

MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES
FEBRUARY 17, 2016

The Malheur County Court met with Judge Dan Joyce presiding with Commissioner Don Hodge and Commissioner Larry Wilson present. Staff present was Administrative Officer Lorinda DuBois and County Counsel Stephanie Williams.

Also present was Larry Meyer of the Argus Observer and John Braese of the Malheur Enterprise.

US GEOTHERMAL

Scott Nichols, Randy Nye, and Ian Warren from US Geothermal met with the Court and gave a brief update of activities and answered questions from the Court members. Also present was SREDA (Snake River Economic Development Alliance) Executive Director Kit Kamo. Neil Hot Springs is active and is a highly efficient and well run power plant. The geothermal resource has held up very well. Mr. Nichols expressed appreciation for the support from the neighbors of the plant as well as the County Road Supervisor Richard Moulton. The Neil Hot Springs power plant is air cooled and the ability to extract the heat and reduce the temperature of R134 is drastically reduced in the summer when it's 95 degrees or hotter outside. Over the last 1 1/2 years US Geothermal has been looking into the possibility of using water cooling at the power plant. Water cooling would improve the efficiency of the power plant and be used during those months when it would be more beneficial than air cooling. Efforts continue to locate a sufficient water source in the area. US Geothermal intends to maintain its leases for properties on Vale Butte; it is not the company's highest priority at this time as Idaho Power is currently not seeking any new renewable energy contracts. However, US Geothermal is still working to identify an area for a test hole.

A poster detailing the operation at Neil Hot Springs was left for the County to display in the Courthouse hallway for the public's review. Mr. Warren reviewed the components of the poster with the Court members.

FIRST HEARING - ORDINANCE 213

Judge Joyce opened the first public hearing to consider Ordinance No. 213 Ratifying Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) creating the Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors (OACES). Surveyor/Engineer Tom Edwards explained that OACES has existed since 1906 as an informal organization. Once the IGA is ratified by at least 10 Oregon counties the entity will be created officially and it is anticipated that all Oregon counties will join the organization. There were no public comments. Judge Joyce closed the hearing. The second hearing will be March 2, 2016.

COURT MINUTES

Commissioner Hodge moved to approve Court Minutes of February 10, 2016 as written. Commissioner Wilson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

AUDIT

Commissioner Hodge moved to approve the County's 2014-2015 audit prepared by Millington Zwygart, Certified Public Accountants. Commissioner Wilson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

CANYONLANDS ADVISORY VOTE - CAMPAIGN TO VOTE

The Court members reviewed the Fact Sheet ad to be published by the County Court and authorized it to be placed in the Argus Observer and Malheur Enterprise.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planner Alvin Scott met with the Court and presented two names for consideration to be appointed to the Planning Commission. By consensus, the Court extended invitations to Dan Hart and John Faw to be members of the Malheur County Planning Commission. Mr. Scott will follow-up with Mr. Hart and Mr. Faw.

COURT ADJOURNMENT

Court was adjourned.