

**IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF GRANT**

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January 26, 2021

Pursuant to notice made to the newspaper of general circulation throughout Grant County, the radio station, county website, and e-mail distribution list, a regular meeting of the County Court was held at the County Courthouse in Canyon City, OR.

9:01 a.m. Call to Order. Present were Judge Scott W. Myers, Commissioners Jim Hamsher and Sam Palmer, Administrative Assistant Laurie Stinnett, Reporter Steven Mitchell, John Rowell, and Jim Boethin. A Pledge of Allegiance was given to the United States Flag. Invocation was given by Jim Boethin.

HAND CHECK. The court approved outside of normal claims day, checks #63126, 63127, 63128, 63150, 63233, 63234.

AGENDA. MSP: Hamsher/Palmer – to accept the agenda as amended. Item N was added as a general order to review a request for an Intergovernmental Agreement between Grant and Harney and Grant and Wheeler County.

ANNOUNCEMENTS. Judge Myers noted that county offices were closed on January 17th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Claims Day took place on the 19th and on the 20th he attended a Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) meeting in the building. Myers traveled to Baker City on the 25th for a Community Connections Board of Director’s meeting. On Friday January 28th he will travel to meet with District Manager Dennis Teitzel of the Prineville Bureau of Land Management. Myers will chair a Mental Health Advisory Committee meeting on February 7th and on the 8th will perform a wedding at the courthouse. On the 15th he will attend a facilities meeting to talk about various aspects of courthouse building improvements including windows and heating/cooling systems.

Commissioner Palmer attended a virtual Community Advisory Council (CAC) meeting and took part in the bi-monthly call with Public Health Administrator Kimberly Lindsay regarding Grant County Covid updates. He took part in the Eastern Oregon caucus call with Senator Findley, Representative Owens and other county commissioners about upcoming legislative short sessions. Palmer met with John Rowell and Sheriff Todd McKinley about current policing issues and followed up by meeting with John Day City Councilor Heather Rookstool. He also had a short conversation with Representative Owens prior to the Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) meeting.

Commissioner Hamsher took part in a National Association of Counties (NACo) call, a White House briefing call, and the bi-monthly Covid updates with Public Health Administrator Kimberly Lindsay. Hamsher took part in a call for the Community Advisory Council (CAC) meeting as well as an Eastern Oregon Commissioner's call with Oregon Solutions. He sat in on the Eastern Oregon caucus call with the state representatives and senators who shared information on the up-coming short sessions, as well as the first part of the Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) meeting. He took part in a League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Board of Directors call. Hamsher will be traveling on February 17th for an in-person LOC meeting. He had a discussion with a Monument citizen about possible funding sources for a fire department. He attended a meeting with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and will be in another ODOT meeting this afternoon. He attended a Southeast Area Commission on Transportation (SEACT) meeting on January 25th.

MINUTES. MSP: Myers/Palmer -- to approve the minutes of January 12, 2022 as presented.

9:03 a.m. Surveyor Mike Springer entered

9:07 a.m. Treasurer Julie Ellison entered

BUDGET RESOLUTION. Treasurer Julie Ellison requested the approval of Resolution 22-02 to adopt the supplemental budget for Senior Citizens Fund. She explained that in the past the Department of Human Services sent the funds directly to the Senior Citizen Centers, but are now sending the funds to the treasurer's office to disburse.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve Resolution 22-02 as presented.

COLA INCREASE. Myers read the request by Treasurer Julie Ellison to present the current COLA increase to the budget committee for consideration. The COLA is calculated each year using the Consumer Pricing Index Report. Employees not under union contract will receive a 3.5% COLA. Union rates differ according to their contracts. Ellison noted that it is important for union employees in the Sheriff's Office and Road Department to receive increases that match other unions across the state.

MSP: Palmer/Hamsher: to approve the request to present the COLA increases to the budget committee for consideration.

COUNTY SURVEYOR. County Surveyor Mike Springer requested that the Court sign off on a re-plat of the Industrial Park. The re-plat was done to accommodate individual sales according to the lot size desired by the buyer.

MSP: Palmers/Myers -- to approve and sign the re-plat as presented.

9:20 a.m. Reporter Logan Baggett entered

COMMUNITY COUNSELING SOLUTIONS (CCS). Judge Myers read a summary of the 2022 contract with Community Counseling Solutions for services provided to Grant County for mental health, developmental disability, and alcohol and drug treatment.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve and sign the contract for services as presented.

INSPECTION AGREEMENTS. The Court reviewed Intergovernmental Agreements between Grant and Harney and Grant and Wheeler Counties for licensing inspection and enforcement of public facilities by and through the Grant County Health Department.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve and sign the agreements for services as presented.

9:27a.m. Librarian Christine Ostberg and Dan Driscoll entered

LIBRARY. Librarian Christine Ostberg presented proposed changes in the hours of operation for the Grant County Library. She shared the results of the library-hours survey taken the past 30 days in the county. Patrons were asked to choose from two schedules. The new scheduled operating hours are Monday through Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; closed on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Ostberg pulled reports that show the majority of checkouts occur from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. during the week. She feels that they will save on electricity even while being open two more hours for the public. The changes were unanimously approved by the library board. While the new hours do not include evening openings, Ostberg noted that this has been the case since Covid restrictions began. Myers asked how this would affect the very popular Lego night. Ostberg proposes to extend a 5:30 p.m. closing time to 7:00 p.m. to accommodate Lego night once restrictions are lifted.

MSP: Palmer/Hamsher: to approve the changes in operating hours as presented.

The Court asked Ostberg to return in six months to report on the changes.

9:35 a.m. Juvenile Director Cindy Tirico, Parole & Probation Sergeant Damon Rand, Sergeant Waddel and Undersheriff Mobley entered

9:36 a.m. The court took a 5 minute break.

9:41 a.m. Sheriff Todd McKinley, Reserve Deputy Ken Olson and Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush entered

9:42 a.m. The court returned to session.

ARPA REIMBURSEMENT. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush requested reimbursement not to exceed \$8260.00 for the Grant County Sheriff's Office. This is the cost of the proposal submitted by Executive Carpet Cleaning and Duct Cleaning to perform maintenance cleaning and disinfect the jail HVAC ductwork. The proposal meets criteria to be reimbursed by ARPA funds.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve reimbursement for the HVAC ductwork cleaning to be disbursed once work is performed and invoiced.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE. PATROL Sheriff Todd McKinley gave an update on department activities. They have responded to 482 calls to date in 2022; approximately 20 calls a day. They currently have 51 total case loads, or 2.4 criminal cases a day. Dealing with John Day has put a burden on the staff. McKinley noted that vehicle expense line will be significantly over budget due to the rising cost of fuel. He said that the increase in calls and limited staff is also contributing to the

increased expense, citing the example of a deputy in Seneca responding to a call in John Day and then returning to patrol in Seneca.

PAROLE AND PROBATION Sheriff McKinley requested that the Parole and Probation department's schedule of 5 day/8 hour work weeks become 4 day/10 hour work weeks. In addition, he asked to stagger the work weeks, which would create more hours within those positions. It will give them some flexibility in their days and help to accommodate clients who cannot make it in during regular business hours.

McKinley also requested that the Court allow application for a grant that would pay for a half-time position in Parole and Probation. The total of the grant would be \$59,206 over two years, or \$29,310 per year. However, he would use his budget to pay for the other half of the position, thus creating one full-time position. The grant is expected to be approved by the end of the month and McKinley would begin the hiring process as soon as the grant is signed. He gave the Court further details regarding the grant. The discussion then led into concerns about the difficulty in dealing with both adult and juvenile clients in the limited space available in the current building. Commissioner Palmer suggested that former Parole and Probation Officers Jim Spell and Ken Boethin may have input that could be of value. The possibility of an addition to the Sheriff's Office and Detention Center was broached. It was noted that the jail was originally planned to include the option of a future addition. Judge Myers noted that there is still a jail expansion fund, but does not know the amount currently in that fund. McKinley will return with further information once the grant is signed.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO) Sheriff McKinley stated that School District #3 has been in contact with the Sheriff's Department and would like to fill the School Resource Officer (SRO) position. McKinley asked the board to consider making this a full-time position at \$80,000.00 a year and is waiting to hear back from them. He does not feel that it is possible to pull from the current deputies to fill this position; it would need to be a full-time dedicated position. The funding for the SRO is straight money from the school district and does not include grant money.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT Sheriff McKinley asked the Court to consider bringing Emergency Management back under the operation of the Sheriff's department.

USED VEHICLE PURCHASE Deschutes County has a 2017 Tahoe, white, with cages, lights and fairly low mileage for sale for \$3000. McKinley requested the Court's approval to make the purchase.

MSP: Hamsher/Palmer – to approve the purchase of the vehicle.

SERVER/COMPUTER STORAGE RACKS The Sheriff's Office has been asked by the Tech Department (Grant County Educational Service District/ESD) to purchase proper storage equipment to house their computer and servers. McKinley has funds in his building maintenance budget to cover the cost of \$2770.00 for the purchase.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve the equipment purchase as requested.

MOBILE RADIOS McKinley requested permission to purchase two Kenwood radios at \$1000 each before they are discontinued.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve the purchase of the radios as requested.

ARPA FUNDS PREMIUM PAY. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush requested reimbursement not to exceed \$58,800.00 for the Grant County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) premium pay. This pertains to GCSO personnel costs during the Covid-19 response, fiscal year 2020-2021. Premium pay is for workers who do not have the option to work remotely and must carry out their duties in person, putting them at higher risk for pandemic infection. Included in this category are policemen, dispatch and emergency responders, health care workers, and others required to work directly with the public. This request was reviewed by County legal counsel and is retroactive for up to 21 months. Additionally, it includes the authorization to reimburse costs to the County for payroll taxes and PERS contributions related to the premium pay request in an amount to be determined by the County Treasurer and not to exceed \$15,000.00.

MSP: Palmer/Myers -- to approve the reimbursement for premium pay within the guidelines of ARPA policy.

COURTHOUSE BUILDING. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush gave an update on the courthouse building needs assessment. This includes windows and paint, but also beyond physical condition, he is concerned with the continuity of government in the event of an emergency. He stressed the importance of continuing day to day operations if the building should be unavailable. Bush has researched funding options and listed various grants and resources that are available. Included are those for natural hazard mitigation, seismic issues, a task force to help fund building renovations, and another half-dozen potential funding sources. Bush noted that it would be important to consider the unique location and historic site the courthouse occupies. He feels that there are realistic solutions to fit the community. Bush plans to submit a letter of intent to apply for a grant covering an evaluation of the facility. At the end of this he would bring the court some options, which would then be taken to the public.

ARPA REIMBURSEMENT. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush requested reimbursement not to exceed \$13,748.57 for the estimated cost to install air purification equipment in the Sheriff's Office and jail. This equipment is specifically designed to reduce the risk of infectious disease, especially COVID-19. He recommends that the reimbursement funds are disbursed once an invoice is received.

MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve reimbursement for the installation cost of the air purification system as presented.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY. The County Court composed a letter to send to state legislators in objection to the Oregon Public Defense Services (OPDS) recently announced refusal to pay for discovery costs incurred by District Attorneys' offices throughout the state. The letter states that "This (action) shifts costs to counties and is a change to a decades long practice." Discovery costs to the Grant County District Attorney's office have averaged approximately \$8000.00 per

year for the last four years.

MSP: Palmer/Myers – to forward the letter to the state legislature as presented.

BLUE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE. The Court received the Contracted Out-of-District agreement with Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) for annual funding. This funding helps to keep college local, schedule classes, and helps local residents obtain a degree. All members of the Court agreed that it is a good use of federal money.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve the COD with Blue Mountain Community College as presented.

COUNTY COURT MEETINGS. The Court discussed the option of moving the County Court meeting dates to the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, rather than the current 2nd and 4th Wednesdays. Myers enumerated reasons as to why this could be advantageous for the community. The Court agreed to proceed with the change. February’s court meetings will be held back-to-back on the 9th and the 16th. Thereafter, the meetings will be held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve the change in dates for county court meetings from the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays to the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.

PAROLE AND PROBATION. Juvenile Department Director Cynthia Tirico requested that the Court sign an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Oregon Youth Authority. This agreement will provide reimbursement not to exceed \$3,298.40 for costs to complete work as required by new legislation SB 575(2021) requiring expunction of juvenile records.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve and sign the agreement with the Oregon Youth Authority as presented.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Stinnett
Administrative Assistant

****** Please note the court minutes are a summary of the court proceedings. An audio recording of each court session is available, after approval of the minutes, by contacting the County Court at 541-575-0059 or gccourtadmin@grantcounty-or.gov***