

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

MINUTES

September 9, 2015

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners met in scheduled session with Commissioner Henry Heimuller, Commissioner Anthony Hyde and Commissioner Earl Fisher, together with Sarah Hanson, County Counsel and Jan Greenhalgh, Board Office Administrator.

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

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Hyde moved and Commissioner Fisher seconded to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2015 Board meeting and September 2, 2015 Staff meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

**VISITOR COMMENTS:**

None.

**HEARING: 2015 NW OREGON REGIONAL HOUSING REHABILITATION GRANT:**

This is the time set for the public hearing to solicit input on the 2015 Northwest Oregon Regional Housing Rehabilitation Project grant for Columbia, Clatsop and Tillamook Counties.

Sarah read the public hearing notice in its entirety into the record as required under the grant terms.

***Susan Wagner and Beverly Danner, Community Action Team, 125 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, St.***

***Helens:*** Susan presented information on the grant details. CAT is working with the Columbia County who has agreed to be the lead applicant for this grant application. She explained that this grant is somewhat different from prior years. It used to be a revolving loan fund, so any properties that were assisted, were done as zero interest loans, with those funds being recaptured when the home sells, the owner passes or if they refinance. Those funds would go back into the revolving loan fund to be reissued and so on. This year, CAT is going after a grant program that will serve those who previously could not be served, such as those who own a mobile home in a park but do not own the property underneath. This will be a great benefit those people in need. These will be grants funds and will not be recaptured.

Commissioner Heimuller, who also sits on the Community Action Team Board, wanted to emphasize that there are a lot of mobile homes in the county that are deteriorating but those are someone's home. These grants funds will help these people get their homes winterized, with possible new windows, new roof, and basically make is safe for the occupants to live there. Commissioner Hyde agrees and sees this grant as a big help to those who desperately need it. Susan explained that there will be guidelines and a process to be followed for someone to qualify. Both the rehabilitation and winterization needs go through one process.

The hearing was opened for public testimony.

***Sharon Evinger, 52276 SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Scappoose:*** She supports this grant and just wanted to comment on the remark from Commissioner Hyde that there isn't much equity in these homes. But when they put these funds into a house that someone else owns, they get none on that back anyway. So she just wants to say she is really glad to see that included for those people in the trailers.

With no further testimony coming before the Board, the hearing was closed. Sarah explained that no action is needed by the Board today. Once the final application is prepared, it will then come before the Board for consideration. That will take place sometime before the end of this month. The Board expressed their full support of this grant application.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Commissioner Heimuller read the consent agenda in full. With no changes/additions, Commissioner Hyde moved and Commissioner Fisher seconded to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- (A) Ratify the Select to Pay for week of 9/7/15.
- (B) Appoint John Sides, Karl Webster and Troy Tindall to the Transportation/Road Advisory Committee for a two year term.

**AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS/AMENDMENTS:**

- (C) Intergovernmental Agreement #234-15 with the Oregon Department of Administrative Services for Printing and Mailing Services and authorize the Chair to sign.
- (D) Hold Harmless Agreement with the City of St. Helens for the Use of the Courthouse Plaza for 2015 Halloweentown Events and authorize Chair to sign.
- (E) Public Road Event Permit and Indemnity Agreement for the Bridge to Breakers event.

The motion carried unanimously.

**TRANSIT SPECIAL DISTRICT:**

Commissioner Fisher explained that there has been a lot of discussion on stabilizing funding for our transit system and the Board had asked the Transit Committee to come before the Board to discuss this.

***Janet Wright, CC Rider, 1155 Deer Island Road, St. Helens:*** Janet provided a summary of the 9/2/15 meeting held between the Board of Commissioners and members of the Transit Committee, to discuss the recommendation for the creation of a Special Transportation District for the purpose of stabilizing funding for the transit program. The reason behind their recommendation for a special district is they felt it would allow for a separate elected Board that could focus on transportation issues and better move the transportation services forward in a more efficient manner. They also felt that having as service district model rather than a special district model would just be status quo. CC Rider would continue to be a part of the county and somewhat held back from focusing on transit issues. It was felt that to fund a service district would be a one step process and less confusing than the special district process. Janet briefly explained the steps involved with getting this on the May 2016 ballot. The last issue is the levy amount, which would be part of the ballot title, and determined it should be between \$.20 - \$.25 cents per thousand. The committee felt \$1 million per year, which would be the \$.23 cent levy, would get them the closest amount to maintain transit services. Her recommendation would be for the Board to direct staff to prepare the paperwork for a \$.23 cent levy on the May 2016 levy.

For the benefit of the public, Commissioner Fisher asked how the department is currently funded. Janet explained that funding basically comes from grants, bus fares, community contributions (which is starting to dry up), along with contributions from the cities and PCC.

Commissioner Hyde asked about the cities contributions and would those continue. Janet would not count that out. Commissioner Hyde suggested that this discussion be held with the cities and that they be asked to approve a resolution in support of this. Commissioner Fisher agrees that the cities need to consider a resolution of support because they do have a voice in this.

Commissioner Heimuller felt it is important for the public to know that transportation is so essential to a community. The transit service is the only form of transportation for many to get to doctor appointments, shopping and even social events. He also noted that transit systems are not profitable. He gave a brief statement on how the system used to be and what it has become today, with a lot of hard work between staff. There have been cutbacks over the past few years because of the loss of grant dollars, but staff has struggled hard to look at all funding options to keep these services going. No one wants more taxes, but we need to look at transportation as a vital part of economic development and the survival of our communities.

Sarah went over the list of processes and time lines that need to happen to get this on the May 2016 ballot.

***Thelma Bonar, 56734 Way Lane, Warren:*** Thelma echos all of the comments made by Commissioner Hyde, however, she would like to see a service district rather than a special district, with oversight by the County Commissioners. She truly supports the transit program and has been using it for a long time. The program needs the funding, but the public needs to be informed in order for this to pass. People want to know where their money is being spent. She is glad to see this Board stepping up on this.

With no further comments, Commissioner Fisher moved and Commissioner Hyde seconded to instruct staff to prepare the resolutions and necessary paperwork to

establish a Special Transportation District at \$.23 cents per thousand on the May 2016 ballot. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Fisher expressed his appreciation for the hard work by the Transit Advisory Committee and others involved in this matter.

**COMMISSIONER HEIMULLER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Heimuller met with Cameron Smith the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs who was in town to discuss the many issues involving veterans services. Commissioner Heimuller expressed to him his concerns with transportation for our veterans and the need for improvements.

**COMMISSIONER HYDE COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Hyde was in Salem twice last week. Once for the Council of Forest Trust Lands Advisory committee meeting. They are working on a harvest management plan to come up with something that works for the counties as far as harvest levels for the next decade. Then on Friday, he attended the meeting with our Oregon Emergency Management Director for discussion on emergency management planning grants. We need to always stay vigilant with regards to emergency management. He mentioned that the County has a new Emergency Management Director coming on board this month. He also attended the Homeland Security Emergency Management Committee meeting yesterday to discuss funding for emergency management.

**COMMISSIONER FISHER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Fisher was also attended the meeting with Mr. Smith of Veterans Affairs. He sees that we, as people, need to take care of ourselves. We cannot be dependant on the Federal and State government. We need to help our own neighbors.

The Board received a report from the Jail today. The Sheriff has been able to hire more deputies, has added bed space for 70+ inmates and has not had to matrix anyone out of jail in the past few months. He appreciates that the people were able to support the Jail levy to help make this happen.

There was no Executive Session held.

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

Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 9<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2015.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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Henry Heimuller, Chair

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Anthony Hyde, Commissioner

By: \_\_\_\_\_

BOC Minutes

9/9/15

Page 8

Jan Greenhalgh

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Office Administrator

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Earl Fisher, Commissioner