

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

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May 17th, 2023 - Regular Meeting of the Grant County Court

Present were: Commissioner Jim Hamsher, Commissioner John Rowell, Administrative Assistant Laurie Stinnett, Kathy Smith, Millie Lysne, Reporter Neil Nisperos, Chris Labhart, Jim Boethin, Julie Larson, Gordon Larson, Eric W. Julsrud, Jason Spriet, Ivan Gall, John and Charlene Morris and Tory Stinnett. Judge Scott Myers joined via live-stream.

COURT REVIEW: Commissioner Hamsher announced that the meeting is being recorded. The agenda was approved with these changes: strike the public hearing designation in the title and under general orders add a Fair contract for approval, an appointment to the Compensation Board and an Extension and 4H District Budget meeting at 11 a.m. today. Commissioner RoAwell attended the Eastern Oregon Caucus Call meeting, the Long Creek North Fork Watershed Council meeting and stopped by the Long Creek Road Department office. Commissioner Rowell attended the Eastern Oregon Caucus Call meeting; the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Natural Resource Public Steering Committee meeting, the AOC Veterans Steering Committee meeting, the AOC Health and Human Services Steering Committee meeting, the AOC Public Safety Steering Committee meeting and the AOC Public Safety meeting. He attended the Legislative Committee meeting, the LCDC local officials meeting, the National Association of Counties (NACO) Public Lands Steering Committee meeting and the Eastern Oregon Caucus Call.

FAIR CONTRACT. Manager Mindy Winegar asked the Court to approve and sign the Neste Events contract for entertainment bookings. MSP: Hamsher/Rowell - to approve and sign the contract for the event booking services of Neste Events. Approval unanimous.

COMPENSATION BOARD. Commissioner Jim Hamsher made the motion to appoint Judy Kerr to fill the vacancy on the Compensation Board left by the resignations of Paula Bartley and Athena Moline. For the record, Kathy Smith objected to the appointment and expressed her feeling that the Compensation appointments have not taken place with the proper agenda notice. Commissioner Rowell stated that the Compensation Board advertisements have run for a year before garnering applicants. Rowell concurred with Smith and stated that an appointment today seemed hasty. It would be prudent to wait until the public was given the opportunity for application. In response to Hamsher's question, Kathy Smith explained that the past Compensation Board, after setting up the wage scale used at the time, no longer had people interested in serving on the committee, which disbanded.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER. Education Service District Manager Robert Waltenberg and Sheriff Todd McKinley came before the Court to propose the funding of the School Resource Officer (SRO) be paid with contributions from the individual districts. It has been reviewed by Sheriff McKinley, Waltenberg and County legal counsel. The agreement would employ the personnel for dedicated job duties during the school year. When school is not in session, the personnel would be available for duties within the Sheriff's Department. Waltenburg noted that if a school chose not to contribute toward the hire, that school would not receive the benefit of those services. Billing would take place in the form of a quarterly flat fee.

MSP: Hamsher/Rowell - to approve the request to move forward with the proposal for the hiring of a School Resource Officer (SRO) to operate across the county at participating school districts. Approval unanimous.

CORRECTIONS. Sergeant Wade Waddel presented two items to the Court; the first being the request for a change in the job description for the position of corporal within the department and the second, a request to promote two current staff to that position. Waddel spoke about limited staffing within the department and the recent transfer of a Corrections Sergeant to another department. Waddel said the need for the positions would alleviate the administrative backlog he is experiencing. The cost is estimated to be between \$8000 and \$10,000 in additional wages yearly. MSP: Hamsher - to approve the additional wages of \$8 to \$10,000 to create and fill two corporal positions in the Corrections Department. Neither Rowell or Myers chose to second the motion; citing upcoming negotiations and the Budget Committee's reluctance to approve "asks" for additional departmental monies. The motion died. Waddel then asked the Court to approve the Corrections corporal job position descriptions. MSP: Hamsher/Rowell - to approve the revised job description for the position of corporal within the Corrections Department. Judge Myers agreed with Commissioner Rowell and would like to hold off on the corporal position approval until negotiations and a longer look at the budget. It was agreed that the request would be tabled until after negotiations.

RESOLUTION 23:15 - HEART OF GRANT COUNTY. The treasurer requested the transfer of \$16,000 from Personnel Services to Materials and Services. MSP: Hamsher/Rowell - to approve the transfer of \$16,000 from Personnel Services to Materials and Services as requested. Approval unanimous.

RESOLUTION 23:16 - SENIOR CITIZEN BUDGET. The treasurer requested the transfer of Personnel Services to Materials and Services in the amount of \$11,000 . MSP: Hamsher/Rowell - to approve the transfer of \$11,000 from Personnel Services to Materials and Services as requested. Approval unanimous.

9:45 am Break until 9:55

9:55 am Meeting resumes

RESOLUTION 23:17. The treasurer requested the transfer of Library funds from Materials and Services to Personnel Services in the amount of \$10,000. MSP: Hamsher/Rowell - to approve the request for transfer of \$10,000 in Library funds from Materials and Services to Personnel Services. Approval unanimous.

OREGON WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT. Ivan Gall and Jason Spriet presented the court with information from a study that began in 2016. After tracking groundwater levels through the years, they began to observe water levels in the Harney Basin beginning to decline. The study area includes the Silvies River Basin in Grant County. The department studies water quantities and not water quality. When adding up the inflows and subtracting the outflows, we are out of balance by about 110,000 acre feet per year. He stated that the decline was the result of issuing too many water rights. In response to questions about the current years above-average precipitation, Gall said that the current surface water and flooding will replenish the groundwater only minimally. Key findings show the groundwater declining at various rates depending on local geology, the lack of the adequate recharge and excessive groundwater withdrawal from pumping wells in these areas. ORS 536.340 will potentially prevent future groundwater development from having a negative impact to area groundwater systems. The ordinance is a tool that the commission can use to specify what types of water and how much of that can be used in future. Under Oregon water law, certain uses are exempt and do not require a permit. These include domestic use up to 15,000 gallons per day; a half acre of lawn or garden and stock water for non-commercial use. Any large commercial or industrial operation requires a permit. Potential solutions currently under consideration include issuance for exempt uses only, as well as the use of community wells in place of individual wells. Gall would like to include two Grant County citizens to be included on the committee formulating the initial draft rules.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Director Tory Stinnett presented the Court with the Oregon State Fire Marshall's Fire Reduction Grant. She received a grant agreement and brought it for preliminary approval, including that of County Counsel. Commissioner Hamsher asked her to forward the grant to Counsel. Stinnett also request Court approval to attend training in Salem, requiring two nights stay and the cost of travel on June 8th. As a member of the Professional Development Committee, the conference fee is paid. Expenses will not exceed \$500, and is available in her travel budget. MSP: Hamsher/Rowell - to approve the request to attend training in Salem on June 8th.

10:41 a.m. Meeting adjourned

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Respectfully submitted by,

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 *****