

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

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February 16, 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.

9:00 am -- Call to Order. Present were Judge Scott W. Myers, Commissioners Jim Hamsher and Sam Palmer, Administrative Assistant Laurie Stinnett, Justice of the Peace Kathy Stinnett, Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush, Community Members John Rowell, Scott Knepper, Bob Pereira, Millie Lysne, Rich Fulton, John Morris, Charlene Morris, Mark Webb and King Williams. A Pledge of Allegiance was given to the United States Flag.

CLAIMS. The Court had reviewed and approved claims and extension district warrants #88-90.
HAND CHECK.

AGENDA. MSP:Myers/Palmer -- to accept the agenda as presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS. Judge Myers traveled to Prineville on January 28th to meet with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) District Manager Dennis Teitzel. On February 2nd he attended a courthouse security meeting at noon, a courthouse facilities meeting at 1 p.m. and a Road Advisory Board meeting at 2 p.m. He attended, by phone, a Natural Resources Steering Committee meeting on the 4th and a Mental Health Advisory Board meeting on February 7th. Myers, by phone, attended an Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Legislative Committee meeting from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and an AOC Board of Directors meeting, also by phone. He is scheduled to perform a wedding on February 21st. On the 11th he will join the conference call with Public Health Administrator Kimberly Lindsay. He announced that the next court meeting will take place on March 2nd, as we transition to the County Court meetings being held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month.

Commissioner Palmer attended the recent John Day City Council meeting regarding policing issues. He felt that there was good discussion and clarification of some misnomers. He visited with Mayor Ron Lundbom after the meeting. He participated in the Eastern Oregon Caucus call with Senator Findley and Representative Owens and the Eastern Oregon Counties call with Rocky Dallum. Palmer met with departments on the basement floor in regards to the search for office space for the Juvenile Department and carried out an annual performance review for a county employee.

Commissioner Hamsher took part in the National Association of Counties (NACo) Public Lands Steering Committee call and the White House briefing call. He joined the bi-weekly Covid update on Friday, February 11th with Public Health Administrator Kimberly Lindsay. He also joined the Eastern Oregon Commissioners call with Oregon Solutions and sat in on two Eastern Oregon Caucus calls. Hamsher attended a Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) Conveners meeting and met with Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) officials about some different projects across the county, including the installation of a controlled crosswalk in Prairie City and speed signs on the highways east and west of town to try to slow down the truck traffic coming through. He took part in both the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Public Lands Natural Resource Committee meeting and Veterans Steering Committee meeting and listened in on the recent Legislative meeting.

MINUTES. MSP: Myers/Palmer -- to approve the minutes of February 26th as presented.

JUSTICE COURT. Justice of the Peace Kathy Stinnett presented the Court with three requests. JUSTICE OF THE PEACE PRO-TEM. She recommended that the following Justices be appointed pro-tem for the year 2022: Harney County Justice of the Peace the Hon. Vicky Clemens, Gilliam County Justice of the Peace the Hon. Cris Patnode and Sherman County Justice of the Peace the Hon. Ron McDermid. Stinnett noted that in the past, pro tems were largely paid appointments. In recent years the addition of video-conferencing has allowed for the use of sitting JPs from surrounding counties, reducing the need for pro-tems to travel to Grant County, and saving the County money.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve the request as presented for the 2022 Justice of the Peace Pro-tems.

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION (CLE). Stinnett gave her annual report on her required continuing education credits. She noted that it was difficult to find available courses throughout the COVID shutdown, but has completed those credits for the year.

NATIONAL JUDICIAL COLLEGE (NJC). Stinnett requested approval for her enrollment in the course titled Special Consideration for Rural Court Judges. The cost of the course is \$750, of which she received a \$250 scholarship. She would like approval to pay the remaining \$500 out of her Dues and Travel budget. This would give her additional CLEs toward her required continuing education of thirty hours every two years.

MSP: Palmer/Myers – to approve the request as presented.

Judge Myers noted that the General Order for the Proposed Stewardship discussion would not take place earlier than 9:50 a.m.

RESOLUTION 22-03. The Court was asked to approve a transfer of \$15,000, a part of the current year's budget, from the Fair budget to the Fair Reserve.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve Resolution 22-03 and circulate for signatures.

RESOLUTION 22-04. As a result of the 2021 expense audit findings, the Court was required to set up a plan to handle deficiencies specified in the audit. The two areas of deficiency were

identified as the requirement for quotes obtained for purchases and compliance with the Coronavirus Relief Program grant agreements and compliance requirements. Myers contends that correct procedures were followed when emergency repair was required for the Courthouse roof. He sought casual bids by phone, which should have satisfied that obligation; however, additional costs to the bid may have put them over the threshold, then requiring written bids. Myers read the resolution for the proposed plan of action to Court attendees.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve Resolution 22-04 and circulate for signatures, record, and send all documentation required to Secretary of State as presented according to ORS 297.466.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Economic Development Director Tory Stinnett called in to present the recently awarded Technical Assistance Grant from the Department of Land Conservation Development (DLCD) to the County for signature. The purpose of this project is to first assess current and future housing needs and buildable land supplies; then, to have identified strategies to address housing barriers for the cities of Dayville, Canyon City, Long Creek, Monument, Mt. Vernon, Prairie City and Seneca. This will give City and County leaders accurate information to work with when addressing these needs. The excerpt read by Stinnett identifies the lack of housing as a factor affecting the local economy. Another piece of the project includes verification of local zoning and urban growth boundary maps in order to ensure accurate future development. Stinnett will be looking for a consultant to implement the housing analysis. Community member Charlene Morris expressed concern for water availability in the face of increased housing development in the County.

MSP: Palmer/Myers – to approve the request for signature as presented.

AMERICAN RECOVERY PROGRAM ACT (ARPA) REIMBURSEMENT. EMPLOYEE PAYROLL AND BENEFIT COST. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush requested reimbursement for \$96,531.15 to the County's General and Special Funds. The cost to the County was the result of the Corona Recovery Act's (CRA) legal requirement to subsidize employees who were quarantined for or contracted COVID-19 with up to 80 hours of full pay and benefits. It was noted that the County's legal counsel reviewed this request.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve the request for reimbursement as presented.

STORAGE AND FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush presented a slideshow of proposed renovations to the former County Shop site located at 323 South Humbolt Street in Canyon City. He proposed the acquisition and retrofitting of four shipping containers to be placed at the site. The units will house Emergency Management supplies, including those acquired for the Covid response. These supplies are currently spread over three locations, with some requiring a climate-controlled environment. His proposal also includes moving the office of Emergency Management to the site. The proposal for the second phase includes moving Search and Rescue (SAR) to the same building, allowing "like" operations to function more efficiently from the same location.

9:50 am John Day City Councilmember Heather Rookstool entered

POLICING UPDATE. Commissioner Palmer attended a recent John Day City Council meeting. He

reported that the COPS grant received by the City after the dissolution of the police department is not transferrable to the County. Councilor Heather Rookstool expressed her desire to reach solutions that benefit both the city and the county in their efforts to ensure public safety. Discussion continued, with comments about competitive wages and how to fairly patrol all the communities within the county. Judge Myers asked that any continued negotiation take place in another venue. Commissioner Palmer proposed that he visit with the Sheriff and Undersheriff and ask them to set forth a proposal with the level of service the Sheriff's department would be able to offer.

STEWARDSHIP. Commissioner Palmer opened the discussion with concern about a potential reduction in the board feet of timber being harvested. He proposed that the Court send a letter expressing this concern, and ask that court members have a seat at the table during the decision-making process. Discussion continued about the best way to ensure county participation in these decisions, as required by federal law. Suggestion was made that a less formal approach, such as a phone call, be used.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS. Two letters of appreciation for outgoing committee members were presented to the Court for signature.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve the request for signature.

RESOLUTION 22-05. The resolution to appoint the Justice of the Peace Pro Tems for the year 2022 was presented to the Court.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve the request as presented.

JUVENILE DEPARTMENT. A new job description for the Juvenile Director as a G-9 Exempt employee was presented by Human Resources Manager Laurie Cates to be effective for the February pay period.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – To adopt the job description of Juvenile Director at grade G-9 effective beginning February 2022.

PUBLIC COMMENT. There was no further public comment.

10:50 a.m. -- Adjourned.

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 **