

## **MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES**

### **January 24, 2024**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Court was called to order by Judge Dan Joyce at 9:00 a.m. in the County Court Office of the Malheur County Courthouse with Commissioner Ron Jacobs and Commissioner Jim Mendiola present. Members of the media, public, and staff had the opportunity to join the meeting electronically or in-person. Present in the meeting room were Economic and Community Development Coordinator Taylor Rembowski and Administrative Officer Lorinda DuBois. Notice of the meeting was posted on the County website, Courthouse bulletin board and emailed to the Argus Observer, Malheur Enterprise, and those persons who have requested notice. The meeting was audio recorded. The agenda is recorded as instrument # 2024-200

#### **BLM**

Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Vale District, District Manager Shane DeForest met with the Court. Mr. DeForest has been with the Vale District since 2015; and in the District Manager position since October 2023. Mr. DeForest shared the Vale BLM Quarterly Report, October - December 2023 with the Court and provided an overview of some of the District projects.

Scoping for the environmental assessment for the HiTech lithium project has been completed; staff is reviewing the comments submitted and will incorporate the comments into the environmental assessment document.

The Aurora uranium/lithium exploration project is a couple of years behind the HiTech project; a formal plan of operations for development activities has not been submitted; the kick-off meeting for the collection of baseline information was recently completed.

Once approval is received, the Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for the Grassy Mountain project will begin; two public meetings as a part of the scoping will be held - one in Vale and one in Jordan Valley.

The DeLamar mine project is in Idaho, but there are one or two roads that may be involved that are in Oregon.

Work has been continuing on Key Research Natural Areas. In 2015, BLM completed sage grouse planning amendments to accommodate the species status at that time. In that plan was designation for the Malheur Field Office area for the creation of nine Key Research Natural Areas; these are small units of vegetation that were intended to be set aside for research purposes. Litigation took place and an updated plan was issued in 2019; the 2019 plan was set aside; work continues on the nine areas - draft environmental assessments are out on several of the areas.

The Boardman to Hemingway project continues; working towards the goal of issuing Idaho Power a limited notice to proceed.

The US Air Force has been discussing an Over the Horizon project; an official proposal has not been submitted.

Currently targeted to issue the Record of Decision on the Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan Amendment in February 2024.

The Lytle Boulevard transmission line project to provide power at the Landfill has not been calendared; it is hoped to put the project into the calendar in the Spring.

Mr. DeForest answered questions from the Court members. See instrument # 2024-213 for the written quarterly report.

### **SUBDIVISION PLAT**

Surveyor Derrick McKrola presented a subdivision plat for the Court's consideration. Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Wildwood Estates Subdivision Plat, in the City of Vale. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. See instrument #2024-215

### **LYTLE BLVD LANDFILL**

Environmental Health Clerk Kelly Friend met with the Court and provided an update on the power project at Lytle Boulevard Landfill. The estimate from Idaho Power that was provided in September 2022 has now increased \$15,000. The electrician has the panels up, conduit in the ground, breakers are ready, and just needs to run the wires and place the meter on the pole. The project cannot progress any further until BLM completes its categorical exclusion.

### **BAKER TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (BTI)**

Economic and Community Development Coordinator Taylor Rembowski requested the Court sign a letter of support for Baker Technical Institute's (BTI) efforts to obtain an EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs Grant. BTI is working to establish an infrastructure construction workforce training program through Department of Corrections, Snake River Correctional Institution. Commissioner Jacobs moved to sign the letter of support. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. See instrument # 2024-202

### **FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY - BROADBAND**

Farmers Mutual Telephone Company (FMTTC) General Manager Ron Rembelski and Outside Plant Manager Blake Seamons met with the Court. FMTTC is applying for funding from the Oregon Broadband Technical Assistance Program (BTAP) and requested a letter of support from the Court. Commissioner Mendiola moved to sign the letter of support. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The maximum grant award is \$150,000 per county. See instrument # 2024-203

### **WARMING SHELTER**

Emergency Services Lieutenant Rich Harriman met with the Court and provided a verbal report on the temporary Warming Center held at the Fairgrounds (Girvin Hall) from January 13 - 19, 2024. At the regularly scheduled LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) meeting the members discussed the forecasted cold weather (below zero temperatures) and began formulating a plan for a Warming Center. The planning began on Thursday, January 11 and the Warming Center opened Saturday, January 13. Oregon Department of Human Services Office of Resilience and Emergency Management (OREM) was instrumental in the planning and execution of the Warming Center. A staff member of the American Red Cross assisted in an unofficial capacity. OREM coordinated meals for the Warming Center; three meals were provided. 20 meals per mealtime were planned when the Center first opened; by the close of the Center 70 meals per mealtime were given out. A total of 950 meals were provided; OREM paid for the meals at an expense of just over \$18,500; and the meals were provided by Hog Rock Cafe in Ontario. After the closure of the Warming Center, Hog Rock Cafe partnered with St. Matthews Episcopal Church to serve 50 lunches per day between January 23 and February 2. There was a total of 146 overnight stays at the Warming Center; the highest midnight count was 39 individuals. There was a total of 76 volunteers (excluding the shift leads and the 24-hour security). Service organizations were also available - Valley Family Health Care brought its Mobile Access Care (MAC) unit on two days and provided 4 nurse visits and 8 medical visits; DHS (Department of Human Services) self-sufficiency staff assisted with enrollment in SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits; the Housing Authority, Community in Action, and Lifeways were also on-site. Staffing the shift lead positions was a challenge - a group of leaders, including County leaders/departments heads, is needed to draw from in emergency situations. The site was not setup for donations. The cost of the security company was approximately \$12,000 and was originally going to be borne by the County; OREM has since said it will reimburse the County for the security expense. OREM also paid for cleaning of Girvin Hall.

The Court expressed appreciation to Lt. Harriman and all the volunteers and agencies who assisted with the Warming Center.

### **COURT MINUTES**

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Court Minutes of January 17, 2024 as written. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET RESOLUTION**

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Supplemental Budget Resolution R24-03: In the Matter of Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Supplemental Budget by Resolution Under Local Budget Law ORS (Oregon Revised Statute) 294.471. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The purpose of the supplemental budget is to allocate Child Support Incentive funds that were not anticipated when the budget was adopted - the funds will be used for security access doors; and to allocate ODHS (Oregon Department Human Services) Resilience & Emergency Management funds that were not anticipated when the budget was adopted - these are reimbursement funds for security of the temporary warming shelter. See instrument # 2024-201

**TOUR**

Commissioner Jacobs noted that the Court members recently attended the CS Beef Packers Industry Tour in Idaho; the tour was very informative.

**COURT ADJOURNMENT**

Judge Joyce adjourned the meeting.