

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

WORK SESSION MINUTES

August 29, 2018

The Columbia County Board of Commissioners met in scheduled session with Commissioner Margaret Magruder, Commissioner Henry Heimuller and Commissioner Tardif.

Commissioner Magruder called the meeting to order.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- Commissioner Heimuller updated the Board on the situation at the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority. A 2 layer investigation is currently being conducted on the Executive Director and Deputy Director on a number of issues. He will continue to keep the Board updated. Other than that, all else is going well at NOHA.
- The Board received a letter from Janet Evans, responding to Judge Grant's proposal for transitional housing. The Board would like to see this issue be put to rest and will schedule time at the next work session to meet with Judge Grant.
- Discussion was held on the Extended Enterprise Zone Exemption for Aero Investments (Composites Industrial). Because the Board still has some questions on the length of the extension, this matter was held over one week to meeting again with Chuck Daughtry.

CC RIDER MONTHLY UPDATE:

Todd Wood, Transit Director, met with the Board for his monthly transit update. Todd discussed an upcoming MTR vote to unionize. He also gave an update on the Tillamook contract and received direction from the Board on how to proceed. Next, Todd addressed the current fleet condition and the need for a plan to replace vehicles that may soon no longer function. He also reviewed ridership numbers and which lines were the most populated. Todd then updated the Board on his current hiring process for a new Administrative Assistant. He also suggested there be a Grand Opening celebration for Rainier Transit Center. Finally, Todd gave an update on the fiscal position of the transit department, and what steps will be needed in order to minimize the 2019 budget shortfall.

COMCAST SETTLEMENT:

Sue Martin, County Assessor, gave an overview of the Comcast appeal, which started in 2009, the resolution this summer and the two different ways counties have been allowed to address the issue of large tax payers when they are appealing their property tax assessments during that nine year period. Last week, the County received a payment for the balance owed during period in question (\$817,669), according to the terms of the settlement. While these funds are new from a cash basis perspective, the settlement amount is almost \$540,000 less than what Comcast would have otherwise

paid in property taxes to Columbia County over those nine years, had the original tax assessments not been appealed.

Jennifer Cuellar, Finance Director, added that the funds will be distributed to all taxing districts with the rest of taxes received during the month of August. This should happen either the end of next week, or possibly the beginning of September, given the holiday next week.

The idea of setting aside these funds in a reserve account was raised by Commissioner Tardiff. Jennifer recommended waiting until we see where we are trending with total property tax at mid year, after tax season, and as part of the topics under consideration as the next year's budget process begins to get underway in December/January.

PLAZA USE AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF ST. HELENS:

Casey Garrett, General Service Director, came before the Board along with John Walsh, St. Helens City Administrator, to discuss lease agreement options for the Plaza and Rose Garden space in front of the Old Courthouse. The city has interest in securing a long term agreement for use of the space and is willing to pay an annual fee. John Walsh provided conceptual plans, which were drafted over ten years ago, showing potential capital improvements to the space. He explained that the city has included a \$750,000 budget in their Urban Renewal plan for improvements to the Plaza and Rose Garden, and emphasized how important this space is to the City's efforts in promoting tourism in Old Town St. Helens.

Casey explained that he would like to treat this as a potential partnership with the city that could help fund a County managed ATV/OHV campground within the City's forest property around Salmonberry Lake. John said the city is definitely open to such an arrangement, regardless of what type of agreement can be reached on the Plaza and Rose Garden.

Commissioner Heimuller expressed concerns with previous Hold Harmless agreements, between the City and County, for use of the Plaza and Rose Garden space. He did not appreciate the fact that the County allowed the City to use the space for free, only to find out later the City wanted to sublease the space to non-profit vendors.

The Board asked John Walsh to draft a proposal for use of the space, so the County can review and consider further.

SAFETY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ON COURT SECURITY COMMITTEE:

Jean Ripa reviewed the recommendation from the Safety Committee wherein it was recommended that the Court Security Committee be re-vitalized. She commended Deputy Marti Kyles who has done a great deal of work as the Court Security Deputy in identifying facilities and policy needs. The affected parties (the Board, the Sheriff's Office, the Courts, Facilities) should review these recommendations and make decisions about feasibility and prioritization. The Board discussed the issue, stating some concern about the potential for unrealistic expectations related to the County's ability to provide funding for State Court functions. Regardless, the Board is willing to

bring the affected parties together, set some parameters for the Committee and move forward. They decided to have Jan Greenhalgh schedule an item on a work session and invite the three Judges, the Trial Court Administrator and Chief Deputy Salle and Captain Weaver for further discussion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER ORS 192.660(2)d) - Bargaining:

The Board recessed the regular session to go into Executive Session as allowed under ORS 192.660(2)(d). Upon coming out of Executive Session, no action was taken.

REQUEST TO PROMOTE PLANNER II TO PLANNER III:

Todd Dugdale, LDS Director, reviewed the Personnel Cost Form submitted with his request to promote Deb Jacobs to Planner III. He noted that Deb Jacobs well meets the requirements for the position of Planner III, including 15 years of planning experience, a Masters Degree in Regional Planning, 12 years with Columbia County, 10 years of which was in the role as Planner II. The promotion would allow assignment to Deb that would allow for a smoother transition in Department leadership as the Director and Planning Manager will be retiring later this year.

After discussion, ***Commissioner Heimuller moved and Alex Tardif seconded to approve the promotion of Deb Jacob to the position of Planner III. The motion carried unanimously.***

Jean Ripa was directed to initiate the process required under civil service and County personnel rules for this promotional appointment.

PRINTER PROJECT:

Holly Miller, IT Director, came before the Board to discuss the printer optimization project that IT has been working on. She presented a powerpoint presentation, going over the project process and selection of the vendor. Commissioner Heimuller was concerned that, although the project showed a 35% reduction in printers and that there was no analysis of current printer expenditures, there was no way of knowing if the new contract would provide a cost savings or an increase. Holly explained that because printer purchasing is not currently centralized, the task of analyzing existing costs would be very difficult across all departments. Commissioner Heimuller also indicated that, while he was glad to see a 35% reduction in printers, he'd have preferred a 50% reduction. Ideally, he would like to see the county staff utilizing 20-25 workgroup multifunction copiers across the organization and not have smaller printers. He also could not support the printer maintenance contract given the lack of a current expense analysis. Commissioner Tardif was also concerned that there was no baseline cost to compare to, but recognized that because of the decentralized purchasing, gathering that information would be difficult, and there is benefit in centralizing printer maintenance and supplies under a single vendor moving forward. Commissioner Magruder indicated that the printer project offered a positive step forward in reducing the number of devices and aligned with the county's values of innovation and service. Holly addressed the next steps being the potential contract approval and then a centralization and update of the counties copiers.

While present, Holly handed out the initial draft of the Broadband Planning Project's report on existing broadband availability in Columbia County. She explained that the information gathered to date reflected vendor self-reported coverage information and that coverage over a particular area may not mean that every business or residence in that area is able to receive service. Sometimes a home on one side of a street can get service while a home opposite it cannot. Upcoming residential and business surveys should help add detail to coverage information. Holly went over the next steps in the Broadband Project, which include the surveys and upcoming stakeholder meetings in mid-October. She asked who could help provide contact information for the various anchor institutions around the county, and who could look over the list of invitees and help ensure that key organizations were not overlooked. The Board offered several suggestions, noting that Jan Greenhalgh, the Board's Office Administrator would be a good person to work with on it.

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

Dated this 29th day of August, 2018.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: _____
Margaret Magruder, Chair

By: _____
Henry Heimuller, Commissioner

By: _____
Alex Tardif, Commissioner