Regarding the school funding formula, he worked with Hermiston School District’s Business Manager to confirm all is well and these fee payments won’t reduce funding they receive from the state.

Commissioner Elfering talked about further economic impact. Mr. Morgan noted this type of business is new in the last 10 years. In the long-term, salaries are high and contribute to local economy – not pulling from services.

Commissioner Murdock reiterated the point of percentage of budgets increased by this development – it is 1% of the County’s budget (Mr. Pahl agreed). The first step is to improve the agreement. Secondly, the agreement down the line would spell out where funds to be used. He noted historical practice is to work with a subject area regarding any fund distributions.

Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the agreement for long-term rural enterprise zone and adopt Order No. BCC2019-068. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.

12. Economic Development Grant. Gail Nelson, Economic Development Coordinator, presented. The grants committee recommends approval of a \$5,100 grant to Class 5 Coffee Works (in Pilot Rock) for signage and ADA ramp. **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the grant and payable. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
13. Community Development Grant. Ms. Nelson presented. The grants committee recommends approval of a \$10,000 grant (in conjunction with several other funding sources) to the Umatilla County Historical Society for help with its museum flooring replacement project. Commissioner Elfering added, for information, funding to the County comes from Video Lottery dollars. In addition, Ms. Nelson advised there is a state mandate funds are to be targeted to economic development. Commissioner Murdock noted his conflict and declared abstaining from vote. **Commissioner Elfering moved to approve the grant and payable. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 2-0. Commissioner Murdock abstained.**

Executive Session – none.

Commissioners' Reports

Commissioner Elfering: (1) West Umatilla County trail meetings -- four held this week in different towns with good turnout at each. Discussion included trail design from the Columbia River at Umatilla to Echo following the Umatilla River. A grant through US Parks in an advisory role has been helpful in the process.

(2) Had a phone conference with AOC's public safety committee with more discussion about grand jury recordation – an unfunded mandate.

Commissioner Shafer: Noted the AOC governance committee also continues discussion of unfunded mandates.

Commissioner Elfering commented about recent Columbia Development Authority meeting regarding depot property and inventory.

Commissioner Murdock expressed more and continuing concern of unfunded mandates. (2) He is chairing the search committee for AOC's new Executive Director. They are down to four finalists -- to be interviewed November 15. (3) He also is on AOC's budget/finance committee noting the budget is now balanced and appropriate reserves are available to fund ongoing AOC activities. (4) He will attend the Census meeting at the Pendleton Convention Center tonight and another one in Hermiston tomorrow night; they are trying to engage more partners. He noted he is also a member of NACO's Census work group. Updated federal figures equate to \$3,200 for every person counted in Umatilla County. He expressed the importance of keeping the Census discussion moving. He also pointed out that the Umatilla County committee is one of the first in the nation to organize itself in the upcoming Census.

Commissioner Murdock then noted town halls for discussion have been schedule to discuss the upcoming election/ballot measures and each commissioner will attend. He was at Pendleton last night, Commissioner Elfering will attend in Hermiston and Commissioner Shafer will attend in Milton-Freewater.

Commissioner Shafer attended EOCI's prison advisory council yesterday and took a tour of the new fully functioning wellness facility for staff – looking to increase staff health.

The meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda Slatt

Executive Secretary, Umatilla County Board of Commissioners