

COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BOARD MEETING

WORK SESSION MINUTES

March 13, 2019

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

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- ***Commissioner Tardif moved and Commissioner Magruder seconded to approve the letter of support for the Columbia County Youth Drop-In Center. The motion carried unanimously.***
- ***Commissioner Tardif moved and Commissioner Magruder seconded to approve the letter of support for the City of St. Helens Application to the Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program for the Columbia County Courthouse & Clock Tower Preservation. The motion carried unanimously.***
- ***Commissioner Tardif moved and Commissioner Magruder seconded to approve the letter of support to the City of St. Helens for the CDBG grant to relocate the Columbia Pacific Food Bank. The motion carried unanimously.***
- For the record, the Board stated that Karen Kane's job title is and will remain Public Information Coordinator. Jan will inform Karen.
- There was some brief discussion on Wendy Dutenhoeffer's request to work 4-10's until her family is settled in Columbia County. The Board agreed to allow those hours until June 1, 2019.
- Commissioner Magruder gave a brief report on Fox Creek. She mentioned that Mayor Cole stated at a recent meeting that the City of Rainier is fully on board with this project. The problem comes from Fox Creek running downhill, winding through a portion town underground and when the culvert gets plugged, it causes major flooding in town. This is an engineering nightmare that may take a few years to get to the point of an actual fix.
- Commissioner Tardif mentioned that the Tourism Committee will be asking for funding support from all public agencies to hire a full time manager, grant match dollars, operations, etc. Just an FYI that will be coming before the Board sometime in the future.
- Commissioner Heimuller spoke with Brian Gray who has expressed interest in serving on the campaign committee for the Transit Service District levy. Knife River and CalPortland have already committed funds for this campaign. Commissioner Heimuller suggested OMIC be contacted for possible financial help on this campaign. Commissioner Tardif then started listing different public agencies, businesses and others who may want to provide campaign funding. More discussion to follow on this.

REVIEW PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM FINDINGS:

Danna Drum, Oregon Health Authority, and Michael Paul, Public Health Coordinator, came before the Board to discuss OHA's review of the Public Health Program and findings. Danna is the Strategic Partnerships Lead for Oregon Health Authority, Office of the State Public Health Director. She provided an overview of OHA's triennial review, including corrective actions and timelines for completion. Discussion about each of the programs and corrective actions followed. Michael Paul asked Danna to provide an overview of the option for the County to decline to include the School-Based Health Centers in the Intergovernmental Agreement. The pros and cons were discussed. Commissioner Tardif asked about a letter the Board recently received from OHA; specifically, the letter discussed environmental health licensing revenue collected by the Public Health Foundation of Columbia County before the County took over the program on 2/1/2019. Danna provided a summary of OHA's position on whether the Public Health Foundation of Columbia County owes the County the revenue that was collected in 2017. After discussion, the Board directed Michael Paul to return next week to discuss the pros and cons of including the School-Based Health Centers in the biennial Intergovernmental Agreement with Oregon Health Authority.

BROADBAND CONSULTANT REPORT:

Holly Miller, IT Director, came before the Board along with Lori Sherwood, from VPS Consulting. They presented an Executive Summary of the Broadband Assessment Project that VPS has been working on with the Columbia County IT Department. Lori discussed the 3 phases of the project that have been completed and what was learned in each phase. Of note, the information on existing service was collected using data that was self-reported by commercial providers to the FCC and aggregated into census blocks, so a provider offering broadband service to a single home in a census block would effectively show the census block as covered by broadband service, even though no other homes in the census block could get service – which means that the reported coverage is likely far greater than the actual coverage.

Lori highlighted that the information gathered in the phase 2 outreach indicated that there was a very low satisfaction rate with existing broadband service across the county – 38% vs a typical average of 60% or better. She also highlighted that the county has an overall lack of broadband infrastructure. This means that a new provider, with a decent service offering, could expect to see reasonably good take rates.

The Board asked about the revenue generation capacity of a project like this and Lori indicated that typically, the benefits of this type of project are in the economic development and livability enhancements that improved broadband infrastructure provides. Due to the cost, it's difficult to see a significant return on investment in system generated revenue.

The Board continued by asking about what grant funding might be available, and Lori stated that Federal grant monies are very difficult to obtain. More money for design and other smaller aspects of a project like this might be available at the state level.

In summary, Lori indicated that a middle mile broadband project was recommended for the county, but that a consortium approach that involved key stakeholders and was tackled a piece at a time, through a variety of policy changes, such as dig once and new development requirements as well as working with the state, school district, and other entities as they expand their fiber infrastructure, would be the best, most realistic way to move forward, other than an annual general fund set aside.

The Board directed staff to come back to an upcoming work session to continue the discussion and talk, in particular, about setting up a committee to continue moving this effort forward.

EMPLOYEE PARKING PERMIT POLICY:

Casey Garrett presented a draft employee parking pass policy, which also included sticker and hanging parking pass options, a parking permit request form to be distributed to courthouse employees, a map indicating employee and public parking areas near the courthouse, and an optional mailer to send out to neighboring residents. Commissioner Magruder explained that rather than mailing notices to neighboring residents, she'd prefer that Casey worked with Karen Kane to draft a press release and with the City of St. Helens to see if they would like to give public notice on their website, or in some other way. Robin McIntyre requested additional time for legal review of the proposed policy to determine how the County would handle enforcement. Casey asked if he should begin issuing parking permits to courthouse staff prior to legal review, or wait until Robin reviewed and drafted a new ordinance. After discussion, the Board agreed to wait until an ordinance was created.

C69-2018-1 – AMEND ALLOCATION CERTIFICATION AGREEMENT WITH OSMB:

While present, Casey Garrett addressed an amended agreement with the OSMB (Oregon State Marine Board) to receive funds from their Maintenance Assistance Program. The amended agreement included an adjusted amount of FY19 funds to be dispersed to the county, which resulted from the OSMB discovering over-payments from 2013, and 2016-2018, that were applied to Beaver Boat ramp and Gilbert River Boat Launch & Transient Dock. The over payments were due to the OSMB being unaware of a \$10 parking fee collected by the Department of Fish and Wildlife at Sauvie Island - \$10 exceeds the \$5 maximum allowed in their Maintenance Assistance Program, so the Gilbert River location is now disqualified. In addition, the funding amount applied to Beaver Boat ramp had factored a \$3 parking fee, which increased to \$5 in 2016. Since OSMB was unaware of this fee increase they did not adjust the funding amount applied to this location, and overpaid the county from 2016 through 2018. After the following adjustments the OSMB requested \$2,791.94 net repayment for previously dispersed funds, then adjusted the FY19 amount to be received down to \$9,200. The amended FY19 agreement will be on an upcoming consent agenda.

EXECUTIVE SESSION UNDER ORS 192.660(2)(e) – Real Property:

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

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

Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 13th day of March, 2019.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: _____
Henry Heimuller, Chair

By: _____
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

By: _____
Alex Tardif, Commissioner

By: _____
Jan Greenhalgh
Board Office Administrator