

**Board of Commissioners Meeting
February 21, 2024
Irrigon Government Center, Irrigon, Oregon**

Present in-person: Chair David Sykes, Commissioner Jeff Wenholz, Commissioner Roy Drago Jr., Matthew Jensen, Valerie Ballard, Greg Goebel, Brian Snyder, Nathan Braun, Kevin Ince, Daisy Goebel, Landon Jones, Tamra Mabbott, and approximately 25 members of the public.

Present via-Zoom:

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 9:00 a.m.

Public Comment: Public comments were given by the following individuals: Emily Roberts, CEO, Morrow County Health District; Aaron Palmquist, Gus Peterson, Lori Seitz, Jodi Ferguson, Janet Greenup, Stuart Dick, Ray Akers; **Comments via-zoom:** Andrea Fletcher, Kirstin Espinola

Open Agenda:

Consent Agenda:

Matthew Jensen, Administrator asked to remove item 4.c, 6th Amendment to Oregon Health Authority Intergovernmental Agreement 180024 for the Financing of Public Health Services

Commissioner Wenholz moved to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- a. Umatilla County Sheriff's Office Invoice 14-153
- b. Out of State Travel Request: Finance Director

Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes

Business Items:

Morrow County Health District Funding Request

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

Morrow County Health District (MCHD) is requesting \$800,000 from ARPA funds. Staff met with MCHD to review the request. Mr. Ince said from a use of funds perspective, the request was within guidelines. Nicole Mahoney, Chief Financial Officer of MCHD said the funds were for primary care and emergency assistance. State and federal funding has ceased and MCHD is still recovering from Covid-19. Changes in healthcare such as telehealth services have reduced income to the health district while wages have risen.

Commissioner Wenholz requested vendor summaries be provided for review.

Chair Sykes motioned to grant funding dependent on financial statements received. Motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Drago moved to table the discussion until vendor summaries are provided. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Interim Ambulance Service:

Matthew Jensen, Administrator

Interim services with Boardman Fire are planned for March 13 after MCHD ambulances pull out. No signatures are needed at this time as the plan is being brought forward for Commissioners to review. Each location will have staffing of 2, with one location providing 24-hour service.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to approve and authorize administrator signature contingent on what presented does not change. Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Oregon Department of Forestry Classification Committee

Dustin Gustaveson, Oregon Department of Forestry

Mr. Gustaveson explained forestland in Morrow County hasn't been reclassified since the 1960s and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) is striving to reconvene the Classification Committee. Forestland classification is a process done by a county convened committee made up of six members. One member each is appointed by the Oregon State University Extension Service, Oregon Fire Marshall, and Oregon Department of Forestry. Three positions are appointed by County Commissioners and committees are evaluated approximately every five years.

ORS 526.005(5)(a) defines **Forestland** as “any woodland, brushland, timberland, grazing land, or clearing that, during any time of the year, contains enough forest growth, slashing, or vegetation to constitute, in the judgment of the forester, a fire hazard, **regardless of how the land is zoned or taxed.**”

Once classified, ODF creates a forest patrol assessment for wildland fire protection.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to appoint the applicants as committee members. Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Rate Increase – Waste Connections

Sandra Pointer, Administrative Manager, Public Works

Kevin Miracle, Brian Brooke, Waste Management

Waste Connections requested a rate increase of 37%. Ms. Pointer noted the high percentage, but stated the increase is comparable and agreeable to competitors.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to approve the rate increase, effective March 21, 2024. Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Letter to Oregon House Committee

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director

Ms. Mabbott presented a joint letter between Morrow and Umatilla counties, co-written with Bob Walder of Umatilla County. The letter encourages the House Committee to fund the water well abandonment, repair, and replacement fund. Funds were originally just for water quantity, but water quality has been added. Umatilla County has the same letter on their meeting agenda for today (February 21) at their Board of Commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Wenholz moved to approve signing by the Board Chair. Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Notice of Intent to Award Contract

Tamra Mabbott

A Steering Committee reviewed proposals submitted for the Morrow Umatilla County Groundwater Investigation research project and unanimously selected a firm.

Commissioner Drago motioned to authorize staff to sign the Notice of Intent to Proceed to Award Contract for the Morrow Umatilla County Drinking Water Investigation. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Notice of Intent to Award Contract – Strategic Planning Services

Matthew Jensen, Administrator

Mr. Jensen's predecessor, Interim Administrator Bev Vanderwall released a request for proposals for Strategic Planning services, but no responses were received. After reaching out to consultant groups, a

proposal was received by Local Government Consulting, LLC (LGC). LGC has experience performing strategic planning services with municipalities in Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. The proposal includes 5-6 months of consulting, with a year of follow-up services. While the contract amount is below the threshold requiring Commissioner approval, the expansive nature of the planning process deserves the attention of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to approve Mr. Jensen signing on behalf of the County. Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Grant Approval – Emergency Operations Center Grant Program

Brian Snyder, Undersheriff

A grant of \$177,000 was awarded to Morrow County's Emergency Operation Center for the acquisition and installation of a generator and transfer switch. The County will match \$59,000 and the total project is estimated to be \$236,000.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to authorize Chair Sykes to sign on behalf of the County. Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Letters of Support

Matthew Jensen, Administrator

The Commission was asked to sign three letters of support. The first letter was to support Congressionally directed spending to go to the Port of Morrow for wastewater treatment, rail improvements, and the Port of Morrow interchange improvement fund.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to approve signing of the letter of support for Port of Morrow Congressionally directed spending request. Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes

The City of Lone and Port of Morrow requested a letter of support for Congressionally directed spending for a business incubator facility to promote economic growth in Lone.

Commissioner Drago motioned to approve the signing of the letter of support for the City of Lone and Port of Morrow CDS spending request. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

The Oregon Military Department requested a letter of support for Congressionally directed spending to fund a project constructing a multi-purpose machine gun range near Boardman. The range will keep over 700 Oregon service members closer to home for training.

Commissioner Drago motioned to approve the signing of the letter of support for the Oregon Military Department Congressionally directed spending. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous yes.

Administrator Update

Circuit Court Building Update

Matthew Jensen, Administrator

There will be listening sessions for the Circuit Court building. Concerns regarding line of sight, security, landscaping, sound buffering, and more will be addressed. 60-80% of the design and site plan are ready to go before the Board and City. More Town Halls will be expected at the end of April-May and information will be available at the 2024 Morrow County Fair.

Break: 11:26 - 11:36 a.m.

Department Reports

Veterans Department Report was presented by Stephanie Case

Sheriff's Office Monthly Report was presented by Brian Snyder

The written Treasurer's Report was provided by Jaylene Papineau

Planning Department Report presented by Tamra Mabbott, Daisy Goebel, and Landon Jones

Finance Report was provided in the packet by Kevin Ince

Accounts Payable Report was provided I the packet by Kevin Ince

Correspondence

Thank You from Neighborhood Center of South Morrow County

Letter from Calvin Garton

Commissioners Reports

Brief reports of Commissioner activity were provided. Commissioner Wenholz attended a Community Renewable Energy Association (CREA) meeting. Commissioner Drago met with Senator Findley, and Chair Sykes has been sitting in on interviews for Assistant County Administrator applicants and noted there were several strong candidates.

Signing of Documents

Adjournment: 12:25 p.m.