

## IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON

### IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF GRANT

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**May 8, 2019**

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 Commissioners Jim Hamsher and Sam Palmer, Administrative Assistant Laurie Wright, Road Master Alan Hickerson, Katy Nelson, Curtis Perry, Frances Preston, Billie Jo George, Reporter Rick Hanners, Economic Development Specialist Beth Simonsen, Deputy Dave Dobler, Gretchen Ladd, Judy Kerr, Economic Development Director Allison Field, and Pastor Flora Cheadle. A Pledge of Allegiance was given to the United States Flag. The invocation was given by Pastor Cheadle.

**FAIR CONTRACTS.** On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, due to time restraints, the court individually approved two agreements to allow alcohol service at the Kentucky Derby event at the Fairgrounds on May 4<sup>th</sup>. One with Spit Fire Cocktails and one with 1188 Brewing Company. Both contracts provide for the vendors to pay the county a portion of their profits.

**AGENDA.** MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to accept the agenda as amended with the removal of 8:00 am Claims signing because it was not a claims day.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Commissioner Palmer participated in a Budget Committee meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> and on the 26<sup>th</sup> attended a meeting at the Airport where Baker County Commissioner Bill Harvey spoke on coordination. Palmer went to the Darkness to Light Stewards of Children event to benefit children in the community. April 27<sup>th</sup> Palmer went to a Search and Rescue fire training put on by Deputy Dobler and the Forest Service. Palmer commended Dobler for his excellent work as the Search and Rescue Coordinator.

9:05 am Reporter Logan Bagett entered.

Palmer talked with Congressman Walden's Aide Tucker Billman about how things are going in the county. Palmer also discussed some of the budget issues facing Harney County with Harney County Commissioner Mark Owens.

Commissioner Hamsher said he and Palmer attended a Budget Committee meeting after the last court date on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Hamsher went to a Natural Resource Advisory meeting and coordination information meeting at the Airport. Hamsher talked about available jobs within the county with Work Source Oregon and stated there are around 90 positions available throughout the county. He met with Economic Development and the Veteran Services Officer. Hamsher took part in the Supervisor Training provided by City County Insurance (CIS) and reported it was a good training. He met with Scott Fairley from Business Oregon. Last night he went to the final Budget Committee meeting for Prairie City. This afternoon he will participate in the final Budget Committee meeting for the county. Hamsher did a bid walk for the new US Cellular tower in Prairie City. Hamsher discussed grazing issues with Congressman

Walden's Aide Tucker Billman and will meet with Billman and permittees on May 14th. He spoke with Emergency Management Coordinator Ted Williams about the recent flooding and wished to thank Williams and Deputy Dobler for all their hard work. Hamsher advised those in attendance that he would welcome comments or questions anyone might want asked of Regional Forester Glenn Casamassa who Hamsher is meeting with tomorrow. Hamsher will try to make it to the Dayville Future Farmers of America (FFA) Banquet tomorrow evening. Hamsher spoke with Kathleen Cathey, Senator Wyden's Aide, about flooding and possible loans from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He also talked with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) about easements for the proposed deer composting site.

Commissioner Palmer read an email he received from William F. Crozer, Special Assistant to the President/Deputy Director White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. The email was received in response to the letter sent to President Trump and other legislatures earlier this year.

**MINUTES.** MSP: Hamsher/Palmer - to approve the April 24th minutes as presented.

**SEARCH AND RESCUE.** Deputy Dave Dobler requested court approval to apply for Search and Rescue (SAR) grant funding. Dobler gave the court members a handout outlining equipment needs for SAR and missions completed over the last eight months. Dobler advised SAR is currently conducting fundraisers and is searching for grant funding that does not require in kind match from the county. In the future Dobler plans on returning to the court to discuss additional grant opportunities. Dobler summarized the missions and trainings conducted to improve the SAR program. Hamsher said what Dobler has explained truly highlights the need for SAR. Palmer said now SAR is being requested to assist other counties as well and believes this is due to the expertise of our SAR program. Palmer and Hamsher both thanked Dobler for his work on the program. Hamsher also asked Dobler to thank the volunteers involved. Billie Jo George commended Dobler being so organized.

**TRANSIENT ROOM TAX REVIEW COMMITTEE.** Grant County Chamber of Commerce Manager Tammy Bremner had sent a written request to the court to appoint and re-appoint volunteers to the Transient Room Tax Review Committee. The committee has not met in a few years, but now needs to meet and update grant criteria and requirements. Bremner reported Bob Quinton and Larry Pierce are willing to be re-appointed to serve on the committee and Jenny Shaw, Karin Barntish and Mike Springer have all volunteered to fill the other three vacant positions. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to re-appoint Larry Pierce with a term to expire June 30, 2021, to re-appoint Bob Quinton as Chamber Representative with a term to expire June 30, 2022, to appoint Jenny Shaw as Operator and Karin Barntish with terms to expire June 30, 2021 and to appoint Mike Springer with a term to expire June 30, 2022.**

9:27 am Mechanic Joe Bennett entered.

**MEDICAL EXAMINER.** District Attorney (DA) Jim Carpenter sent two recommendations to the court for appointment and training of death investigators. There are no viable prospects within the county for appointment as a Medical Examiner at this time. The State Medical Examiner will assume the role of local medical examiner pending appointment, but is generally not available to travel here. To assist the State Medical Examiner Grant County should appoint additional certified death investigators. Carpenter recommended Gretchen Ladd, Wheeler County District Attorney, be appointed as a certified death investigator for Grant County and that former John Day City Police Chief Richard Tirico be approved to attend Medical Death Investigator Training July 22-26, 2019. The training would be paid by

the county and the estimated cost would be \$1,157 or less. The DA's budget has funds available in the training budget to cover the expense. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to appoint Gretchen Ladd as a certified death investigator for Grant County. MSP: Hamsher/Palmer - to approve sending Richard Tirico to the training in July to be paid from the DA Training line.** Palmer would like to have an agreement put in place with Tirico to guarantee he put in a certain amount of time once trained. He expressed concern that people are sometimes sent to training and then decide they don't want to perform the duties. Hamsher said Tirico is a local citizen and believes this won't be an issue. Palmer would prefer a time commitment of at least a year from Tirico. Frances Preston agreed with Palmer. Hamsher said he understands the theory, but we don't hold our employees to time commitments when they are sent to training.

**ROAD DEPARTMENT.** Road Master Alan Hickerson had three requests for the court.

Used Lowboy: Hickerson said the Road Department has been planning to update the current lowboy for a few years now. Lead Mechanic Joe Bennett explained the benefits of the newer lowboy. Bennett located a 1991 3 axle Trail King Lowboy for \$39,500 that would replace the current 1981 Cozard 2 axle Lowboy. Woodpecker Truck & Equipment quoted a trade in value for the 1981 Lowboy of \$15,000 so the final price of the 1991 Lowboy would be \$24,500 and would be paid from the Road Department Capital Outlay Heavy Equipment line. **MSP: Palmer/Hamsher -- to approve purchase of the 1991 Trail King Lowboy from Woodpecker Truck in the amount of \$24,500 to be paid from the Capital Outlay Heavy Equipment line.**

Shipping Storage Container: The Road Department would like to purchase a 40 foot shipping container to store pallets of sandbags in for flood emergencies. This would increase the life of the sandbags and also allow for faster emergency response time since they could be loaded with a forklift on the pallets instead of by hand. Hickerson estimated the cost of the container to be at or below \$4,500. Palmer suggested speaking with Undersheriff Mobley about opportunities to purchase this item from state surplus. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve purchase of a shipping container at a cost not to exceed \$4,500.**

9:45 am Victim Assistance Director Kimberly Neault entered.

Equipment Operator Position – Long Creek: Hickerson requested court approval to begin advertising for the Equipment Operator position in Long Creek that should be approved during the Budget Committee meeting later today. The selection process can take six to eight weeks to complete and Hickerson would like this position filled on July 1 when the new budget year commences. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve moving forward with advertising and selection for the position in Long Creek.**

**DEPUTY CLERK JOB DESCRIPTION.** The court had previously approved grade placement review for the Deputy Clerk job description. The grade placement was received from the Local Government Personnel Institute (LGPI) at a grade 6. The current placement for this position is a grade 5. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to adopt the revised job description and accept the grade placement effective for the July pay period.** Justice of the Peace Kathy Stinnett wanted to commend the court for making Human Resources a full time position and said it is very much needed. Stinnett would like the court to think about a county wide compensation study in the future. She suggested utilizing a compensation committee instead of LGPI and possibly having less categories, but include wage steps that would be based on experience. Stinnett summarized how Gilliam County created their current wage scale. Judy Kerr said when she worked for the Forest Service there were step increases and it worked very well. Palmer and Hamsher agreed that step increases would be beneficial for employee retention and moral. Hamsher believes it is important to show employees they are appreciated.

**COMPENSATION.** Palmer again stated he thinks Hamsher should be compensated for all of the hours he worked in the Judge's absence. Human Resources Manager Laurie Wright suggested this be discussed further because it could cause a snowball effect where other elected officials and employees could make similar requests. Palmer suggested setting a time on the next agenda for this discussion. Preston thinks Hamsher should also be compensated. Judy Kerr believes the county should put a resolution in place to appoint an interim Judge when necessary. Palmer said County Counsel gave an opinion on this. Wright reported County Counsel advised only the Governor can appoint for the Judge position, even if it is for an interim Judge.

**VICTIM ASSISTANCE.** Victim Assistance Director Kimberly Neault presented a request to the court for funding assistance from the General Fund. Neault reported the VAWA Rural Grant was closed out before all expenses were paid and there is a shortage of \$626.68. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve payment of \$626.68 from the General Fund.**

**PROCLAMATION.** The court reviewed a Proclamation Designating May as Older Americans Month in Grant County. Hamsher read the Proclamation to those in attendance. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve the Proclamation Designating May as Older Americans Month in Grant County and circulate for signatures.**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.** Economic Development Director Allison Field requested court approval of several items.

Request for Qualifications/Proposals: To approve four Requests for Qualifications/ Proposals (RFP's) for the following services for administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): grant administration, labor standards, architectural and engineering services, and environmental review.

**MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve the RFP's as requested.**

RFP Selection Committee: Field requested appointment of county staff, an elected official, and one Heart of Grant County board member to the selection committee for the RFP's. Field recommended Allison Field, Beth Simonsen, Jim Hamsher and Rick Minster. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to appoint Allison Field, Beth Simonsen, Jim Hamsher and Rick Minster to the CDBG RFP Selection Committee.**

Memorandum of Agreement: The court reviewed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Heart of Grant County and Grant County for the purpose of defining roles and responsibilities as they relate to the application and administration of the CDBG funds for final design of a domestic trauma service center in John Day. Business Oregon, the Grant County DA and the Heart Board have all approved the MOA. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve the MOA and authorize Commissioner Hamsher to sign.**

CDBG Budget Revision: Field reported the original grant application did not include funds for the environmental review. As Heart's matching funds are required to be spent first, the budget revisions reflect moving the matching funds to complete the environmental review and begin architectural plans so the project will begin in a timely manner. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve the budget revision request and authorize Commissioner Hamsher to sign.**

**OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY.** The court reviewed the 6<sup>th</sup> Amendment to Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Agreement 153123. The agreement provides for additional financial assistance of \$7,105.04 for the Intoxicated Driver Program Fund. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve OHA Agreement 153123-6 and authorize Commissioner Palmer to sign.**

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT.** The court reviewed a Statement of Work contract between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Grant County. The contract is to obtain law enforcement services from the Sheriff's Department to assist BLM in the administration and regulation of the use and occupancy of public lands. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve the BLM contract and circulate for signatures.**

**RESOLUTION 19-18.** Budget Resolution 19-18 was reviewed by the court members. This resolution receipts and appropriates unanticipated Mental Health Funds for Crisis in the amount of \$210,000. Hamsher read the resolution to those in attendance. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer -- to approve Resolution 19-18 and circulate for signatures.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT.** Billie Jo George presented copies of a book on coordination to each court member that Frances Preston purchased. George said at a Collaborative meeting yesterday in Harney County there were disturbing items discussed. She reported the Forest Service stated because the Forest Plan Revision has been stopped the forest will operate under the 1991 Plan and is a closed forest. George said they also stated that travel management was in place. George stated she and Preston had to correct the employees and were disturbed that the facilitator didn't know that travel management was not in place. Palmer and Hamsher both said they will look into this and Hamsher will talk about this with Glenn Casamassa tomorrow. Hamsher asked if Commissioner Mark Owens from Harney County was in attendance at the meeting and George said he was and seemed agitated by what was being said.

10:17 am The court took a break.

11:05 am The court returned to session.

**UMATILLA NATIONAL FOREST.** Ukiah District Ranger Paula Guenther presented an update to the court on forest activities. Guenther handed programs of work to the court members about what is happening on the Umatilla National Forest. Guenther reported fuel reduction will be conducted around the Granite and Olive Lake areas for the 10 Cent Project. The Umatilla Veteran's Crew will also be reinforcing some previous thinning work that was completed a few years ago. Guenther said the Dale Work Center is continuing to be worked on and decommissioned. She explained the process for removing the buildings and materials from the site. After buildings are removed the site is being rehabilitated. Guenther said she is still interested in hearing ideas from citizens for use of the site. Hamsher suggested a horse camp with corrals. Whatever the site is used for will need to be self-contained as there are no water or sewer services available. Palmer suggested camping and recreation for the site. Kerr suggested the site might be a good location for a rest stop. Guenther agreed and believes a more formal call for suggestions will happen this summer. Preston asked if the Forest Service planned on keeping the property or if there might be an opportunity for citizens to purchase it. Guenther reported at this time there are no proposals to sell the property. Preston worked at the Dale site at one time and suggested if the site is used for recreation a flag pole should be reinstalled near where the original one was. The acreage of the site is estimated at around 20 acres. Guenther said a structural study was completed on the dam at Olive Lake and it was found to be unsound. She reported her objective is to continue recreational use at Olive Lake and different proposals are being reviewed at this time. Hamsher said every effort should be made to save the dam at Olive Lake. Palmer pointed out that Guenther has brought up fire several times and expressed concern with the lodge pole thickets and remote location in the area. Palmer believes from a fire danger standpoint every effort must be made to save the dam. Olive Lake is a natural lake that a dam was added to years ago to increase its size. Guenther reported the Penny, Nickel and Ten Cent Projects all address lodge pole thickets in one way or another. Hamsher asked if replacing the dam with another wooden structure was an option. Guenther doesn't believe this option has been looked at yet. Discussion about the potential cost and

issues that might arise followed. Palmer suggested partnering to put better signage on forest roads in the area during the winter. Reporter Rick Hanners said another option might be software such as Geofencing which sends real time alerts of road closures to cell phone GPS devices.

11:45 am Nick Brown entered.

Guenther answered questions from those in attendance including planned prescribed burns, how contractors are selected for projects and the different type of commercial sales.

**US CENSUS BUREAU.** Partnership Specialist Nick Brown from the United States Department of Commerce Census Bureau provided a presentation regarding the upcoming 2020 Decennial Census to the court members. Brown introduced himself and said he currently lives in Redmond. Brown explained the Decennial Census is conducted every 10 years and federal funding is based on the census count. Brown stated his job is to educate the public about the census and stressed the importance of counting every citizen. Brown said once he is done with his presentation he will ask the court to appoint a committee to assist with the census. This is the first year that citizens will be able to complete the census online and can also report by mail or over the telephone. Brown reported he is an Army Veteran and took an oath to protect the Constitution and he took the same oath when he was hired for this census position. Brown summarized the 2020 Census questions and general procedures including security measures to keep information safe. Palmer suggested the court members contact the radio station and put out a public service announcement in support of the census. Brown is willing to be a liaison to a census committee and assist in any way he can.

**PUBLIC COMMENT.** Preston said during the flooding Haley Walker's property flooded and Preston asked Walker what contributed to this. Preston said Walker advised her that not having Canyon Meadows Dam was, in her opinion, a large factor. Preston asked the court to re-start discussions with the state about replacing the dam at Canyon Meadows. Palmer suggested asking the Army Corp of Engineers to return and look into this. General discussion about the Canyon Meadows dam and drainage followed.

12:42 pm -- Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Wright  
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 Laurie Wright at 541-575-0059 or [wrightl@grantcounty-or.gov](mailto:wrightl@grantcounty-or.gov) \*\*\*\***