

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

WORK SESSION

January 27, 2004

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

Commissioner Bernhard called the meeting to order.

PHIL DEWEY: SURVEYOR FEES:

Phil Dewey, County Surveyor, came before the Board regarding surveyor fees. He approached the Board last October about increasing some of his fees. The Board tabled the discussion to allow time to review fees in other counties. It's been many years since any changes have been made to the surveyor fees. He presented the Board with a proposal for more realistic fees to cover actual costs. Surveyor fees were not included in the last county department fee review. Commissioner Hyde has done some research and is not comfortable with raising any fees at this time. Tillamook County is very comparable with Columbia County. Phil noted that the County is trying to get a GIS system up and running and some of the fee increases will go towards that. Phil sometimes has to check surveyor maps up to 5 times, but doesn't get paid for that. The plan check fee is only for the first and final check. Commissioner Hyde feels it might be prudent to hire the company that did the county department fee survey to do a review of the surveyor's fee schedule. That would give the Board justification, should any fee increases be necessary. Commissioner Bernhard agreed with conducting a formal review of the fees. Commissioner Corsiglia doesn't feel any justification will be easy to sell to the public. Phil stated that it is just a cost of doing business. For the last 4-5 years, he's had to subsidize the costs and he can't continue to do that. He also noted that he plans to serve one more term, but once he is gone, much of the equipment will go with him. The County needs to start considering how they are going to handle that. After discussion, there was a consensus of the Board to have a formal review of the surveyor fees conducted.

RECOMMENDATION FOR SURFACE MINING ADMINISTRATION:

Todd Dugdale, LDS Director, came before the Board to discuss the issue of surface mining administration. The County issued an RFP for Surface Mining Administration services and received one response from Kuper Consulting LLC. Gary Lynch of DOGAMI had previously expressed interest in providing contractual services to the County to administer our program and submitted a proposal. Both proposals would provide the same services which mirror the service types and levels now provided to the County including support to SMAC; staff and the Board; annual inspections and reporting; complaint handling; and depletion fee program support. Todd noted that the DOGAMI proposal would be to implement the county's current program/

ordinance with no change in status for limited exempt mining operations. The Kuper proposal is for \$75,000 per year and the DOGAMI proposal is for \$38,000 per year for the same services. Staff and the Surface Mining Advisory Committee recommend the County contract with DOGAMI.

Thelma Bonar approached the Board to express her agreement that it is important to keep administration local.

After discussion, Commissioner Hyde moved and Commissioner Corsiglia seconded to authorize staff to enter into negotiations to contract with DOGAMI for surface mining administration services. Under discussion, Commissioner Corsiglia wanted to see this contract revisited in one year. With the vote taken, the motion carried unanimously.

DAVE HILL: RECREATION TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION:

Dave Hill, Public Works Director, came before the Board along with RARE student, Michael Hoffman. There is a grant opportunity through the Oregon State Parks Department for the Crown Zellerbach linear trail and it is ready for submission. Michael presented a map for review. The Board has been working on acquiring the CZ road for a linear trail, however there are four gaps (bridges) that need to be acquired. The grant request is for \$72,000, with a \$18,000 match. Dave will be working on finding the match. Michael would like a letter of support from the Board for this grant. The Board added support for this grant to the consent agenda. Dave will draft a letter for Board signature.

JAN COLTON, PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE (PCC):

Jan Colton, and Mike Christopher of Portland Community College were present. Commissioner Hyde asked for this meeting because of PCC withdrawing from Columbia County. Jan explained that PCC, along with everyone else, has had some budget problems, with a deficit of about \$10 million. That created a number of service cuts, such as the closure of the St. Helens office. PCC still offers classes in St. Helens, if they get enough enrollment to pay for the classes. Mike stated that, since 1999, he has been working with a group of people to determine what classes are wanted here in Columbia County. Mike went over a comparison of the 1998 and 1999 enrollment and the student count from Columbia County has grown. Mike feels that, once the economy improves, PCC will be looking to locate out here again.

Currently, Columbia County's campus is Rock Creek, however, transportation is an issue. The county is currently in the process of developing a transportation plan. A lot of discussion was held on, once the economy improves, where would be the most suitable area for PCC to site.

Commissioner Bernhard suggested that a press release be done to share information with the public on the status of PCC in Columbia County. Jan stated that she would prepare a press release and get it to the Board.

MERINA & COMPANY - COUNTY AUDIT EXIT INTERVIEW:

Ruth Baker, Finance Director, came before the Board with Kammy Austin, of Merina & Company to present the exit interview for the County audit. Kammy presented the Board with her memo and reviewed the audit scope, audit reports and final comments. Kammy expressed her thanks to Columbia County staff for all their cooperation during the audit process.

THELMA BONAR:

She had heard a lot of rumors that Robert Crain will be leaving the County because of salary issues. If he would get enough in salary, he probably wouldn't leave. He has done so much for the county and has saved the county a lot of money. There have been a lot of employees leave LDS because of low pay. The Board will look into that.

On another topic, Thelma feels that the Humane Society is violating their rental lease, like renting space to the city to house dogs. They are supposed to clear things like that with the County first. She asked that the Board look into that.

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

Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 27th day of January, 2004.

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: 

Rita Bernhard, Chair

By: 

Anthony Hyde, Commissioner

By: 

Joe Corsiglia, Commissioner

Recording Secretary:

By: 

Jan Greenhalgh