

MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES

February 24, 2021

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 Don Hodge and Commissioner Ron Jacobs present. Various members of the public, media, and staff were present electronically. Notice of the meeting was posted on the County website 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 # 2021-744

COVID-19 RESPONSE - UPDATE

Health Department Director Sarah Poe met with the Court and provided an update on the response to COVID-19. Also present was Environmental Health Director Craig Geddes and Ambulance Service District (ASD) Director Bob Dickinson. Ms. Poe expressed appreciation for various County department staff that have supported the Health Department in the COVID-19 response efforts. Lieutenant Rich Harriman is the Incident Commander; ASD Director Bob Dickinson, Environmental Health Director Craig Geddes, Planner Eric Evans, and Building Official Adele Schaffeld are members of the incident command team; these staff members have been actively involved in the daily COVID-19 response in addition to their primary job duties. Additionally, various other County staff members have supported the efforts. The County team held 27 COVID-19 test sites in 2020. After tomorrow's County vaccine POD (Point of Distribution), close to 3000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccination will have been given (does not include vaccines given by Valley Family, the hospital, and other community partners). The Health Department staff have also been invaluable through the pandemic.

The Governor announced yesterday that Malheur County will be moved into the Moderate Risk category beginning Friday, February 26th; our numbers have finally reduced through the efforts of our community. The team has taken a harm-reduction approach in regards to the restrictions imposed by the State and have focused on an education approach.

The vaccine PODs require numerous volunteers; approximately 100 community members have volunteered at the PODs so far (each POD requires staffing of approximately 50 people). Treasure Valley Community College's nursing program students have helped at several vaccine PODs along with several community-based organizations. Wheelchairs are available at the POD and Spanish speaking volunteers are on-hand to assist throughout the process.

The Court members individually expressed their appreciation to Ms. Poe and those involved in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Poe answered various questions from the Court members.

COUNTY LAND SALE

Treasurer/Tax Collector Jennifer Forsyth met with the Court and reviewed three potential properties to offer for sale at the next County Land Sale. An Order for sale of the properties will be prepared for the Court's approval next week.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Commissioner Hodge noted he has been in discussions with Road Supervisor Dave Tiffany about the need to replace some equipment at the Road Department. More details will be obtained and Commissioner Hodge will assist with obtaining financing.

MINUTES

Commissioner Hodge moved to approve Court Minutes of February 17, 2021 as written. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

CROSSING PERMITS

Commissioner Hodge moved to approve three Crossing Permits to Idaho Power Company for installation of overhead transformers for pumps; Crossing Permit #07-21 on Echo Road #770; Crossing Permit #08-21 on Miller Road #833; and Crossing Permit #09-21 on Ivanhoe Avenue #1115. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Original permits will be kept on file at the Road Department.

RIVER DEMOCRACY ACT

The Court discussed the River Democracy Act sponsored by Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley. The legislation would add nearly 4,700 miles of rivers and streams in Oregon to the national Wild and Scenic Rivers system. Baker County has voiced opposition to the Act in its entirety. Commissioner Jacobs noted that there has not been local input on the Act; it is anticipated that there may be public meetings held on the matter in the near future. Commissioner Jacobs explained that a number of streams listed that are in Malheur county are intermittent streams - meaning they dry up every summer. Approximately 32 different segments in Malheur county have been listed in the proposed legislation; of which about ten are intermittent streams. It is also proposed that there be a 1/2-mile buffer on each side of the river - which makes it a mile wide. The Court members agreed to individually research the proposed legislation and discuss the matter further.

AMENDMENT - LAKE OWYHEE ROAD FLAP AGREEMENT

Commissioner Hodge moved to approve Amendment 3 to the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) agreement, Project Number/Name: OR MALHEUR 846(1), Owyhee Lake Road Overstreet Road - Owyhee Reservoir; Western Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA), FHWA Agreement #DTFH70-16-E-00041. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The expiration date is extended to December 31, 2021. A copy will be returned for recording. See instrument #2021-0806

LEASE EXTENSION - CITY OF VALE

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Second Amendment to Lease Agreement Between City of Vale and Malheur County for Use of Vale City Hall, which was Recorded with the Malheur County Clerk on November 4, 2020 as Instrument Number 2020-4199; and First Amendment Recorded as Instrument Number 2020-4956. Commissioner Hodge seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The term of the lease is extended to June 30, 2021. See instrument# 2021-746

MEDICAL DIRECTOR RESIGNATION

The Court received notice of Dr. Morris Smith's resignation as Medical Director. The Court signed a letter thanking Dr. Smith for his 29 years of service as Medical Director of the Health Department. See instrument # 2021-745

LETTER OF SUPPORT - TVCC SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Court signed a letter to Governor Brown urging restoration of full funding to Oregon's Small Business Development Centers and in particular the local Treasure Valley Community College Small Business Development Center. See instrument # 2021-747

COURT ADJOURNMENT

Judge Joyce adjourned the meeting.

** Intergovernmental Agreement #167562 with Oregon Health Authority for Opioid Rapid Response Project recorded as instrument #2021-0807