

Union County Board of Commissioners
Regular Commissioners Meeting
February 20, 2019

Present: Commissioner Donna Beverage, Chair
Commissioner Paul Anderes
Commissioner R. Matthew Scarfo

Commissioner Beverage opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was given with all three Commissioners present.

Public Comment

Second Amendment Sanctuary Ordinance

Ken Wisdom, 63760 Mt. Glen Road, La Grande presented a Second Amendment Sanctuary Ordinance to the Commissioners for consideration. He stated that he presented an ordinance written in 2016 regarding the Second Amendment rights which was placed on the county ballot and successfully passed. There are currently many changes being presented through legislation regarding gun control. These changes have prompted the creation of this updated ordinance which will allow Second Amendment Sanctuary status for Union County gun owners. Commissioner Beverage stated that the Commissioners would review the proposed ordinance. Commissioner Scarfo asked if Mr. Wisdom had spoken with Sheriff Rasmussen about this proposal which he answered that he had. Commissioner Beverage asked if any other Oregon counties have adopted this ordinance. Mr. Wisdom stated that Josephine County has adopted a similar ordinance.

Climate Change

Kathryn Boula, 1404 First Street, La Grande, presented information to be taken under consideration for the Union County revision of the comprehensive land use plan currently in process. This information assists in the planning changes pertaining to climate change. She suggested that by addressing forest carbon and utilizing the information provided through organizations such as the Community Firewise program, Union County could become a leader in the area for addressing climate related issues. She also offered to volunteer in the county planning process. Commissioner Anderes stated that Representative Greg Walden is currently proposing a climate change bill.

Elected Official, Department Head & Employee Comments

Gun Control Legislation

Commissioner Donna Beverage stated that she would like the Commissioners to join Crook County in support of maintaining the rights put forth by the Second Amendment allowing citizens the right to bear arms. She explained this request would be done by sending a letter requesting the support from various pro-gun organizations. Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, drafted the proposed letter of support with minor changes, but also suggested a second draft option. The second option maintains Crook County as taking the lead on the issue with Union County supporting their efforts by encouraging support from the pro-gun organizations. Commissioner Anderes stated that he was in support of the first letter, but concerned about statements within the letter including that Union County would take the lead which creates concern about financial implications. Commissioner Scarfo stated that this issue has been passed by the voters county-wide and should be included in the letter. **Commissioner Anderes moved to draft a letter to**

support Crook County, include a statement about this being passed county-wide and have our legal counsel review the letter prior to distributing. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Forest Planning and Travel Management

Commissioner Beverage presented a petition regarding the Blue Mountain Forests Record of Decision. She explained that Baker, Grant, Harney, and Wallowa counties plan to sign the petition and she would like Union County to join in support. The petition is in regards to forest planning and travel management for the Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests. Commissioner Anderes stated that this will help the Blue Mt. Forest Plan to move forward at a much better pace by having a workable plan and will provide additional firefighting access. He is in support of this petition. Commissioner Scarfo brought up a statement within the petition that caused concern. Upon discussion, it was interpreted to be inclusive of other agencies and sufficient for the document.

Kathryn Boula, 1404 1st Street, La Grande, stated that there is no data available to support the additional road openings referenced in the petition. She suggested additional public input and public access. She disapproves of the blanket policy contained within the petition and doesn't agree with opening roads simply for firefighting access. She also disapproves of opening all roads as they were not all intended for public access and asked who would be responsible for maintaining these roads.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she remains in support of the petition as it says that issues and roads will be addressed on a project-by-project basis. **Commissioner Anderes moved to support the petition. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Future Farmers of America Support

Commissioner Anderes stated that this is Future Farmers of America (FFA) week and that he would like to go on record in support of FFA throughout Union County.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Scarfo moved approval of the January 29, 30, 31, and February 4, 5, 6, 2019 Claims Journals and Meeting Minutes from the February 6, 2019 Board Commissioners meeting as presented on the consent agenda. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Matters

Resolution 2019-02, Authorized Appropriation Transfer

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented Resolution 2019-02, In the Matter of Transferring an Authorized Appropriation, to the Commissioners for approval. This resolution will allow payment to be made to districts without creating a budget violation. The payments are a result of the Community Service Fee received from Telocaset Wind Partners under a Strategic Investment Program (SIP) agreement from the construction of the Elkhorn Wind Farm. These fees are received in lieu of taxes on the exempt portion of the project described in the SIP. The fees are budgeted and included in the Wind Project budget fund. Union County retains a portion and makes payments to the other districts for their portion. The amount of funds received for the districts was higher than anticipated necessitating this resolution.

Commissioner Anderes said that this will be a welcome addition to the district budgets.

Commissioner Anderes moved approval of Resolution 2019-02, In the Matter of Transferring an Authorized Appropriation. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Beverage recessed the meeting at 9:40.

Commissioner Beverage reconvened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

US Census Bureau Presentation

Sarah Bushore, Partnership Specialist of the 2020 Census, requested Commissioner support of the 2020 Census. She explained the process involved in the census and described changes from previous counts. She stressed the importance of getting an accurate count of all citizens which will affect funding the state and counties receive for a variety of programs including WIC, school lunch programs, and free medical clinics. Citizens will be asked to participate in the census by self-reporting to the census website or through a telephone option. Those that do not respond voluntarily will receive a mailed short form to complete. If the Census Bureau receives no response to the mailing, then they will utilize locally hired enumerators who will go door-to-door. They are also hoping to involve public health, public libraries, and public county buildings to assist as a location to aid in achieving an accurate count. It will also be helpful to involve students, community clubs, and service organizations to assist with the count by forming Complete Count Committees. Commissioner Scarfo stated that the privacy of citizens is a big issue and that people may be reluctant to release personal information. Sarah stated that each enumerator hired by the Census Bureau is required to sign confidentiality agreements. Information released as a result of the census will be in raw data format only. The Commissioners thanked Sarah for her presentation.

Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Update

Commissioner Beverage provided an update on AOC stating that they now have 100% membership participation of all Oregon counties. The organization is working through issues and moving forward. Commissioner Anderes stated he was unable to travel to the recent County College session due to road closures but was able to participate via telephone and video. He stated that being present would be preferred, but that the video was a good substitute and the audio portion worked well.

Next Commissioners Meeting

The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. There will not be a Commissioner Work Session held in March.

Adjournment

Commissioner Beverage adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Powers
Sr. Dept. Specialist II
Union County Commissioners