

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

In the Matter of Calling an Election to)
Consider the Renewal of the Columbia County)
Jail Local Option Tax Levy for Four Years)

ORDER NO. 16-2020

WHEREAS, the old Columbia County Jail was built in 1969, and was designed to hold a maximum of 39 prisoners, but was frequently overcrowded, and as a result arrestees often had to be released into the community after booking and before arraignment, prisoners had to be released into the community before their sentences were served, and there was constant fear of litigation over the unsatisfactory conditions in the jail; and

WHEREAS, on November 3, 1998, the electors of Columbia County approved a measure authorizing the issuance of bonds to finance the construction of a new County jail and related law enforcement facilities; and

WHEREAS, the new Columbia County Jail and Justice Facility was completed in January 2001, and is designed to house up to 255 prisoners; and

WHEREAS, the cost to operate the new jail and supervise a greater number of prisoners was unknown at the time the electors authorized its construction, but it was obvious that it would be much greater than operating and staffing the old jail; and

WHEREAS, even though it was known the cost of operating and staffing the jail would increase, the Sheriff and Board promised to run the new jail for at least a year without additional funding to determine the minimum amount of new funds which would be necessary; and

WHEREAS, in order to temporarily run the new, much larger facility and supervise about four times as many inmates without additional funds, the Sheriff and Board promised to try to raise as much money as possible through bed rentals to agencies such as the US Marshals Service, save money by shifting road deputies into the jail to assist the regular correctional deputies, and temporarily shift additional County General Fund money into the Sheriff's Office and Jail budgets; and

WHEREAS, the amount of revenue that can realistically be expected from bed rentals to other agencies has now been established; and

WHEREAS, the County General Fund can no longer fund the operation of the Jail in sufficient amounts to keep more than 25 local inmates in the Jail without a levy; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, Columbia County voters approved a levy of \$.05797/\$1000.00 of assessed value for Jail operations; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, Columbia County voters approved a renewal of the levy for four

years;

WHEREAS, the General Fund and bed rentals have supported operations for 15 years; and

WHEREAS, the General Fund has experienced a significant decrease in the last decade and can not fully support Jail operations without a levy; and

WHEREAS, General Fund support for the Jail has remained consistent since the 2014 levy; and

WHEREAS, Federal bed rentals have remained stable since the 2014 levy, but are not a guaranteed revenue source; and

WHEREAS, the proposed renewal would raise approximately \$3,179,844 in Fiscal Year 2021-2022, \$3,282,306 in Fiscal Year 2022-2023, \$3,388,069 in Fiscal Year 2023-2024, and \$3,497,240 in Fiscal Year 2024-2025; and

WHEREAS, the estimated total outlay over the four-year renewal period is approximately \$13,347,459; and

WHEREAS, the purposes for which the funds to be provided by the proposed local option tax are to be expended would be to retain 100 jail beds for the local jail population; provide sufficient staffing to manage jail population, provide for maintenance, and provide constitutionally adequate food, clothing, and health care to inmates; and

WHEREAS, the period of time authorized by the electors pursuant to ORS 280.060(3) would be four years;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

1. An election shall be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2020, to consider the renewal of a Columbia County Jail Local Option Tax Levy at the rate of \$0.5797/\$1000.00 of assessed value for four (4) years. The Columbia County Clerk is hereby directed to publish the ballot title and place the question of the proposed local option tax levy before the electors of Columbia County on the May 19, 2020, election ballot.

2. The purpose for which the funds to be provided by the proposed local option tax levy are to be expended would be exclusively for operating the Columbia County Jail.

3. The approximate rate for this operating fund is 58¢ per \$1000 of assessed value, approximately \$58 to the owner of a \$100,000 home. (The estimated money raised will be \$3,179,844 in Fiscal Year 2021-2022, \$3,282,306 in Fiscal Year 2022-2023, \$3,388,069 in Fiscal Year 2023-2024, and \$3,497,240 in Fiscal Year 2024-2025, with an estimated total outlay over the four-year renewal period of \$13,347,459.)

4. The period of time authorized by the electors pursuant to ORS 280.060(3)

would be four (4) years.

5. The proposed taxes are outside the limitation imposed by Section 11(3), Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

6. The Board of County Commissioners adopts and approves the ballot title which is attached hereto, labeled Exhibit "A", and is incorporated herein by this reference.

DATED this 19 day of February 2020.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: Alex Tardif
Alex Tardif, Chair

By: Margaret Magruder
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

By: Henry Heimuller
Henry Heimuller, Commissioner

Approved as to form

By: [Signature]
Office of County Counsel

Request for Ballot Title Preparation or Publication of Notice

EXHIBIT "A"

SEL 805

rev 01/18
OAR 165-014-0005

No later than the **80th day before an election**, a governing body that has referred a measure must prepare and file with the local elections official the text of the referral for ballot title preparation or the ballot title for publication of notice of receipt of ballot title. This form may be used to file the text of the referral and request the elections official begin the ballot title drafting process or file a ballot title and request the elections official publish notice of receipt of ballot title.

Filing Information

Election Date

May 19, 2020

Authorized Official

Alex Tardif

Contact Phone

503-397-3839

Email Address

sarah.hanson@columbiacountyor.gov

Referral Information

Title, Number or other Identifier

Renewal of Jail Operating Levy

This Filing is For

Drafting of Ballot Title Attach referral text.

Publication of Notice Ballot title below.

Ballot Title Additional requirements may apply

Caption 10 words which reasonably identifies the subject of the measure.

Renewal of Columbia County Jail Operating Levy

Question 20 words which plainly phrases the chief purpose of the measure.

Shall Columbia County renew a levy of \$0.5797/\$1000.00 of assessed value for four years beginning in 2021 for Jail Operations? This measure renews current local option taxes.

Summary 175 words which concisely and impartially summarizes the measure and its major effect.

In 2014, voters approved a three year levy for all Jail operations. In 2017, voters approved a four year renewal levy for all Jail operations which will expire in 2020.

The three primary funding sources for the Jail are the County's General Fund, Federal bed rentals, and the existing Jail Operating Levy. Since the 2014 Levy passed, the County General Funds support for the Jail has remained consistent. Federal bed rental revenue has also remained stable but is not a guaranteed revenue source. The County cannot fully fund operation of the Jail without renewal of the Levy.

Prior to the 2014 Levy, the County was required to reduce Jail beds for local inmates to 25, and anticipated a full closure of the Jail without the Levy. The operating Levy currently supports a total of 100 local beds, and funding for the constitutionally required food, clothing, management, and health care for inmates. Renewal of the Levy will pay for continued operation for the Jail through 2024. The estimated money raised will be \$3,179,844 in FY 2021-2022, \$3,282,306 in FY 2022-2023, \$3,388,069 in FY 2023-2024, and \$3,497,240 in FY 2024-2025, for an estimated total Levy of \$13,347,459.

By signing this document:

→ I hereby state that I am authorized by the county or city governing body, or district elections authority to submit this Request for Ballot Title – Preparation or Publication of Notice.

Signature

Date Signed

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Signature



Date Signed

2-19-20