

COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
December 16, 2020

The Columbia County Board Of Commissioners met virtually in a scheduled session with Commissioner Alex Tardif, Commissioner Henry Heimuller, and Commissioner Margaret Magruder together with Sarah Hanson, County Counsel, Tiffany Johnson, Assistant County Counsel and Jacyn Normine, Board Office Administrator via telecommunication with County staff and members of the public.

Call meeting to order:

Commissioner Tardif called the meeting to order.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Heimuller moved and Commissioner Magruder seconded to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2020 Board meeting and the December 9, 2020 work session the motion carried unanimously.

VISITOR COMMENTS - 5 MINUTE LIMIT: No Public Comment

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE: Mike Paul, Public Health Director gave a status update on the COVID-19 virus. In the United States we have more than 300,000 deaths due to the virus this year. This number has increased more than 60% over the last 14 days, yesterday we had close to 3,000 deaths. The number of cases has also increased by about 25% daily and more than 100,000 hospitalized with an increase of 17% over the last 14 days.

In Oregon, sadly we have seen the highest number of deaths yesterday at 54 bringing the State's total to 1,214. The State also reported over 1,000 new or presumptive cases yesterday bringing the State total since the onset of the virus, to 96,000. This is about 15% of the State's population leaving 85% susceptible, this is telling us we could get worse with the number of cases and deaths depending on the actions we take. Oregon has 544 hospitalized which is 5 more than the day before. Here in Columbia County we are still in the extreme risk category based on the metrics system evaluation of community spread. December 5th was our highest day with 26 new cases. We then had one day with 20 new cases and are leveling out with 10-15 cases per day.

Oregon Health Authority releases outbreak information on Wednesday afternoons, so we will be getting those reports this afternoon. In November, Columbia Care Center reported more than a dozen cases, Brookedale/ Rose Valley in Scappoose reported more than 30 cases and 2 deaths. In December Meadow Park and Specialty Care has reported more than 20 cases and the new report will be released this afternoon.

Overall numbers for the County are almost 700 for the year, at the end of November we had around 450 this is more than 200 cases for December and we are only half way through the month. Our cumulative number of deaths as of yesterday is 7 and we have more than 40 hospitalizations. 10 of these hospitalizations are from December. Mike gave a quick overview of other Oregon counties also in the extreme risk category. Columbia County is at a case rate of 300/100,000 and we need to bring that number down to 200/100,000 to be removed from the extreme case category. Our test positivity has been moving in the right direction with currently 6% positive test results. We need to get this down to 5% or less.

State-Wide guideline recommendations for travel: Practice 14 day quarantine after arrival into the State and limit interactions to immediate households.

The Covid-19 drive-thru testing is being held again today at the St. Helens High School from 10-2. There is a pre-registration that can be found at doineedacovid19test.com.

Discussion was held on wrap around service to help with those in quarantine, and how long one should be quarantining once receiving a positive test result, or confirmation that you have been exposed. These partnerships are going well, Thank you. Columbia County Public Health will give referrals to these wrap around services, or walk you through the process to self-refer.

Vaccines have been received, Oregon will begin vaccinating Long Term Care Staff and Hospital Staff this month. The second vaccine will be reviewed for emergency use vaccines soon. Our next challenge will be to vaccinate people, and what information is needed to be vaccinated. We will continue working with State and follow the vaccine distribution timeline, and tracking how it will be delivered.

HEARING(S): No hearings to come before the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA: No items to come before the Board.

MATTERS: No matters to come before the Board.

COLUMBIA COUNTY EMPLOYEE SERVICE CEREMONY:

The Board of Commissioners recognized the following employees for their dedication of service in Columbia County; Kay Clay, Max Culbertson, Terri Etter, Alan Haebe, David Leader, Robin McIntyre, Brian Pixley, Jonathan Ray & Jeremy Tull for 10 years of service . Shelley Blickenstaff, Sophie Frazier, Andrea Juriewicz, Rodger Kadell & Joshua Luttrell for 15 years of service. Sarah Hanson and Nancy Sullivan for 20 years of service. Dean McMann and Kelley Lungberg for 30 years of service. Due to Covid -19 and social distancing requirements no group gathering will take place with employees, the Commissioners will recess at the end of this meeting to individually congratulate each employee from a distance.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 1.** With this past year being a challenging year for many, Columbia County continues to stay true to form and continue to be great public servants and continue to show up for the community. Erin O'Connell wanted to express gratitude and acknowledgment of all the great work that we do as an organization. The whole organization deserves a thank you. This is a team effort and it takes all of us to make this thing work and to support our community. Times like these especially show the value in that. Erin asked a few employees to send her some stories about their jobs, and true to form it was not about them individually, but rather about how their co-workers or supervisor supported them and how it was a group effort. The responses that she received made her reflect on our guiding principles of Service, Engagement, Connection and Innovation. Erin then shared a few of the stories that she received.
- 2.** Mike Russell, Public Works Director, came before the Board to discuss the Columbia River PUD (CRPUD) Energy Conservation Program Financial Incentive Program. Solid Waste would like to take advantage of this program and upgrade all 133 fluorescent lights to LED lights at Columbia County Transfer Station, lighting. The county can upgrade all of its lights, receive a financial incentive award of approximately \$24,291.00 and save energy. Three bids have been obtained and provided to CRPUD for review.

Public Works staff has reviewed the bids and information from CRPUD and we recommend choosing the Bid from Peak Electric at a cost of \$34,702.00 after receipt of the incentive award of approx. \$24,291.00 total cost will be approx. \$10,411.00 and entering into the Energy Conservation Program Customer Implementation agreements for Non-Custom Projects at Existing Non-Residential Facilities with CRPUD. This project has been pre-authorized by CRPUD in writing. After discussion, staff was directed to put the contract on the consent agenda for approval.

COMMISSIONER MAGRUDER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Magruder thanked Erin for her presentation of recognition of county employees, and all of our service recognition employees that provide service to the county. She apologized for not being able to do the service recognition ceremony in front of the Christmas tree as traditionally done, but looks forward to meeting with employees throughout the day.

Don Mehlhoff, District Conservationist for Natural Resource Conservation Service who works with Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District, is retiring at the end of the month after 20 years here in Columbia County. Don has done a great job, working with him over the years have really appreciated his participation.

COMMISSIONER HEIMULLER COMMENTS:

The Covid-19 drive-thru testing center is open 10-2 today at the St. Helens High School, preregistration is available online. Last week roughly 200 people were tested. We hope to see that many again today. Next week on December 23rd the drive through clinic will not be open in lieu of Christmas.

Tristan Wood, Assistant Director in Public Works, who has been with us for some time will be moving onto greener pastures and will be working with David Evans Company. We wish Tristan the best. Tristan has done an outstanding job here being a point man on bridge building, culverts, fish ladders, and the lead on the recent Gable Rd upgrades. David Evans was smart, they made a wise choice.

Be kind to one another. He has had a bunch of phone calls this week with several just being nasty. With everyone's stress levels being higher due to the holiday season, pandemic, wildfires, and a tumultuous political year as far as the presidential elections go. He does not have all of the answers. Everything that we can do a little bit at a time to help ourselves, family and neighbors is all we can do until this thing is over with. Treat your neighbors with kindness. Everyone needs a little this year.

COMMISSIONER TARDIF COMMENTS:

Happy Holidays.

Good luck Tristan and all of the employees that will be moving on over the next year.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board recessed their regular scheduled meeting to go into executive session under 192.660(2)(a)(d). Upon coming out of executive session no action was taken.

With nothing further coming before the Board, the meeting was recessed to meet with employees in recognition of service. There will be no afternoon meeting this afternoon.

Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 16th day of December, 2020.

NOTE: Audio/video of the meeting is also posted on our website at <https://www.columbiacountyor.gov/meetings>

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: _____
Alex Tardif, Chair

By: _____
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

By: _____
Henry Heimuller, Commissioner

By: _____
Jacyn Normine
Board Office Administrator

