

Board of Commissioners Meeting  
October 20, 2011

Present: Commissioner Steve McClure  
Commissioner Mark D. Davidson  
Commissioner William D. Rosholt

Call To Order

Chairman McClure called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with all three Commission members present.

Public Comments

Dwight Dill, Center for Human Development, 2301 Cove Ave. La Grande, came to the Commissioners to talk to them about a residential proposal that they have. He explained that they have been looking at this proposal for a number of years. They are looking at developing a five to six bed home with four permanent residents. The population to be served would be young adults in transition.

Commissioner McClure asked if this was mental health or developmentally delayed. Dwight stated that it is mental health so it is individuals that are in a State hospital that would give them a transition home to get them back into independent living in the communities. Dwight explained that the individuals would range from 18 to 25 years of age. The intent would be to have them in the home for 18 months to 2 years on average. There would be two additional crisis or respite beds that can be used.

Commissioner Davidson asked if it is a secure facility. Dwight explained that it is not a secure facility so they would have to be there voluntarily. The State would like to see this as a regional resource so it could be residents from Eastern Oregon but not necessarily Union County.

Commissioner McClure asked if the intent would then be to cycle the individuals back into their original communities or keep them in La Grande. Dwight stated that they would probably go back to their home communities but they could choose to stay locally. The State would like to see supported education as a tie in to the program and EOU would be an advantage to staying in this community.

Commissioner Davidson asked where the proposed location is. Dwight stated that they had originally looked at an empty group home on 4<sup>th</sup> and G but the owner of the property would entertain an addition to the home which is needed because it would result in a lien on the property. They are looking at possibly building the home in front of their current building on Cove Avenue. They will be looking at other options because they want it to look as much like an average home as possible.

Dwight explained that their next step is to submit a proposal to the State that is due at the end of this month. They may or may not be chosen as a project.

Commissioner Rosholt asked if he needed a letter from the County for the application. Dwight stated that would be nice to include in the packet that is submitted but it is not required. Commissioner Davidson stated that he would not be opposed to a letter of support to the State but he would need some more details on the proposal before he would vote to support the project. Dwight explained a letter of support to move forward with the application would be helpful and once he gets the project finalized he would be happy to bring the proposal back before they move forward with anything so the Commissioners can see the entire proposal.

Dwight stated that he sent an email to the State addressing if there would be an impact to the local school district. Their response is that it is possible that the individuals would be attending local high schools. If it were appropriate based upon the assessment of the clinical staff of the home they could attend although it could be possible that residents would complete a GED working from either the home or another facility that is not a public school. Dwight feels that would be the preferred mode to pursue a GED track at the beginning because this is a transitional home into adulthood. He does not see placing them in the public school as meeting that end but moving into the adult structure would be more appropriate. He cannot give a definitive answer that there would never be any residents attending the public school system but it would be most unlikely.

Chris Panieke, Business Manager for La Grande Public School District, explained that the school continues to face financial challenges. He is under the impression that the four beds that are available could be filled by an individual from anywhere within the State. He is very supportive of taking care of the people from this community. When people are brought in from outside the community they then become their resident students which means total financial support for their education falls on the School District funding. If one of those students is a high needs student which requires a one on one assistant while they are in the school, the District's cost to educate that student will exceed \$30,000. For every student that is on a special IEP the District receives about \$10,500 to educate that student.

Commissioner McClure asked how many IEP students are currently in the school district. Chris stated that there are 376 IEP students. Some of the students are ones with learning disabilities but are in the flow but get some extra services and others are high needs students. It absorbs a lot of resources. He spent a lot of time looking for other resources. If the child is an 18-21 year old and is on an IEP they are mandated to educate them.

Commissioner Davidson stated that he would like to hear Dwight's response to what the School District is saying. Commissioner Davidson stated that in Dwight's comments earlier he stated that it would not be for developmentally disabled individuals. Dwight explained that this home is not for physically developmentally disabled individuals. It is specifically for people with a mental illness. It could be Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder or severe depression. In terms of addressing Chris's concerns there are 58 beds with developmentally disabled living in them. There are currently 6 students from those group homes at La Grande High School. With this home he does not see the impact being that great on the school. Some of them may come in at 21 or 22 and wouldn't be eligible for school anyway. If they were they would probably go the GED route and work with TEC or another organization. They are trying to get them transitioned into adult services. They want to get them into employment. However, if someone wants to get their high school diploma they would have to support that. CHD would offer mentors with this program. If they had behavioral problems CHD could provide a mentor with them if they need that during school time.

Commissioner Davidson asked if there is a way to structure the application to keep the clients out of the public schools. Dwight stated that it is the right of the individual to choose whether they would like to attend the public school and get a high school diploma as opposed to a GED. They can provide mentors to be with the students if needed. He explained that with this population it is not that they are going to be violent and aggressive all the time. They have a mental illness and need some support with that. It is much different than someone with a developmental disability that has severe behavior problems.

#### Public Works Grader Lease Buyout

Richard Comstock, Public Works Director, and Jim Brennan, Western States Equipment, came to the Commissioners with a grader lease buyout option for consideration. He explained that there are two early buyout leases on road graders. The third one is not ready to be done at this time. The prices will be about \$3,000-\$6,000 less a year than the current leases.

Jim explained that there have been some changes on the interest rates and there is a higher buy back that is being offered now than the buy back that is offered at the end of the five year lease. He explained that if they do the buyout now there will be a few years to have the new tier 4 engines out before the next buyout is available.

Commissioner McClure asked what the tier 4 engines are. Jim explained that they are the new environmental engines that are coming out. He asked Jim if there is a market for the graders that he would be buying back from the County. Jim explained that they rent the graders. This time of year is a busy time for

rentals so they do make money renting the machine. There are a few bigger cities and contractors that will purchase the graders.

Commissioner McClure stated that he did not see an issue with the buyout plan. He would like Richard to run it by Brandon Eyre the County's legal counsel.

**Commissioner Davidson moved approval of the buyout of the two grader leases. Commissioner Rosholt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### Flexible Funds Grant

Sean Chambers, MERA Coordinator, came to the Commissioners to talk about the Flexible Funds Grant opportunity presented by ODOT. He explained that Commissioner McClure brought the grant to his attention recently so he has been working hard to get it ready for the deadline today. It is a conceptual plan to build a trail from the Fairgrounds of Union County up to the trailhead off Fox Hill. It would be a multimodal path providing for foot traffic, bicycles, equestrian and ATV travel. The intention is to take that traffic and remove it from Fox Hill Road and to provide an opportunity for people from out of town to come to the Fairgrounds and offload ATVs and go up the trail to access the MERA park system. This grant would pay for the planning document since it is just in the planning phase. The grant request would be for \$80,000 and the County's match would be 10.27%. The match will be made through Sean's time. **Commissioner Rosholt moved approval of the Flex Fund Program Planning Grant as presented. Commissioner Davidson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### Consent Agenda

**The September 29 and October 6 claims journals; the September 28 and October 5 Public Works claims journals; the August 2 Board of Commissioners Minutes were approved as presented on the consent agenda.**

#### Jail Agreement . Wallowa County

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Jail Agreement with Wallowa County to the Commissioners for consideration. She explained that this agreement started on July 1, 2011. There was a previous two year agreement that expired the end of June. They have been continuing to house their inmates in Union County's facility. This agreement would run from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013. It is the same terms and conditions as the previous agreement with the exception that they have reduced the number of guaranteed beds from 8 to 7 for Wallowa County in the County's Jail facility. It is a little less obligation but it is also less revenue. It does allow for a \$1 a day increase during the second fiscal year but it remains at the 7 guaranteed beds. **Commissioner Davidson moved approval of the Jail Use Agreement between Union and Wallowa**

**Counties as presented. Commissioner Rosholt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Federal Agency Coordination Resolution

Resolution 2011-13, In the Matter of a Resolution Establishing Coordination Between Union County and Federal Agencies and State Agencies Involved with Federal Agencies, was presented for consideration. Shelley explained that this Resolution is in a form that was received from several other Counties that have adopted a similar Resolution. It would put the Federal and State agencies on notice that the County is requiring coordination on implementing plans, policies, projects and management actions in Union County that will impact the County.

**Commissioner Davidson moved approval of Resolution 2011-13 as presented. Commissioner Rosholt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Appointment to Non-Motorized Advisory Committee

Court Order 2011-48, In the Matter of Appointment to the Mt. Emily Recreation Area Non-Motorized Advisory Committee, was presented for consideration. This Court Order would appoint Aric Johnson to fill a vacant position left by Lloyd Mason who has resigned leaving a vacant position on the committee.

**Commissioner Davidson moved approval of Court Order 2011-48 as presented. Commissioner Rosholt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Appointment to UCEDC Board

Court Order 2011-47, In the Matter of Appointment to the Union County Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors, was presented for consideration. This Court Order would appoint Tim Seydel to replace Don Starr who has resigned from the Board leaving an unexpired term.

**Commissioner Davidson moved approval of Court Order 2011-47 as presented. Commissioner Rosholt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Appointment to BOPTA

Court Order 2011-49, In the Matter of Appointment to the 2011 Board of Property Tax Appeals, was presented for consideration. This Court Order would appoint Mike Sanford to replace Gary Howland who resigned from the Board leaving a vacant position.

**Commissioner Davidson moved approval of Court Order 2011-49 as presented. Commissioner Rosholt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Amicus Brief

Shelley explained that the Commissioners have been invited by Wallowa County to participate in an Amicus Brief regarding the lawsuit that has been filed by Cascadia Wildland, the Center for Biological Diversity and Oregon Wild. They filed for a petition of judicial review of the Oregon Department of Wildlife agency rule on the wolf management and the taking of wolves. Wallowa County is pulling together other counties to support an Amicus Brief on this subject. So far they

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have commitments from Baker, Umatilla, Grant and Harney counties. They are asking if Union County wants to participate and asking for a financial contribution of \$1,000 toward the cost of having the Brief prepared and filed.

Commissioner Davidson stated that Wallowa County informed him that they also have commitments from Crook and Gilliam County.

**Commissioner Davidson moved approval of supporting the Amicus Brief and to contribute \$1,000 towards the preparation and filing costs. Commissioner Rosholt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Wilhelm  
Sr. Dept. Specialist