

COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

January 12, 2005

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

Commissioner Hyde called the meeting to order and led the flag salute.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Bernhard moved and Commissioner Corsiglia seconded to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2005 Board meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

VISITOR COMMENTS:

Jim Huffman, Attorney, 52904 Cliff Drive, Scappoose. To begin with, he is a county and city taxpayer. He understands that the County has a policy of not charging cities for incarceration of suspects. It has been his observation that the City of St. Helens is abusing this privilege at the expense of the all county taxpayers, by excessive incarcerations and holding people on ridiculously high bails, such as \$50,000 on misdemeanors. It is his opinion that they are doing this to extract a lot of money to support their programs. The city has increased their case load and now have a full time Judge and a full time prosecutor. No other city has this. He cannot believe that there is such a difference in the makeup of St. Helens that would justify this sort of incarceration difference. In comparison to the other cities, St. Helens has the vast majority of incarcerations. The release criteria in the St. Helens municipal court is far more stringent than the felony release criteria used by the Circuit Court Judges. This is a burden on the county budget and to subsidize a city program isn't right. The Bar Association also sees this pattern. Commissioner Corsiglia has received a number of these same concerns over the years and suggested that the County extract the number of arrests by St. Helens Police to take a look at this. Jim gave an example of how a person was held in jail for 4 weeks, went to trial and acquitted. He spent 4 weeks in jail at no cost to the city. It was a petty charge and shouldn't have even gone to trial, but they use the jail time to try to force him to plead guilty. This is a tool to extract guilty pleas and then they have these gigantic fine schedules. They frequently issue \$50,000 bail requirements instead of the normal \$5,000. Further, it is commonly known that once the city gets the bail money, they hold on to it. They hold it for fines, which is not what the bail is for. The law is that bail has to be reasonable. When the city raises the bail from \$5,000 to \$50,000, that is not reasonable. There is a bail schedule that has been adopted by all the State and Municipal Judges and there is no \$50,000 A Misdemeanor bail schedule. So the City of St. Helens is violating their own signed agreement with the other Judges. Personally, Jim feels that a lot of what they are doing is illegal. Commissioner Corsiglia has heard that the City of St Helens has more people on probation per capita than any other city in the State of Oregon. Jim stated that the city has a thing called the "Wally's List". The city gives a list of all people on probation to the police. Everyone he puts on probation has a "no alcohol" stipulation. So if someone gets

pulled over, the police check to see if they are on Wally's list. If he is, the police hassle the person about alcohol and is eventually lodged. This is a huge burden on the county wide budget, but it is a very effective tool for the city to get money to fund their programs. They are taking more than their fair share. He asked that the county consider implementing a fee schedule to the cities for housing inmates. If the city has to start paying for the people they incarcerate, then maybe they wouldn't have so many frivolous arrests. The Board stated that they would look into this matter.

Tammy Maygra, Deer Island. Tammy asked why the County doesn't hold public meetings around the county on LNG's. Commissioner Hyde stated that the Board has not received any formal proposal on an LNG. However, should one be submitted, there will be public meetings held. Tammy understood that the Board said they were in negotiations with an LNG company and, if so, will there be any concessions to bring them in. Commissioner Hyde stated that there have been no negotiations so far, but concessions are automatic in the enterprise zone if they qualify. Commissioner Corsiglia explained that a number of companies continually look at possibly siting in Columbia County, however maybe one will get to the point of a proposal. Tammy asked if the Board has any concerns about an LNG plant siting here. Commissioner Bernhard stated that when a representative from the LNG company first approached the Board regarding a possible development, safety issues were the number one concern to be addressed. Commissioner Hyde stated that with no formal application received, there is nothing to comment on or note any concerns. Tammy's final question was if Columbia County will consider the effects on the entire Columbia River or just what effects Columbia County because everything along the river will be effected. Is it right for Columbia County to site a plant here that has adverse effects on another county - she thinks not. She asked if all the negative impacts of an LNG plant is worth a possible 6 jobs. She thanked the Board for their time.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Commissioner Hyde read the consent agenda in full. With that, Commissioner Bernhard moved and Commissioner Corsiglia seconded to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- (A) Ratify Select-to-Pay for 1/4/05 & 1/11/05.
- (B) Approve 2005 Social Gaming License for Wayside Inn.
- (C) Appoint Jimmy Wolfenbarger to the Columbia Drainage Vector Control District Board to complete the term of Ken Erickson. Term to expire on June 30, 2005.
- (D) Approve offering a \$500 incentive pay to District Supervisor's for obtaining or renewing the Herbicide Applicator's License for the next 12 months.
- (E) Approve Columbia County Public Records Policy.

AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS/AMENDMENTS:

- (F) Amendment #35 to the 2003-2005 County Financial Assistance Contract #05-001 with State Mental Health.
- (G) Amendment #36 to the 2003-2005 County Financial Assistance Contract #05-001 with State Mental Health.
- (H) Amendment #37 to the 2003-2005 County Financial Assistance Contract #05-001 with State Mental Health.
- (I) Local Law Enforcement Block Grant #03-416 for \$3,342.00 and authorize the Chair to sign.
- (J) Ratify Commissioner Hyde's signature on the Project Completion Report and Certification; Close Out Agreement for the Housing Rehabilitation Program; and Program Income Status/Information Reports for Community Development Block Grant #H010002.
- (K) Intergovernmental Agreement for Equipment and Services between Columbia County and Clatsop County.

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMISSIONER HYDE COMMENTS:

Last Thursday, the County held an emergency management table top exercise dealing with a potential terrorist attack. It went very well and the new Emergency Management Director handled it very well. There were 13 county employees who participated.

On Monday, he was in Salem for an AOC meeting to discuss legislative issues. He was present for the opening of the legislative session and to hear the Governor's State of the State address.

COMMISSIONER CORSIGLIA COMMENTS:

Commissioner Corsiglia commented on the upcoming meeting where the Board will be considering an appointment to the State Senate seat, which may possibly create a vacancy in the State Representative position.

He has been working with Diane & Ray Pohl to coordinate the Meth Task Force to address this growing epidemic. Hopefully, this will develop into a county-wide process.

COMMISSIONER BERNHARD COMMENTS:

Yesterday, she attended a Local Alcohol & Drug Planning Committee meeting and a Mental Health Advisory Committee meeting. Discussion was held on the school kids who are affected by drugs. They are not using the drugs, but are living with parents who are users. Commissioner Hyde noted that this has also become a work force issue and an economic development issue.

Commissioner Bernhard will be attending a United Way Retreat this weekend to talk about the campaign and how it works.

VACANCY IN THE SENATE SEAT:

Commissioner Hyde stated that Columbia County holds the most votes for the soon to be vacated senate seat. The Board will be voting on that position at their next meeting on January 19th at 2:00 p.m. in Room 308. There are currently 4 candidates and they have been asked to be present at that meeting, either by phone or in person. Questions can be asked of them at that time. This may cause the potential loss of another legislator, which will need to be dealt with soon afterwards.

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

Dated at St. Helens, Oregon this 12th day of January, 2005.

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: _____
Anthony Hyde, Chair

By: _____
Joe Corsiglia Commissioner

By: _____
Rita Bernhard, Commissioner

Recording Secretary:

By: _____
Jan Greenhalgh