

COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

May 11, 2005

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners met in scheduled session with Commissioner Anthony Hyde, Commissioner Joe Corsiglia and Commissioner Rita Bernhard, together with Sarah Tyson, Assistant County Counsel and Jan Greenhalgh, Board Secretary.

Commissioner Hyde called the meeting to order and led the flag salute.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Bernhard moved and Commissioner Corsiglia seconded to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2005 Board meeting and May 4, 2005 Staff meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

**VISITOR COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Hyde understands there are many veterans in attendance today to discuss the budget for VA services. He wanted to speak first on the issue. County's deliver a lot of services on behalf of the state and federal government and VA services is one of them. When the state mandates services, they pass through the funds to the local governments to provide those services. When the state gets in a tight budget, they cut funding but not the mandates and assumes that local governments will fill the gap. They still expect the services to be provided. He has been representing counties statewide through the Association of Oregon Counties and is highly involved in the process. One of the issues they are dealing with is VA services. The state has cut the funding for VA in half. Last year, the state funded \$10,000, as opposed to the \$20,000 it should have and the County made up the difference. This year, the State plans to cut VA funding again and wants the county to make up the difference again. The county has budgeted \$10,000 for VA services. Commissioner Hyde feels that the State needs to fund this service and a lot of pressure needs to be put on the legislators to make sure these services are funded. He explained two bills that are before the legislature now which, if passed, will make sure VA services are funded from this point forward. He explained that if the county supplants another \$10,000 - for a total of \$20,000 - they would be locked in to that amount forever. The county doesn't have that in their budget. He is rather upset today, because the county is not the enemy here. He has spoken with the legislators at length on this issue and counties will not step aside on this.

Chet Thomas wanted to say that he is the one who invited Katie to the meeting today to answer any questions that the Board couldn't. At the last meeting regarding this issue, Congressman Wu was present and went away with plans to support VA services. Chet wanted to know what he has done on the issue. Chet was at the VA doctor and there was a notice posted saying that if a veteran was elected for surgery, it would be 9 to 12 months out. That is not acceptable. There will be a lot of vets coming back from Iraq and will be needing VA services. We don't want this to be buried. We want to keep the VA services alive. There are peoples lives at stake here.

Commissioner Bernhard feels there needs to be a bigger push at the federal level and doesn't understand why there isn't. Katie explained that VA services are funded by the federal government. The problem is that unless you have a local advocate to help the veterans, the outcome is slim to none. The advocates are a tremendous benefit to the vets and it shows in the number of benefit dollars coming in to Oregon vets.

Commissioner Hyde feels that the time to push is now. There are currently two bills before the legislature, SB10 for \$5 million and HB 2700 for \$2 million. Both create new funding for VA services and he encouraged all veterans to contact their legislators right away.

Commissioner Corsiglia stated that the Board feels for the citizens. People feel that when they pay their tax bill, the county gets all of that revenue. The fact is that the County only receives about 18% of that money. Every time the state takes funding away, the county needs to determine the best way to use that \$1.30 per \$1,000. They cannot tap the money that goes to all other outside districts. The County could use everyone's help in contacting the State about these types of services.

Commissioner Hyde gave the audience the names and phone number of the legislators they need to contact and again, encouraged everyone to contact them and voice their opinions.

Bonnie Paripa - she is the wife of a veteran and strongly believes that the vets have served our county and stood up for our rights and deserve these services. Her husband just got out of surgery but he almost died because of the amount of time it took for him to receive the much needed medical services. We all need to do what we can to make sure that the veterans are taken care of the way they should be and deserve to be.

Katie gave a couple additional names to call.

The Board thanked everyone for coming in to express their opinions on this very important issue.

**HEARING: SURRENDERING JURISDICTION OF ROSE AVE & ALDER STREET:**

This is the time set for the public hearing, "In the Matter of Surrendering Jurisdiction Over Those Portions of Clara Cleveland County Road No. P-158 (commonly known as Rose Avenue) and Alder Street located within the City Limits of Vernonia, Oregon".

Cynthia Zemaitis gave a brief staff report. As the Board will recall, late in 2002 the County agreed to transfer a piece of property formerly owned by Julie Cameron, Tax Account No. 4405-014-13800, located on Weed Avenue in Vernonia, to the City of Vernonia, upon their agreement to accept jurisdiction of the portions of Cleveland Road (Rose Avenue) and Alder Streets lying within the City limits. This exchange also included a strip of property, Tax Account No. 4404-023-03700, also owned by Cameron, lying behind the Weed Avenue property which we subsequently received through foreclosure. The City agreed – upon condition that the Road

Department satisfactorily repair the roads. That work has now been done and the City is asking for the deeds to the former Cameron properties.

Following the hearing, the Board must determine whether it is necessary, expedient or in the best interests of the county to surrender jurisdiction over these portions of county roads to the City of Vernonia.

The hearing was opened for public testimony.

Dave Hill, Public Works Director, is in favor of this.

With no further testimony coming before the Board, the hearing was closed for deliberation. With that, Commissioner Bernhard moved and Commissioner Corsiglia seconded to transfer jurisdiction of those portions of Clara Cleveland County Road No. P-158 (commonly known as Rose Avenue) and Alder Street located within the city limits of Vernonia to the City of Vernonia, and to approve Order No. 19-2005 upon County Counsel approval. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Commissioner Hyde read the consent agenda in full. With that, Commissioner Bernhard moved and Commissioner Corsiglia seconded to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- (A) Ratify Select-to-Pay for 5/10/05.
- (B) Authorize Stan Mendenhall to hire one Juvenile Probation Officer in the Juvenile Department.
- (C) Reappoint Dave Coomb to the Ambulance Service Advisory Committee, as an alternate for CRF&R, term to expire on December 31, 2007.
- (D) Approve the Determination of Eligibility as Non-Profit under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 Section 105(a)(15) and authorize the Chair to sign.
- (E) Approval to apply for the 2005 CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Funds and authorize Community Action Team to submit an application.
- (F) Resolution No. 20-2005, "In the Matter of the 2005 Election to Receive O&C Land Related Safety-Net Payments Under P.L. 106-393".

The motion carried unanimously.

**COMMISSIONER HYDE COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Hyde was in Salem last Friday to attend the Council of Forest Trust Lands. One topic discussed was the lawsuit with the State of Oregon dealing with the funding they were taking away. They are getting close to a settlement on that lawsuit.

He also met with Senator Gordlee on Community Corrections funding and the creation of a Homeland Security Department.

On Monday, he was in Salem attending an AOC Legislative Committee meeting. Then he met with the Governor, the Chief of State and House Majority Leader.

This afternoon, he will be in Salem meeting with Curt Schraeder.

**COMMISSIONER CORSIGLIA COMMENTS:**

On Friday, Commissioner Corsiglia attended a Port Appreciation event at Multnomah Plywood. The Port has held a couple of these events to show their appreciation for their employees. This has been a very positive thing for the Port.

Last weekend, he attended a concert given by the Oregon Symphony in Clatskanie which was very nice.

On Monday, he met with the Meth group again. Discussion was held on the need for a stronger and more involved Sheriff's department to combat the meth problem in Columbia County.

**COMMISSIONER BERNHARD COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Bernhard also attended the Port BBQ at Multnomah Plywood and the employees were happy to see that they were being recognized.

On Friday, Janet Wright and herself met with the Scappoose and St. Helens Senior Center Board members at the St. Helens Senior Center to talk about transportation issues. The RFP process is moving along pretty well and she is anxious to see how many responses they will receive. She and Janet will be going around the county to talk about the transportation issues.

On Saturday, she spent the day going around the county attending different events. The Farmers Market in Scappoose has been very successful. It was a good time to talk with a lot of people.

Next week, she will be in Redmond attending a GOHBI conference. This is her first meeting as a Board member. This group is a statewide organization dealing with mental health.

Commissioner Bernhard commented that there are some employees in the Assessor's office who are volunteering their time to paint their offices. They will be doing this on the weekend and also supplying the paint. This is a good thing for employee moral.

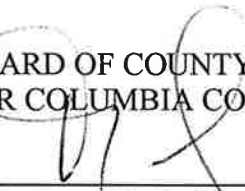
There was no Executive Session held.

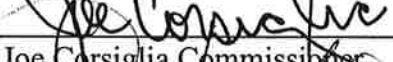
With nothing further coming before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

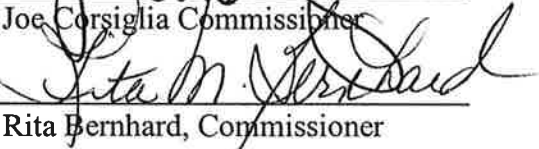
Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 11<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2005.

NOTE: A tape of this meeting is available for purchase by the public or interested parties.

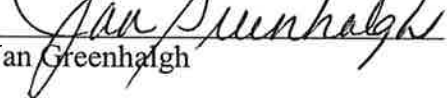
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By:   
Anthony Hyde, Chair

By:   
Joe Corsiglia Commissioner

By:   
Rita Bernhard, Commissioner

Recording Secretary:

By:   
Jan Greenhalgh