

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

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<https://grantcountyoregon.net/AgendaCenter>*

September 21st, 2023 – Regular Meeting of the County Court

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.

CALL TO ORDER. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. Present were Judge Scott W. Myers, Commissioner Jim Hamsher, Commissioner John Rowell, Administrative Assistant Laurie Stinnett, Reporter Neil Nisperos, Millie Lysne, Judy Kerr, Frances Preston, Mindy Winegar and Dusty Williams.

AGENDA. Review of the agenda for September 21st, 2023.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher -- to approve the agenda for September 21st, 2023 with the addition of the communication site agreement and the airport runway agreement to be a general order without presentation by Haley Walker. Approval unanimous.

ANNOUNCEMENTS. The Judge and Commissioners attended or participated in these events:

JUDGE MYERS – September 9th– Performed a wedding In John Day, 11th - meeting of the Mental Health Advisory Board, 11th - Airport Commission meeting, 12th - Safety Meeting at the courthouse, 13th - Veterans Advisory Committee meeting with committee members from Salem, 14th - Special Meeting of the County Court to proceed on the airport project, 15th – Performed a wedding, 19th – PERS training for retirees in Burns, October 3rd - Monument Senior lunch followed by a safety inspection and on September 29th - AOC District 1 meeting in Pendleton followed by a meeting to receive input from county officials regarding the new state fire-mapping process.

COMMISSIONER ROWELL – September 21st – Grant Soil & Water Conservation meeting; 11th – South Fork John Day Water Council online meeting; 12th – John Day City Council meeting; 13th Oregon Dept. of Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee meeting; 14th – Grant County Public Library Advisory Board meeting; 14th – Natural Resource Advisory Committee meeting; 15th – Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife meeting; 19th – Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) public meeting; 20th – Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative’s 2023 Economic Development Business Summit at Anthony Lakes ski area.

COMMISSIONER HAMSHER – AOC Public Safety Steering Committee meeting, Natural Resource Steering Committee meeting, NACO Public Lands Steering Committee meeting, AOC Health and Human Services Steering Committee meeting, Department of Land Conservation and Development Local Officials Advisory Committee meeting , Veterans Town Hall held in Mt. Vernon and the OTEC Eastern Oregon Economic Summit at Anthony Lakes.

MINUTES. To approve the minutes of September 6th, 2023 and the Special Meeting held on September 14th.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve the minutes of September 6th and the Special Meeting held on September 14th, 2023 as presented. Approval unanimous.

9:11 am Enter Scott Knepper and Tammy Workman

FAIR. TRACTOR SHED DOOR. Fair Manager Mindy Winegar requested approval for the purchase of a door for the tractor barn at the fairgrounds. Bids received were from NE-HI Enterprises of Baker City and R&K Garage Doors, LLC of Pendleton. No response was received from The Door Guy. The bid was awarded to NE-HI Enterprises of Baker City.

MSP: Hamsher/Myers – to approve the purchase & installation of tractor shed door from NE-HI Enterprises in the amount of \$3018.00. Approval unanimous.

UPDATES. Other project status included repairs to picnic tables by Dusty Williams; the request for proposals for the engineering of the new RV Park and this week's start of the asbestos abatement at Keerins Hall to be completed within 3 weeks. Winegar noted that the fair was a success and thanked the Court for the compliments for the operations, condition of the grounds and successful events of the Fair.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK REVISIONS. New language, policies and clarifications have been added to and/or edited within the handbook. Topics include: race, pregnancy and breast-feeding accommodations, part-time employee longevity pay, new statewide policy for Paid Leave Oregon (PLO), Family Medical and Military Leave, Employee Criminal Arrest or Conviction, Job Injury and PERS-eligible retire and rehiring.

MSP: To approve the changes to the Employee Handbook and its subsequent circulation to employees.

Rowell noted a typographical error on page 46, "in you're injured on the job" to "if".

Approval unanimous.

VOCA GRANT. The VOCA Grant VOCA/CFA-2023-GrantCo. DAVAP-00004 in the amount of \$189,466.00 has been applied for by Victim Assistance Director Kaylie Clark for the years 2023-25. The grant is currently in the application process and has not been received. Clark requests the Court's approval, post-application.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to approve the grant application as described. Approval unanimous.

BURNS PAIUTE TRIBE COMMUNICATION SITE AGREEMENT. Unbilled communication site invoices were brought to the attention of the court by Roadmaster Alan Hickerson during his inventory of equipment (antenna) on the Fall Mountain tower. The representative from the tribe asked for a current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and agreed to bring the account current for back-pay from 2018 – 2023 at \$600 per year. The January 2024 rate will increase to \$750 yearly.

MSP: Myers/Rowell – to sign the MOU and move forward in the process of bringing the account

current. Approval unanimous.

EASTERN OREGON COUNTIES ASSOCIATION (EOCA). Yearly dues for EOCA membership in the amount of \$7500.00 are due. Myers acknowledged the many services EOCA provides to Oregon counties are due. *MSP: Myers/Rowell – to approve the payment of \$7500.00 in EOCA membership dues. Approval unanimous.*

SENIOR ADVISORY COUNCIL AWARD TO SENIORS SERVICE. Director Rick La Mountain asked the court to for signatures on a certificate of appreciation to Rose Coombs, recipient of the council's award this year.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – to sign the certificate of appreciation as read for award to the recipient. Approval unanimous.

Break 10 minutes
9:35 am Enter Shannon Springer

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Director Tory Stinnett has submitted her resignation as Director of the county's Economic Development department to take a position with Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation (GEODC). Her last day of work for the county will be October 3rd.

Stinnett listed for the Court the on-going projects and obligations of the department. These include:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) housing rehab grant.
- Oregon State Fire Marshall's grant with Irene Jerome and Soil and Water Conservation District's Tyler Bales. We will need someone at the county level to participate and process some data.
- Completed housing study needs to be documented for the cities and county to utilize. It would be helpful for the county to have someone available to assist with that information.
- Program manager for incentive program; will need someone to cover that.
- Grant County Community Action Team (GC CAT) meets every other month.
- Economic Development strategic plan – needs someone to continue in that role.
- A resource and guide to follow when dealing with economic development.
- GROW Program – framework that started with the Ford Family Foundation that supports entrepreneurs.

Hamsher thanked her for her efforts and was glad to see she's not going too far.

Stinnett countered the perception that her department is not valuable to the community or is replicated within other organizations. She stressed that all of the roles played by the different organizations are extremely varied. She cautioned that regional partners will not be doing work directly for the county, with "boots on the ground."

Stinnett would like to be involved in the new hiring process, if that is the direction the court is going. She stressed the importance of onboarding a new employee and her willingness to help

facilitate that process. The Court members were not sure of the plans for the department and may be looking at a work session to come to a decision. Stinnett was asked for a list of current contacts, projects and contractual obligations. Forwarding calls and messages should be directed to the County Court.

9:40 Enter Kyle Sullivan, Julie Ellison, Jim Carpenter

Frances Preston felt that the Court should receive a summary of the consequences, from Tory's perspective, of eliminating the department. Judy Kerr noted that Stinnett is moving to a different job that covers some of the same issues; Stinnett countered that the roles are different. Myers said that Stinnett will have a wonderful boss in the new organization. GCSWCD Director Kyle Sullivan said that Tory's run a heck of a show and has been great to work with.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY. DA Jim Carpenter requested a review of the current wage level in effect for his paralegals. Wage reviews in the past were sent to LCI *** for comparison. We no longer have that mechanism, according to Carpenter. He noted that paralegals are not represented by a union and that the wages in his office are no longer competitive in the current market. Myers agreed to look at wages that would be comparable for Grant County, including Baker, Wallowa and Harney County, but noted that a decision would not be forth-coming today. Carpenter said that he requires more of his staff than other district attorneys.

MSP: Hamsher/Rowell- to look at job descriptions for paralegals and move forward in gathering information to support a decision on the request. Approval unanimous.

AIRPORT & RUNWAY AMENDMENT. The airport received no response for the runway construction Request for Proposals (RFP), necessitating an amended agreement to move the Connect Oregon Grant start and completion dates. These will be forwarded for one year, from June to November of 2023, to the new start and completion dates of June to November of 2024. The amendment was reviewed by legal counsel.

MSP: Myers/Rowell – to approve the amendment to move the start and finish dates of the runway project. Approval unanimous.

OTHER DISCUSSION. Treasurer Julie Ellison commented that she would have appreciated being informed about the meeting agenda changes.

MSP: motion to adjourn 10:20 am

10:20 a.m. – Adjourned

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Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Stinnett
Administrative Assistant

- Please note: court minutes are a summary of the court proceedings. An audio recording is available, after approval of the minutes, by contacting the County Court at 541-575-0059.