

MALHEUR COUNTY SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Pursuant to Initiative Measure No. 23-64

Meet to Promote Relocating Oregon-Idaho Border Ordinance

January 13, 2025

The Special Meeting of the County Court was called to order by Judge Dan Joyce at 9:00 a.m. with Judge Joyce presiding and Commissioner Ron Jacobs and Jim Mendiola present. The Special Meeting was held pursuant to Initiative Measure 23-64 and Malheur County Meet to Promote Relocating Oregon-Idaho Border Ordinance to discuss how to promote the interests of Malheur County in any negotiations regarding the relocation of the Oregon-Idaho border. Present in the meeting room were public members Bob Doughty, Harold Durfee, Devon Durfee, Bob Wheatley, Charles "Chuck" Pike, John Lawson, Merlyn Skeen, Logan Skeen, and Malheur County Economic and Community Development Director Taylor Rembowski. Present electronically were Matt McCaw with Greater Idaho, James (no last name given), Steven Mitchell with the Malheur Enterprise, and Antonio Sunseri with the Argus Observer. Notice of the meeting was emailed to the Argus Observer, Malheur Enterprise and posted on the Courthouse bulletin board and County website. The meeting was audio recorded. The agenda is recorded as instrument # 2025-0101

Judge Joyce asked for comments from the public.

Bob Wheatley: My name is Bob Wheatley. I am a representative of the Greater Idaho move the border movement in Malheur County. I have given each of the commissioners a copy of some materials that I've put together; they're informational and primarily that's what I'm here for today is just to share some information with the commissioners and with the others here participating - point out a few things that have been happening lately and primarily things that have been happening in the Oregon legislature. One of the things that I wanted to show everybody is, first of all, I brought a map. Can you guys see that map? You see all the red and then you see the blue. In this last election in November, all the counties in red voted Republican, or conservative, if you will, the counties that are marked in blue are the counties that voted Democratic and we know how it carried. So, the majority of the state was in favor of primarily of views that were of a conservative nature. Those counties in blue, those nine counties out voted the other 27 counties in Oregon to pass their agenda over what most of us would represent. The second map that I have given you, you will see marked in red, those are the 13 counties that have so far voted in favor of looking into moving the border. Those are the counties in Eastern Oregon that have approved looking into this, investigating this. Now, one of the things that I wanted to point out to you is that in Malheur County, in November, there was a ballot measure that would have eliminated requiring these three meetings a year, and Greater Oregon did not oppose that. We did nothing to, we put out no materials, we did no speaking against that measure, because we've been to all these meetings. We agreed with the commissioners and the other people that these meetings did not need to be necessarily held on a regular basis as long as there was an accommodation to where we could have

a special meeting when and if there was information to discuss. So, we supported that, but in Malheur County, 54% of the people voted to continue these meetings. So, I think that's a sign. There was no, like I say, there was no support against that measure from us as a group. And yet the people of Malheur County are still saying they want this looked at and want it talked about. Since the November election, we have had very little support in the legislature. Since the election, Representative Mark Owens, who represents in the House, District 60, which Malheur County is a part of, Mark Owens has said that he will submit a bill, a piece of legislation in this upcoming session that will ask for a committee to be put together, a bipartisan committee of the House and Senate that would interact with the legislature in Idaho to discuss the matter. It's just a matter of discussion, okay, to answer questions. Senator Diane Linthicum of District 27 has also stated that she will be presenting a bill in the Senate, Oregon Senate, for the same purpose. So what we're asking, the thing that we're asking formally here today, is that once again we ask the commissioners to consider supporting what the people of Malheur County have asked for and we ask that you would write a letter to the legislature indicating that you support the people that you represent in Malheur County and represent and would like the legislature to seriously consider passing these bills to form the committee to meet with the Idaho Legislature to discuss the merits, the pros and the cons, if you will, to discuss the problems, whether they can be met with, whether they can't, or whether there may be a better way of meeting what our problems are without having to go this far with moving of the border. But we need the people in the Legislature to know that the people of Malheur County support it and that the commissioners support it. So, we ask you to really seriously consider doing that. Most of the 13 counties that have already voted to support this movement have sent letters of support to the legislature, the county commissioners, in each one of those counties. I think Malheur County is one of three that has not supported it; and that's why we are here today to ask for that support.

Gentlemen, I don't want to dominate this meeting at all. I have brought some information and it's included in your handout, but there are some things that I would like to mention, for those who may be listening and those who are here today, to give you an idea of what is happening in the legislature and what has been happening, that are going to have a dramatic impact on us in Eastern Oregon, and very much so in Malheur County, in the next few years. We've talked about over the last three years that there are measures being passed in the Oregon Legislature that are going to have an impact on our farmers and ranchers. Ladies and gentlemen, that time is here. We will be seeing in 2025 some of the impacts of the new green energy policies that Oregon has passed. Just historically, this green energy legislation was first proposed in the 2019 and 2020 state legislatures. Now if you will remember, the big walkout by the Republicans, in both the House and the Senate, was done at this time and the purpose of that was to block this legislation. The Republicans did not have the votes to block it. The Democrats would have passed this legislation basically without opposition. The Republicans, the only measure they had was to not show up so that there was not an adequate quorum to have the vote. And I think most of you remember all the uproar about that and supposedly the state police were going to go to all these legislators who had done a walk out and force them to attend. Anyway, things kind of cooled off a little bit but in order to avoid that happening again the legislature then did pass a measure that put in an attendance qualification and so any members of the House or Senate who pulled something like this again - did a walk out and

missed, I can't remember what the number was, it was like three or four meetings, it wasn't very many, they would not qualify then to run for re-election. That's what happened to Senator Findley. In this last session, again to oppose this type of legislation, he was one of the ones that walked out and by standing by his values and what he knew that the people that he represented wanted, he forfeited his right to be able to run for re-election. Okay, as I mentioned, for various reasons, there was also a court action that stopped some of these policies from moving forward due to procedural problems, those have since been addressed and changed, but Governor Brown was coming towards the end of her session and so, she did not push it, but our new governor, Governor Kotek, immediately when she took office, then she, by executive order, put into effect many of these policies that had not yet been enacted legislatively. Okay, so what is the 100% Clean Energy for All Act? The 2021 legislature directed Oregon's utility companies to have no greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. To reach the 2040 mandate, 40% of Oregon's energy from natural gas and coal sources will have to be replaced by solar and offshore wind. One estimate shows that 70 billion dollars will be needed to accomplish this transition. Okay, so we've got some time between now and 2040, so there is still time to act and try and get some changes made. But the way the legislature stands at this point, the Democratic majority, which supports all these measures, will not be making any changes unless we get some real support coming from the rest of this state. Okay, there's a program that's been passed; it's the Climate Protection Program, known as CPP. It starts in 2025. This is already in effect. It requires that greenhouse emissions from suppliers of diesel, gasoline, natural gas, and propane, as well as other gas emitting industries, must reduce their carbon emissions. It's interesting to me to note that, you know, this sounds like maybe, I mean, there's some good things here. I'm not saying that this is totally wrong and something that we shouldn't look at trying to do in the future, but to jump into it the way they're jumping into it is going to be a real impact on the state, especially on our farmers and ranchers. Let me give you an example here. Part of this legislation and these acts that have been put in place includes an Advanced Clean Trucks Act, known as ACT Act, and Oregon is part of a six state compact that is led by California, which will restrict the sales of gas and diesel trucks, such as larger pickups, the F-250s and the HD2500s, many of our farmers drive, vans, motor homes, delivery trucks, dump trucks and semi-trucks. Starting in 2025, this act will require 11% of sales within each truck class to be electric vehicles. Let's think about that for a minute. And let's just look at one of those categories. Semi-trucks. Imagine it, folks. Imagine that the semi-trucks that deliver and also export products in and out of Oregon, starting this year are going to have to be converting to electric. At this point, I don't believe there are many manufacturers that even have electric semi-trucks available. Most manufacturers are working on it, because they've seen this coming, started in California. Oregon is next. I'm sure Washington will not be far behind. There are other states in the country that are doing the same sorts of things. Illinois is one of them that I know of, is being looked at. So, this is going to have a great impact. I looked into a little background on this information and I thought it was kind of interesting, some of the comments that people have made regarding this changeover. So what we're talking about in California started this I think either last year or maybe the year before, implementing this thing, the same act, regarding semi-trucks and it's having effect already in that most of the people, most of the carriers who deliver these things and they have these semi-trucks are being able to gradually work into it but they have new requirements for their diesel trucks that they have emission requirements that they have to meet so most of them in order to

meet those requirements, since they don't have the electric to try and convert to, are having to upgrade their diesel engines to meet the compliance. So, we're talking about thousands of dollars in investment, probably for those who have fleets, talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars to make that change over. And that's only a temporary thing because it's going to keep getting tougher and tougher until it's a 100% requirement for electric. And one of the interesting things that I came across, and this affects not only those who are running those companies that are making these deliveries for all of us, but it also includes those companies who are in business, California and Oregon, to make the sales of these equipment. These people are going to be forced out of business as well, because they're not going to be able to get the equipment. They're not going to be able to make the sales. There's also a part of this bill that is going to require in the state of Oregon, and this starts this month in Oregon, sales of diesel have to be cut by 11 percent. Okay, that's just the start. Each year it's going to increase. So, we're being forced into a situation where our farmers and our ranchers and those who are in the business of delivering goods to and throughout the state of Oregon are looking at a point where they either make the conversion, which is going to be thousands, maybe millions of dollars. One of the quotes that I saw, a trucker in California stated that the truck, the diesel truck that now costs him \$160,000 is going to, if he, when he goes to electric truck, in order to go to electric truck, he's looking at anywhere from \$400,000 to \$600,000. So, we're going to be seeing a lot of people going out of business. Another thing that came up with this, and it's happening in California already, a lot of those smaller trucking companies that can't afford to make these upgrades to be compliant at the present time are already going out of business. And there are truckers outside of California who make deliveries into California and if they can't make that upgrade they're going to be stopped at the border, they're not going to be allowed to bring that merchandise into California. So, what is happening, they're setting up transfer stations at the border so those trucks with loads that can't comply with California have to stop at the border, shift their loads over to a California compliant truck who will then make the rest of the delivery. So, think about that. I mean that might be really good down the road for Ontario. We're right there at the border maybe we'll be the transfer station for all of Oregon - people bringing their merchandise in, they'll have to stop in Ontario and shift all this over. Imagine the additional costs that are going to come from this. Imagine the number of truckers that are just going to quit coming to Oregon. And so, these are the things that I'm trying to let people know about.

I think it's important for us, in general, to think about this clean, this green clean act is going to eventually impact us as individuals as well. It's going to have an impact on all of our utilities. In January 2025, rate hikes of 15% for Pacific Power electric companies and 4.7% for natural gas customers went into effect. Those same residents have already had increases of 35% over the last three years in electric and 43% in gas. And I'm sure folks that, those of us who have Idaho power, we're going to have a little bit of a break because of Idaho Power and their situation. But these hikes are coming as this stuff continues to come through. How about the gasoline? The Oregon Department of Transportation is showing a \$1.7 billion budget shortfall for 2025. In order to make up for that, they're proposing adding \$0.35 a gallon to the current Oregon state tax on gas and \$0.40 per gallon on diesel. It says that a tax rate of 75 cents per gallon, which this new tax rate would bring us up to, Oregon would surpass California and Illinois for the highest gas tax in the

nation. And in addition to that, that 35 cent gas tax increase won't fill all of ODOT's (Oregon Department of Transportation) budget hole. So, plan on vehicle registration fees increasing as well. These are just a few of the things that we're looking at happening to us, and it starts this year. It has started in January. And I tell you, I've tried to keep up on some of this stuff, and I honestly wasn't aware that how much this was going to affect us this quickly, and I know that a lot of other people throughout Eastern Oregon, but I know especially in Malheur County, are unaware of these things. And whether we like it or not, that legislation has been passed. That's not to say that there couldn't be changes made, hopefully, but it's going to take a lot of work to do that. People say how impossible it is to think about moving the border. I'm telling you, I think it'd be easier to move the border than it's going to be to change the legislature in the state of Oregon the way that it's made up right now. We know just looking at those maps that those counties in the Portland, Salem, Eugene areas that make up the majority of the population of Oregon are going to pass whatever legislation they deem meets their agenda whether the rest of Oregon likes it or not and we need to be aware of this folks. Just for informational purposes I have begun putting together a list of people in Malheur County who have made me aware that they would like more information. I'm putting together a group text that I will, as I gain information, I will be sending out group texts to people who want to be informed and I am very happy to anyone who'd be interested just need to let me know and I'd be happy to put their names on it, but again, like I said I'm not here to make a long-winded speech I don't want to take up all your time but I did want to bring this information forward, present it to you, and I will be quiet now and let the rest of people talk.

Charles Pike: My name is Charles Pike and I'm pretty sure some of you here know me, I was raised here. One of the things that back up what he says and the reason for this border move is the fact that it's not just that impact but the people that's making this law about no fossil fuels in Oregon and removing the dams out of the river. Okay, first I would like to say how many tractors is produced that's over 200 horse that's electric? How many trucks that has that horse power to truck this stuff in? Maybe the legislation that put this up ought to do some investigating on what the impact of all of the people in Oregon and the world; these farmers feed us. And in over a hundred years, I come in this world in 1946, my father was using horses. That's developed up to now and what it is now and there's two, three hundred horse tractors. How are they going to charge these tractors if they take the power out of them windmills? They don't impress me much. What's the impact? There should be more investigation before they make a law like this because that legislature also eats a potato and gravy and a beef steak. These farmers produce that. They feed the world. Okay, this is just Oregon. It's not the whole United States or the whole world, but it's a beginning. The law, there might be some good in that, but they need to do more. They're gonna throw all these tractors that burn diesel fuel in the garbage? The millions, thousands of millions, hundreds of thousands, one of those tractors cost three or \$400,000 apiece. They can't afford in 10 years to switch all that to electric. Maybe we ought to do a little more investigating about this law. I support the farmers, I love them. I was raised a farmer here in Malheur County. I even worked for Mr. Mendiola's grandfather when I was a child, Joe Mendiola. So, farming is not new to me, but there might be some good things in the fossil fuel reduction. I can see that there could be some good in that, but we got to do a little more investigating before we start shoving that down. That's really all I have to say. We can't just throw these tractors away or these trucks because they burn

fossil fuel. And we certainly can't afford to buy new ones just because it doesn't burn fossil fuel. Let's do a little more investigating about our laws, the impacts, the batteries that's in these things. When they go bad, where are you going to jump them? We don't just go throw things in the ditch anymore, like we used to when we were kids. That's an impact, and these batteries require chemicals. Where does that come from? It needs to be investigated and developed. This impact on these farmers started over 100 years ago, and it's developed up to what it is today. And I'm amazed at what it does. And I'm amazed at how it feeds us, not just us, but the world. Let's not destroy it. Yes, let's develop it. That's basically what I wanted to say.

Devon Durfee: So, I've done diesel mechanic-ing and I drive truck so in the schooling that I've done for an electric vehicle that you guys want to produce on the road the batteries only last 10 years, I don't know if you guys knew that, but it costs at least 20,000, and this is just in a hybrid car, at least \$20,000 to replace that battery every 10 years. It's like Chuck said, how are you gonna dispose of it? Because there's no clean way to dispose it. You can't even reuse the batteries. You look at your old vehicles, you can recycle them and reuse them. And if you look into an electric truck, there's more investigation that needs to be done. If you went from coast to coast in an electric truck, it would take six days, maybe seven days, to move your groceries across the United States of America. When I hauled beef, we had three days to move it. So how is that gonna effect on moving beef or other products that are time-sensitive if we do all electric? And I mean, like Chuck was saying, if you look at the carbon footprint that a windmill leaves or even a solar panel leaves it doesn't make sense because it leaves a bigger carbon footprint than even just an old tractor that runs straight on diesel not even def or anything like that. It leaves a huger carbon footprint because the main fact of it is you can't reuse it. I mean look at how many vehicles that we can still use today that are older than me. I'm 34 years old and yet they're still out there running, still producing. I mean, how can we justify math versus what an electric is going to do versus an old tractor or an old truck? And I don't know the research on it, but I've heard like to charge up, I can't remember how many electric trucks, it will take more of the power grid than what a whole city runs off of to charge those electric trucks. So, we definitely need to investigate on what we're going to do to run semi-trucks because if it takes more, if it takes like four semi-trucks, it takes more to charge those trucks than it does a whole city like Chicago or whatever, what are we going to do? We don't have the energies or the resources for it. And I mean, I need to look a little more into it but I've heard some of the numbers and I haven't written it down, I'll admit that, but I have heard how much it will affect the power grid because of what it takes to charge just an electric semi-truck.

B. Wheatley: Just to that, because I've seen a couple articles on that because the electrical grid throughout the United States at the present time cannot handle what he's talking about and it's been estimated, and this is probably like every other federal estimate it's gonna be on the low side, it would cost ten million dollars to update the electric grid throughout the United States to the point where it can handle this and we're talking, and the charging stations, like he said, they're going to be having to stop quite often to recharge these electric batteries. So there needs to be a whole series of these charging stations. It's not there. It's going to be 10, 12 years before the infrastructure would be in place to make this happen. And yet California, Oregon, these other states are saying, oh we're going to start it right now. You figure out how to make it.

D. Durfee: You have 11 hours to drive in a day for a truck driver. An electric truck, if I remember my math, you got four or five hours and then it takes pretty much a whole day to charge that truck, if you have the correct charger and not just that, they don't have the charging stations where you need them. We nowhere near have the efficiency. In California, even though they don't want to push it, how long have they been doing grid blackouts? Years. Before I was probably even alive, they were doing grid blackouts. Word is Idaho, they produce the power and they're taking it down to California. Thousands of miles that they're pushing electricity down to California out of Idaho, and then we tear out three dams over by Klamath Falls because of the fish, which are still there, because if they weren't how would we still have them? We all know that they swim up the river to produce and spawn, so, I mean we're not really helping ourselves because the cleanest energy that I can think of is probably hydro, a dam. Other than that, that's all I have left to say.

Merlyn Skeen: I come here every year. I'm Merlyn Skeen, and we still have all the same problems. I keep coming to this meeting and our lives haven't gotten any better on the farm. It's getting worse, as everybody's all testified. It's getting worse for us as business owners. It's getting worse for us as citizens with the death tax. Nothing is improving. So, I would just plead with the Court. We have Mark Owens willing to take our case for you to support. I didn't realize that we were only three counties that didn't have a letter of support from the county court. I plead with you to please get their attention, at least let them know how bad it is for us over here and get their attention to what we're asking. And for them to let us go, I know that's a big, huge discussion, but they need to listen to us. They need to make some concessions so that we here in Eastern Oregon will still be existing. Because the way it is now, I don't see any course forward. I feel sorry for my son, you know, we're retiring. What's his future gonna look like? How's he gonna feed his family? Farming is tough already where it is right now without all these new regulations that are coming on. So that's what I would ask of you as the County Court.

C. Pike: You know, what's just as bad is that legislator up there has never worked like a farmer does. So, if you put the hours in that a farmer does that legislator probably wouldn't even be there would he? Most of them don't even realize what work it takes to make a farm work, especially where you have animals. I was raised on a dairy and when I drafted I swore I'd never milk another cow again, I wasn't going back to that. But now today things has changed and it's work because they did the investigating and made it work. But you can't just stop something that's multi-million dollars like these tractors and that because of fossil fuel. It has to be investigated, improved. I can see where not making emission it would be good for the world. But you still got to make the world click, every one of us have to.

M. Skeen: We have to make noise or we won't ever be heard and basically that's what this push is for. We're just trying to make noise so that they will listen to us and care. I don't know if it will help but we can't just go down without a fight. Or we won't exist anymore over here the way we do now.

multiple talking

Judge Joyce: Do you have a letter drafted?

M. Skeen: A letter drafted to leave for you?

Judge Joyce: Do you have one?

M. Skeen: No. Do you want one?

Judge Joyce: Would you?

M. Skeen: For the court?

Judge Joyce: Yeah.

B. Wheatley: I can come up with one.

M. Skeen: I thought you already had done that before.

Judge Joyce: Not that I know of.

B. Wheatley: I can get a copy of several of the counties that have done it and it follows pretty much the same form so I can get that to you.

Judge Joyce: I think it's got to be done properly. You know, like what you guys are talking about. Just saying.

B. Wheatley: Just to follow up with what Merlyn said, I guess that's the message that I wanted to bring today is that we need every county, all the county commissioners in counties that have voted to wanting to look into this to let the legislature know that in representing your constituents you support having them look at this. That's all this bill would be is to look at it. It's not a bill to move the border. It's a bill to make the two legislatures look at the problems and discuss them. So, if we can get that started. And then the other thing, you know, I mentioned that I'm putting together this group text and, gosh, within a week's time, and just Chuck and I talking to people we know, I've got like 120 names of people that are interested in getting more information. If we can spread the word and get more people in Malheur County, in all the areas, I want from Jordan Valley to Nyssa and Adrian, Ontario, Nyssa, Vale, I want input from all the areas. And then what we have to do is write letters, not just to our legislators, but to the people who are the, I don't know what they call them, presidents of the Senate or House, whoever the House and Senate leadership are to let them know and to committees that may be looking at these bills, to let them know that we support this thing. If we could get thousands of letters going to Salem, let them know that the people at the grassroots want this looked at. We can overcome those hundreds of thousands of votes that are out there. I think it can have an impact, but if we don't try it now, if we don't do it now, it's just going

to keep going forward. And like Merlyn said, in 10 to 15 years there's not going to be much activity in Malheur County. People will have moved out.

C. Pike: Well, last week I was with a group of clients around the table, we were discussing this, about the fossil fuel thing, and the power plants, and the farmers here, God help the governor and come on down and set on the border, because we're not going to just destroy all of our fossil fuel tractors. Multi-millions, even trillions to do this. How are you going to enforce it? You've got the majority of the people here, they'll go get their fuel if they have to in Idaho. Does that help Oregon?

M. Skeen: The farmers can't do that, it's not legal. If you're a private citizen, you can go do that, you can go over to Fruitland and fuel up. But if you're a farmer and you have your bulk tanks (inaudible)

C Pike: It's either that or go out of business, right?

B. Wheatley: Another part that I didn't mention on this reduction in the sales of the diesel vehicles, what they're going to do is, ultimately, they want to do away with all sales of diesel fuels and also diesel run vehicles. They are not saying that you can't go over to Idaho and buy a diesel tractor or truck and bring it back into Oregon, but they're not going to register it. So, what's that accomplish, right?

C. Pike: Well, the county sheriff's going to go write you a ticket for violating that law maybe. Most of them will probably support the farmer in my opinion, they're elected officials.

B. Wheatley: It could get to be really tough. I was kind of, I was sad to see, I don't think there's any supporters here that supported the ballot measure to stop the meetings that were opposed to moving the border. I don't think there's anybody here today. I was hoping they'd be here because one of the things that our meetings in the past have done with them here was to increase the dialogue that there's a lot of things that we commonly see wrong that we'd like to see fixed. They don't want to see us have to go to moving, they don't want to move the border, but they were willing to talk about the things that we do agree on. I was hoping we could continue that type of dialogue as well, so we'll see what happens in the future. I hope that will happen, because we need all the people in Malheur County to address these issues. Whether we move the border or not, we need to address these issues for our farmers and ranchers and our everyday business people.

D. Durfee: Another thing on the Green Act the whole reason why they say it's not green is because there's no efficient way to get rid of petroleum oil, which is like the oil you put in your engine, and this and that, which is not true because oil manufacturers have now started paying for waste oil to turn into diesel and a diesel engine can efficiently burn petroleum oil; I've even done it myself.

C. Pike: They need to investigate it. They need to. I can see the laws. I can see the reason for them. They want to do it right now. Let's do it over a period of time and develop it. Makes sense, don't it?

D. Durfee: If they didn't have a clean way to get rid of petroleum oil, why would we buy waste oil? And this goes for not just waste oil like engine oil, this goes for hydraulic fluid, transmission fluid, anything that's oil-based. I mean, brake fluid can even be converted into diesel. I've done the research on it. I know how to do it.

John Lawson: I'm John Lawson, originally from Klamath Falls, but now Boise. And I'm not quite sure if I totally understood the reason for the gathering tonight. Are you going to be proposing or making a letter to the legislature and Salem asking them to disregard or against Measure 23-64? Is that the purpose of the meeting?

Commissioner Jacobs: We're here to listen to the public, you know; exactly what's taking place this morning to hear your views and then we'll have to make that decision of how we're gonna, if we're gonna submit a letter of support.

J. Lawson: Obviously, I'm in favor of moving the border. I'd like to put Boise and Klamath Falls together so I could say I lived in one state all my life. I'm a retired police officer and a retired attorney. And what I think one thing we need to talk about is getting some legal counsel involved in alternate ways to put pressure on Salem. Even if it's to the extent of having the pro border move counties come together and form some type of a resolution to say, hey, we won't go. You want to destroy your life, we won't go. And just say, you know that the county sheriff is the main law enforcement officer in the county. Oregon State Police, they do their job, but the sheriff is in charge of the law enforcement in the county. The judges in each county control case work in the county, not Salem. I think you could at least put together a coalition, like the people who want to move forward, and put some pressure on them politically through a large eastern Oregon group that says, we won't go. We won't support this. We won't support that. We won't do this. You can't stop our cows from defecating and farting. You know, there's natural gas out there no matter how you describe it but you can't put it in a gas can but I'm just thinking that there's got to be a way we can put pressure on Salem by having the counties come together. Form a coalition saying, we're not going to put up with your BS. We're going to do it our way. We will not enforce the law. And the sheriffs don't have to. Salem can't force the county sheriffs to do something regarding law enforcement in these counties. They might try to get the state police involved, but they're basically a highway patrol. So, I'm just thinking these things through legally, and I haven't really come to any conclusions yet from what I've been able to think about. I think its time for a rebellion, not just a, please let us out of your state. No, I think its time we need to put up a fence and say, we'll live on this side, you stay on your side. You obey your laws. We'll do what we want to do, but by doing it in a legal sense and just form of a coalition between counties. It's hard for one county to put enough pressure on Salem to make them do anything but if all the counties that voted to move the border come together and actually establish an organization of or at least an unofficial or official group of counties they could probably put a lot more pressure on Salem to back off.

C. Pike: To take this one step further, those people on the coast that are dairymen and they have other farms like nuts and what stuff they grow over there, why couldn't we get them to go with this also?

J. Lawson: I don't see why not.

C. Pike: Some of them can't be all for that fossil fuel, they can't afford to replace all their trucks and their tractors.

J. Lawson: Well, most of the Oregon counties are now red, at least at the last election.

C. Pike: We might get to do it legally and get some of the people on that side of the state to join us.

J. Lawson: I'm just kind of thinking this thing through legally, and I haven't got an answer for it yet. But that's kind of where my mind is going while I'm sitting here. I'll let it go at that.

B. Wheatley: I might just add to that just to kind of answer a little bit of the question there is that essentially, we're at the point with the Greater Oregon organization that's basically doing what John said is kind of where they're going. This year they have two primaries, their two priorities are to work at the legislative level, and they've been doing this for the last couple of years, and they are gradually building a number of people in the legislature. Most of them are Republican, but some Democrats, who are willing to listen and work with this. And that is where, you know, we realize that as county commissioners, you have a limited impact with the legislature. But we also realize, like John said, that the counties that have voted for it, that there are associations. We know that you have several counties that you have an association with. And so that's the second part that Greater Oregon is working on, is working with each county to build the support in the counties so that we have a common voice, if you will, not only with the legislature, but with the governor and others who can have an impact. So that's kind of where we're going from. I've kind of been assigned as a representative of the group for Malheur County to try and provide, get as much information as I can out. That's why, you know, I want to communicate with you so that you know what our group is doing and what we're trying to accomplish and what we would like to see you do to help us. But I also, part of my duty is to try and get more information out to all the voters in Malheur County to make them more aware of what's going on. So, I keep mentioning this group text thing, but for those that are here or who may be listening, anybody that you know that would be interested in being part of that text, just get a hold of me and let me know. I'll be more than happy to add names to it and we'll keep growing in that way. So, from our side of the street, that's where we're working at now. I think we're at the point with the 13 counties, there are two more counties that are interested and that we would love to have come in with us, join the 13th. But that 15 counties is probably max that we're looking at joining the movement at this point. Once we reach that, I think we've come to the conclusion that now it's time to really put pressure on the legislature. Some of you are probably aware, maybe you don't know, because I mean, this involves Idaho as well. And in last year's legislature, the Idaho House passed a memorial that would have formed a

committee between Oregon and Idaho to study this. There was also a similar bill presented in the Idaho Senate, but it was, by the time it got to committee, it was late in the session, the session adjourned before it could get to the floor for a vote, but they had enough senators who said they would vote positively for it. Had it gotten there, it would have passed. So, Idaho is willing to look at it. We need the Oregon legislature to be willing to look at it. They may come up with a totally different answer, and that's great. Maybe some of these things that we're talking about, maybe it just needs to go back and rework the legislation. I don't know. But the first thing that has to happen is discussions between us at the grassroots level between the legislature themselves between the two states.

C. Pike: Is there some way legally we could bring Western Oregon in with us that would be supportive of our agenda here?

B. Wheatley: They can support it.

C. Pike: I wonder if we could work on something like that.

B. Wheatley: And there are people in Western Oregon, in fact I'm taking up all the time, but just for your knowledge a year and a half ago one of the major polling companies did a poll in Northwestern Oregon to get the feelings of the people who live in Northwestern Oregon about the idea of moving the border. And 54% of the responders were positive about looking at the idea of doing it. So yes, in that part of the state, there is support. There are not enough votes to get the counties to pass a resolution like Eastern Oregon has done, but there are certainly voters in the other side of the state that support the idea.

C. Pike: If we got them to come in with us that'd make us a lot stronger, that's for sure, if there's some way to do that, legally like he said.

Unknown: I like that thought.

B. Wheatley: You know we talk about, you talk about being from Klamath Falls and one of the areas that has been talked about and there's a lot of support is, I'm not sure what the county is, but the county that Coos Bay is in.

Unknown: Coos County.

B. Wheatley: Coos County, okay, so there's been support there for this and I'm just thinking out of my, you know, if this thing continues to go forward, and if suddenly we see that truckers are no longer able to come into Oregon to bring goods and stuff in, if we get Coos County and a couple of those other counties to join us, and we do move the border, suddenly Idaho has a port on the ocean. It could be one of the biggest ports in the Pacific Northwest. I'm just saying, there are things that can happen that we can't even sometimes imagine, but we can't allow what's happening to go

forward without changes if we want to see the economy of rural Malheur County continue to exist and thrive.

D. Durfee: Well and with what California has passed you're not allowed to have a commercial rig that's older than ten years old; I don't know if you guys knew that. So, if you have a four hundred thousand or six hundred thousand dollar semi-truck how are you gonna pay that puppy off in ten years and not just that, in ten years the battery goes bad anyway. So, what are you gonna do?

B. Wheatley: Let me ask you a question because you're knowledgeable on this, but I do know that California has passed legislation already that diesel trucks cannot idle for more than like five or six minutes.

D. Durefee: That is correct.

B. Wheatley: How does that affect your truck?

multiple talking

D. Durfee: Honestly, you don't want to idle a semi-truck too much. But here's the better question, why do you as an individual have less rights than a dog? And I say this because guess what, it gets hot in California and you know how many semi-truck drivers have gotten a pet so that they can idle in the state of California because the dog or the cat or whatever animal they have has more rights because if they don't idle that truck for that animal, it is now animal abuse. Well what about myself? I'm a human being. I have less rights than a dog to idle a truck.

C. Pike: I've got another thing to bring up. What about this rail? They talked about a reload here in Malheur County. They're a piece of electric. Are they going to change those too? That's another aspect of moving materials (inaudible)

D. Durfee: And not just that. These new trucks

C. Pike: (inaudible) bring that in too because that is a big part of our life - the rail.

D. Durfee: These new trucks are affected more by idling because the DPFs that they have in them they get plugged up with all that soot more and then they have to get worked on earlier because of all the idle time and that's why these new trucks can't idle.

Bob Doughty: Seems to me like its time for us to put a little pressure to on the other two counties that have not got on board yet. Can we do that just by emailing the commissioners there and what not?

B. Wheatley: The Greater Oregon organization is working on that. They are the ones that have worked in each of the 13 counties so far to get people involved and get the measure on the ballot

and get votes and they are still continuing to work with them. Umatilla County is one that would be a key county to bring onboard and there's a lot of work going on there. The other thing that I would just point out, when you look at the map, I think it's really interesting to me that every Oregon county that borders Idaho has voted to have the border move. I think that tells us something.

multiple talking.

Logan Skeen: One thing I would just like to add, uh, geez, I don't know how many years ago was five years ago or whatever when they were trying to pass the, uh, all the overtime laws. This side of the state was very against it and rightfully so, we're at an extreme disadvantage against Idaho, we bussed people over there, there was a bunch of people that went over, testimonies were given and everything, and the state showed a willingness to not view all counties the same. I think we need to remember that. So, the squeaky wheel will cause action. So, we need to continue to express why these laws and everything that they're trying to pass are not good for our side of the state, so that they can remember, because they've already done it, and that sets kind of a protocol there that they can view these counties differently when it comes to some of the laws.

M. Skeen: And I'm sure we could get some more bus loads over there if we ever had a chance for a hearing like we did with the overtime hearing.

Commissioner Mendiola: I'm sure even these blue states have farmers and truckers and loggers and stuff in them that are going to be impacted. I think the best thing I've heard so far is the common voice is what we need to do is everybody start pushing an agenda. So, it's not invasive like changing the borders. They just need to know our views and how it's gonna hurt us. Common voice is the best thing going forward.

D. Durfee: There's plenty of truck drivers that won't go into California.

Commissioner Mendiola: There's a lot of truck drivers that quit going to California.

D. Durfee: They can't afford it for one and because of their laws and regulations. And I don't know if you know this, the crazy thing of it is, if you take the load into California right now, it pays great. But if you want to get out of the state of California to get a load that pays to get out of it, you cannot. And Colorado is the same way right now and you know what? They're pretty much right behind California in my opinion on following their agenda. Which Colorado has lost a lot of business because of what they've done.

Commissioner Mendiola: California has lost a lot of business too.

D. Durfee: California has, yeah.

M. Skeen: Oregon's going to be right behind them.

D. Durfee: And if we don't change what we're doing, we're not going to help our economy. And that's just the commercial industry.

J. Lawson: Well, I'm just curious, too. I think it's Umatilla County that takes all the trash from Portland. Is that correct? One of those river counties takes all the trash out of Portland and is transported by train over to one of the Eastern Oregon counties where it's dumped. And I'm just wondering how they're going to get them out of Portland if we did the same thing to them that they want to do to us, not allow their trucks into our state or our side of the mountains. So, they have to have all their trash accumulate there in Multnomah County. Just being a little facetious here, I'm sorry.

B. Doughty: Well to be a little facetious, a friend of mine in California, he was a farmer, called me yesterday just to discuss everything about the election and how that went and blah, blah, blah, and rah, rah, Trump and the typical BS. And he told me he had just seen a report that Oregon yesterday was sending 60 fire trucks with crews down to California to help them fight the LA (Los Angeles) fires. They made it as far as Fresno, and the California EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) stopped them and said, no, you can't go further. These trucks don't measure up to California's EPA standards.

D. Durfee: Not just that, California's having problems because they got electric fire trucks. What are you gonna do?

Unknown: Sorry, I can't answer your call, my truck battery needs to be recharged.

D. Durfee: Sorry, I can't pump water, I'm passed my four hours. Their big thing of this go green energy is the carbon footprint that it's going to leave behind. I promise you, you will leave a bigger carbon footprint with this go green energy. Windmills is a prime example. It's made out of a carbon steel, that carbon steel cannot be recycled, cannot be reused. All they do is they take it out to a landfill and they bury it. And not just that, that windmill runs off of that oil that they say isn't usable because that petroleum oil can't be burned cleanly, which it can be. It can be burned through a diesel engine. And guess what? Here's the other problem. When COVID came into effect, California had a lot less traffic, no cars, and semi-trucks coming in there, you want to know how clean it got down there in California? I was talking to multiple truck drivers they said that is the cleanest I've seen the state of California in years because they didn't have all those cars running, just semi-trucks and you could actually see the sky.

C. Pike: Well that brings up another too, when you said air, these airplanes all burn fossil fuel too, how are they going to do that? They'd have to develop an airplane that's electric huh. That's fossil fuel too.

D. Durfee: That's the biggest thing about the good green stuff is about the carbon footprint. I honestly think they don't realize how big the carbon footprint they will leave with an electric vehicle. Even solar panels and windmills are leaving a bigger carbon footprint than the energy that

we could burn or even having a diesel generator running to make electricity. It leaves a bigger carbon footprint than that ever would, probably. I'm sure of it. But a windmill is only good for 20 years.

There were no further public comments; the Court thanked the participants for their input and Judge Joyce adjourned the meeting. See instrument # 2025-0102 for the handout from Mr. Wheatley.