

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

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August 3rd, 2022

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, Commissioner Jim Hamsher, Administrative Assistant Laurie Stinnett, Reporter Logan Bagett, John Rowell, Kelly Workman. A Pledge of Allegiance was given to the United States Flag. The invocation was given by Kelly Workman.

AGENDA. MSP: Myers/ Hamsher -- to accept the agenda with the addition of item K) a request from Victim Assistance Director Kimberly Neault to attend a training and L) a request for the addition of a cellphone hotspot for Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush. Unanimous 2/2.

ANNOUNCEMENTS. Judge Myers traveled with Roadmaster Alan Hickerson and staff on Wednesday, July 27th, to look at the new paving project taking place in Granite. This involves a county-to-forest road; a multi-million dollar paving and sub-surface project with very little cost to the county. He will perform a wedding later in the week and attend a Road Advisory Committee meeting tomorrow afternoon at the Road Department shops. He noted that the County Fair will take place on August 10th through 14th. The next court date is August 17th, 2022; claims are on August 10th.

Commissioner Hamsher had a couple of discussions with Representative Owen and Congressman Cliff Bentz' office. He feels that the wildfire mitigation map seemed to be rushed to get out and is hopefully being pulled back for revision. He will attend a Training and Employment Consortium (TEC) board meeting next week, a Southeast Area Commission on Transportation (SEACT) meeting, a weekly briefing from the White House, and a National Association of Counties (NACo) Public Lands Steering Committee meeting. He visited with several County department heads and participated in a call with the US Treasury Department to discuss local assistance and tribal funds. He commented that they should be rolling out county allotments soon.

REQUEST FOR REHIRE OF RETIRED EMPLOYEE. In keeping with a recent change in state and county policy, the County has the option to rehire employees who have retired, creating a substantial savings for the County. MSP: Myers/Hamsher—to approve the request for a current employee to move forward with an application for rehire, and to consider the application in September. Unanimous 2/2.

COMPENSATION TIME ACCRUALS. Several departments continue to have timecards with compensation time accruals. Judge Myers reminded department heads to carefully watch those accruals and use flex time when necessary. Justice of the Peace Kathy Stinnett asked if the Court is aware that under certain circumstances, the use of comp time is unavoidable. Judge Myers said they are aware of this and will see how it plays out going forward.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR ROAD NAMING (RESOLUTION 22-28). Silvies Valley Ranch has recently requested approval to build eight more cabins, which will require the development of two new access roads. The proposed names are Horseshoe Loop and Hackamore Road. Judge Myers read the resolution in its entirety, and opened the floor for public comment. A motion was made to close the hearing when no comment was forthcoming. MSP: Myers/Hamsher— to close the public hearing for Resolution 22-28, the naming of new roads on the Silvies Valley Ranch, for comment. Approval 2/2. MSP: Hamsher/Myers – to approve Resolution 22-28 for the naming of two roads on the Silvies Valley Ranch, Hackamore Road and Horseshoe Loop, and circulate for signature. Unanimous 2/2.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS RENTAL AGREEMENT. A local apartment used for parole and probation housing has previously been rented for \$350 per month. The contract has been amended to reflect the increase to \$400 per month. MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve the increase in the cost of rent and circulate for signature. Unanimous 2/2.

AIRPORT CONTRACT FOR RUNWAY WIDENING. This is a 6.5 million dollar project, of which 90% is paid by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Airport Manager Haley Walker successfully procured a Connect Oregon grant to cover the remaining 10% of cost, leaving the Airport and General Fund with no monetary obligation. MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve the Service Agreement with T-O Engineers and affix the required signature. Unanimous 2/2.

MOVE OREGON’S BORDER. Judge Myers contacted Representative Mark Owens to ask about the current status of the movement; Owens said there have been no changes at the legislative level. Myers then asked Sandie Gilson if she would like to give an update to the Court and citizens. A senator from Klamath Falls is currently working on a state-wide memorandum. Gilson noted that during the recent gubernatorial debate, all candidates were questioned about the dissatisfaction with representation in Eastern Oregon. Gilson also stated that, according to legislative members, they have seen a lack of effort and concern at the county levels. She said that non-PERS members are unable to get information from PERS. Myers made a note to contact PERS for information. Senator Findley reported that he cannot get noticed in the legislature because he’s from Eastern Oregon and “doesn’t matter”. Morrow and Wheeler Counties have upcoming ballot measures. Crook, Gilliam and Umatilla counties have not taken the issue to the ballot. With the exception of Baker County, the letters from the counties were described as too general and “weak”. Southwest Oregon has chosen not to be a part of the movement. Myers said he would talk to Owens and Findley, and find out how we could strengthen our response.

PSILOCYBIN ORDINANCE #2022-01. Myers stated the Court’s intent to put the matter before the voters on the November ballot. Ordinance #2022-01 would prohibit product manufacture and distribution of psilocybin. MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve Ordinance #2022-01 prohibiting the manufacture and distribution of psilocybin and hold a second hearing in order to qualify for the November ballot. Unanimous 2/2.

CITY OF GRANITE ADDRESSING. Granite is the only incorporated city in Grant County that has not developed a comprehensive plan. The governing body of Granite has been unwilling to administer the addressing process and notify the proper entities. Springer does not feel that it would be a problem for the county to deal with that part of the process, but has questions about what liabilities, if any, exist for the County in doing so. It was decided to reach out to County Counsel for advice on the issue.

BROADBAND OPTIONS. Discussion continued about the options for broadband service for county offices. Dan Becker, Co-Chair of Grant County Digital (GC Digital), presented information for the County to be aware of when making decisions regarding a broadband provider. At the last County Court meeting, Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush was directed to talk to Oregon Telephone Company (OTC) about the specifics of a broadband contract. Bush submitted that quote to the Court today. Becker said that the opening of the GC Digital bids for the courthouse and airport project take place on August 23rd, 2022. They have until April of 2027 to pay for this project. They would be providing 48 individual fibers to the County. Becker said that GC Digital’s plan includes overbuilding their network, on purpose, in order to avoid any shortage in bandwidth. Becker does not feel that the service offered by OTC at the price point of \$250 monthly is the same thing that GC Digital is offering, and termed it “apples and oranges”. He asked the court to consider their options and let him know what the Court desires; he will take that information to the GC Digital board. Construction for GC Digital would begin no later than October; the airport and courthouse are at the top of the list of projects. Bush said that security of our communications and the current limit of our internet capabilities are two of the biggest concerns. If the Court chooses to move forward with GC Digital, it would require looking at the ARPA funds available. Becker feels that the bandwidth capabilities “in an out” that OTC provides will not be the same as that offered by GC Digital. He said that the funding at this point is not a concern; they have time and the money to complete the project and could assist in finding the money if the Court so desires. He noted that the County could backfill with OTC for the present, if necessary. Bush noted the advantage of the intranet feature of GC Digital’s service within the county.

PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE. Kimberly Lindsay shared information about Community Counseling Solutions corporate culture survey. She briefly touched on the \$1.25 million grant for remodeling the current building; it will get a facelift and interior remodeling. They still need additional funding and are about halfway there. There is a bill for funding to provide stable housing for people with mental health and addiction issues, with an emphasis on those who have children; Grant County would receive \$1.4 million to purchase homes. The state has identified funds for counties to help those who are unable to aide and assist in their own defense and would be eligible for the state hospital, to instead, receive this help within the county. There will be two full-time people hired for Morrow, Wheeler, Gilliam and Grant combined to serve these citizens. Lindsay made note of Measure 110 that decriminalized the possession of drugs. She felt that the bill was not well-written and found fault with the assumption that 1000 people who were criminally charged would voluntarily call in to receive treatment. Commissioner Hamsher noted that the number of people seeking treatment has been “dismal”, with which Lindsay concurred. Nevertheless, Grant County will receive a \$710,000 grant for two years. This will fund 3.5 positions plus benefits. She reported that Juniper Ridge has experienced staffing issues. A new acute care facility is to be built in Hermiston. On the public health front, we’re seeing another COVID surge and numbers are high. She does not see the masked mandate changing, but possibly a change in the screening process.

WORK PHONE HOTSPOT. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush requested the addition of a hotspot to be added to his county cell phone plan. MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve the addition of a hotspot to the Emergency Management Coordinator’s work phone as requested. Unanimous 2/2.

BROADBAND REPORT. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush reported back on topics addressed earlier in the meeting. Oregon Telephone Company confirmed that they offer 1 GB of

dedicated and symmetrical service, meaning that upload and download speeds are the same. Installation would be available the middle of next week.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE TRAINING. Review a request for Victim Assistance training put on by the Department of Justice. Dedicated grant funds will be used. MSP: Hamsher/Myers – to approve the Victim Assistance training as requested. Unanimous 2/2.

11:19 am 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 Laurie Stinnett at 541-575-0059 or gccourtadmin@grantcounty-or.gov .