

MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES
October 16, 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 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 Steven Mitchell with the Malheur Enterprise. 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 agenda is recorded as instrument # 2024-2865

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Planning Director Carol Parker met with the Court. Ms. Parker explained that beginning January 2025 Planning Commission meetings and Border Region Review Board meetings will be held at the Vale Seniors and Community Center. The facility will accommodate larger numbers of the public better than the current location at Justice Court. Commissioner Mendiola moved to authorize signing a rental agreement with Vale Seniors and Community Center for the monthly meetings. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

LIFEWAYS

Lifeways CEO (Chief Executive Officer) Steve Jensen met with the Court and provided an agency update. The grant request to the Governor's Office for Project Hope was submitted approximately four weeks ago and is under review.

Sheriff Travis Johnson joined the session.

Policy and procedures have been developed for the Deflection program. Training is completed and a training video is available; and staff have been hired. The Deflection program in Malheur county began October 1st.

Lifeways recently completed their State audit and results of the audit were phenomenal. Mr. Jensen shared some of the auditor's comments from the exit interview with the Court. Numerous community partners were contacted as part of the audit. There were four findings in the audit.

Mr. Mitchell left the meeting.

CROSSING PERMITS

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Crossing Permit #73-24 to Agri-Lines Irrigation/Aden Johnston for work on 12th Avenue E #736; and Permit #74-24 to Warrington Irrigation for work on Arabian Drive #1102. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Original permits will be kept on file at the Road Department.

COURT MINUTES

Commissioner Mendiola moved to approve Court Minutes of October 2, 2024 as written. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

Commissioner Mendiola moved to reappoint Jimmy Simpson to the Vector Control Board of Trustees. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT TO ANNEXATION

Commissioner Jacobs moved to consent to the annexation of Ref #'s 19771; 19767; and 7390 into the City of Ontario. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Fourteen tax lots owned by multiple owners in the area of NW Washington Avenue are annexing into the City of Ontario. The Sullivan Group LLC (Limited Liability Corporation) is acting as the applicant. All property owners, city and county representatives met in 2021 and agreed that the entire area needed to be annexed. See instrument # 2024-2866 for the Annexation and Rezone Application.

LETTER OF SUPPORT - CITY OF VALE

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve a letter of support for the City of Vale's COAR (Critical Oregon Airport Relief) grant application for Miller Memorial Airpark. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The grant application is for construction of hangar lots at the airport. See instrument # 2024-2867

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT - BOCCALEONI

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Temporary Employment Agreement for Part Time Courthouse Security Deputy - Malheur County Sheriff's Office with Rusty Boccaleoni. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. See instrument # 2024-2868

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Senator Lynn Findley met with the Court and gave a legislative update and answered questions from the Court members. Senator Findley attended ten community meetings throughout the state to discuss funding issues for transportation and ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation). ODOT's budget presented in August to the Governor's Office forecasted a \$354 million shortfall at current funding levels. The transportation workgroup is looking at transportation and funding mechanisms to build a path forward for legislation in the 2025 session.

The Governor has announced that she wants to find another \$1 billion for education. Oregon school districts must complete an estimated 146 reports to Oregon Department of Education annually.

Rural health care is another big issue. The hospital in Baker City closed its obstetrics department last year; several other hospitals in rural Oregon in Senator Findley's district are considering doing

the same. Reimbursement rates are low and it is difficult to maintain the required staffing levels. Long-term care funding and regulations are another issue.

Senator Findley has introduced legislation for the next year regarding determining revenue for the CAT (Corporate Activity Tax) tax exemption- proposes to remove the sunset date for small pharmacies along with some other small changes. Additionally, this will be the seventh year that the estate tax relief program legislation will be introduced.

A wildfire funding package will be considered; the RFPA (Rural Fire Protection Agency) program needs to be updated.

Renewable energy will be a topic for consideration.

DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) is going through the rulemaking process to develop a Climate Protection Program (CPP); this is not friendly to development, Oregonians, or industry and could have significant impacts to the cost of doing business in Oregon. Additionally, in 2021 a statewide recycling bill was passed.

Measure 110 is still a work in progress.

There is effort underway on how to fund a new courthouse facility in Malheur county and whatever the County can do to show it has "skin in the game" would be beneficial.

Commissioner Mendiola inquired as to the status of permitting for Grassy Mountain. Senator Findley explained that the State has notified Calico/Paramount Gold that all information has been submitted and accepted for the Environmental Evaluation. Theoretically a permit could be issued by the third quarter of 2025.

Commissioner Jacobs asked for any updates on the lithium exploration project or Senator Wyden's Malheur Community Empowerment for the Owyhee Act bill; Senator Findley did not have any updates.

COURT ADJOURNMENT

Judge Joyce adjourned the meeting.