

COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BOARD MEETING

WORK SESSION MINUTES

August 24, 2010

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners met in a regularly scheduled work session at 10:00 a.m. with Commissioner Earl Fisher and Commissioner Rita Bernhard, together with Sarah Hanson, County Counsel and Cynthia Zemaitis, Acting Board Secretary. Commissioner Hyde was not present.

Commissioner Fisher called the meeting to order.

LRS ARCHITECTS - REVIEW OF COURTHOUSE FACILITY STUDY:

Paul Boundy with LRS Architects came to discuss the Courthouse Facility Study with the Board. Mr. Boundy has been working with the County for the last 2 or 3 months to put together a report on the facility study, and presents a final draft version which includes recommendations. The report contains a space needs assessment and an actual facilities analysis, then looks at options to address those 2 issues and the estimated cost to address them.

With regards to space needs, State Courts has a couple of issues, and there are lack of privacy issues with the District Attorney, Human Resource, Commission on Children and Families and County Counsel offices. It is recommended that County Counsel move to the first floor of the Courthouse, leaving their vacated offices for the D.A. Building Inspectors can move into the EOC space once they vacate it, and H.R. and CCF can move into the old jail.

Commissioner Fisher mentioned that if Transit moves out to the new facility, that would free up some additional space.

Mr. Boundy then summarized the facilities analysis. The Courthouse, for its age, is in great shape, but there is a maintenance level of exposure on the outside, where the wood is starting to age. There is no way to demonstrate how the courthouse would react in a bigger earthquake; to retrofit it would be very costly, but would extend the life of the building. All electrical and mechanical systems are in need of upgrading. Commissioner Bernhard questioned the requirements to keep the building historical when the sprinklers are installed.

With regard to the annex building, there are two recommendations: incremental

strengthening and seismic protection. The building was sturdily built, but codes were very different then. The larger systems to deal with are the mechanical systems, and three options are given in the report. There is a lot of wasted energy with the current system; some savings could be found there.

Mr. Boundy went through each of the recommendations and their related costs.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT STAFFING REQUESTS:

Jennifer Cuellar, Finance Director, discussed a staffing proposal. She has outlined the proposals and has included new job descriptions. Basically, she has stayed with the 6.5 FTE, but makes the 2 higher-level staff exempt employees.

Jean Ripa stated that the payroll position has never been represented by the union, so there is no change there. The second position, tax collector/grant administrator, is currently in the union. If the Board approves this proposal, Jean will send out notice of the position declaring that the position is excluded from union representation under a managerial exemption. The union can choose to object and go through the union clarification process. If the union objects, Jean will come back to the Board to discuss the process and whether the Board will want to defend this decision. Jean does recommend that both of these positions be FSLA exempt.

Jennifer indicates that the total cost of this would fit in with the current budget, but would cost 1% more every year in carrying costs.

The Board has directed that their approval of these proposals be added to the consent agenda.

EOC PROJECT

Jean Ripa had a meeting with Derek, Sarah, Bill and Jennifer regard the new Emergency Operations Center project. She is concerned that Derek and Lorraine, although doing a great job, are trying to do things they do not have the expertise for and recommends that the Board give Bill Potter the authority to spearhead this project sooner rather than later.

REVIEW OF ANNUAL EVALUATION PROCESS:

Jean Ripa asked the Board how the process of the annual evaluations worked for them, and whether they would like to see any changes. Jean recommended that, instead of trying to jam it into 2 days as the Board did this year, they spread it out a little so that they can take a half hour after each evaluation and fill out the form. Commissioner Fisher wonders if the Board should make only one,

united, statement instead of three individual statements. Jean outlines a couple of ways they could address that. Different options were explored.

METHOD OF APPROVING POLICIES:

Jean Ripa pointed out that the way the Board approves various policies are different; some are approved by order, some by motion. Jean and Sarah Hanson agree that the Board should be consistent in adopting policies. Sarah explains that an order is a record made of a Board decision, and is easily tracked. She does not believe that an order carries more weight than a motion, legally, but it might with staff. Sarah believes we should establish a policy on adopting policies. Discussion is held on the difference between orders, resolutions and motions. Jean indicated that it comes down to a policy coming from the top and the means to find or track the policies. Sarah recommended that the various departments be asked about their policies and how they were adopted. Commissioners Fisher and Bernhard agree that further discussion is needed, which should include Commissioner Hyde.

NON-PARTISAN COMMISSION

Sarah Hanson discussed the ordinance that was adopted to make the Commission non-partisan, and the fact that an explanatory statement is now required. She has drafted such a statement, which she hands out to the Board. Discussion followed, to include the addition of a run-off consisting of the top 2 or top 3 candidates. Commissioner Bernhard stated that she has heard several comments that the Board is trying to create a charter, and wonders if something could be added to the statement that they are not making a charter. Sarah reminds the Board that this goes back to the issue on whether they can actually do this without a charter. Sarah would prefer not to raise the charter issue in the statement. Commissioner Bernhard suggested using the language "general law county". Sarah will make the suggested changes and discuss it again with each individual Commissioner and then put it on next week's consent agenda.

There was no Executive Session held.

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

Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 24th day of August, 2010.

Work Session Minutes

8/24/10

Page 4

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: _____ Not Present

Anthony Hyde, Chair

By: _____

Earl Fisher, Commissioner

Recording Secretary:

By: _____

By: _____

Rita Bernhard,
Commissioner

Cynthia Zemaitis, Acting Board Secretary