

Union County Board of Commissioners
Joseph Building Annex Conference Room
Regular Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, September 2, 2020

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

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

Public Comments

Irene Gilbert, 2310 Adams Avenue, La Grande, addressed the Commissioners with her concerns regarding the Boardman to Hemingway project with Idaho Power. Ms. Gilbert relayed Idaho Power used prevailing use to determine what land in Union County is forest land, which was incorrect. This resulted in the incorrect identification of forest land using the predominant use rather than the soil class to identify forest land. Her recommendation is for Union County Legal Counsel to look into the facts regarding the land and also that the County should provide funding to the Stop B2H Coalition's legal defense fund.

Leann Knapp, Oregon Food Bank, addressed the Commissioners regarding the 2020 Union County Census and the importance of completing the survey. The survey is a handful of questions that pertain to each household, and is available to complete online. The census is to be done every 10 years, and is important in receiving funding for Union County.

Audrey Smith, Community Connection of Northeast Oregon (CCNO), addressed the Commissioners with her comments regarding the 2020 Census. Cook Memorial Library has partnered with CCNO to assist citizens in completing the census online, offering incentives of \$100 gift cards for Safeway and Walmart. Ms. Smith also relayed the importance of the completion of surveys by Union County residents. Union County is currently at 64% return rate, which is below the state return at 67%. The deadline to submit the census survey is September 30.

Ms. Knapp asked the Commissioners for their support in staffing volunteers from Union County during the final push of the census. Should the County decide to assist in the final stages of the census, it would be greatly appreciated.

Commissioner Beverage asked Administrative Officer, Shelley Burgess to confirm the census information is available on the Union County website.

Commissioner Scarfo would like to thank Leann, Audrey and Kip for their hard work and thinking outside the box. He did the math, according to the percentage rate, Union County is down 9,500 residents submitting surveys. 9,500 times \$3,400 per person, per household would be \$31M for the County.

PUBLIC HEARING: Annexing Property into the La Grande Rural Fire Protection District

Staff Report

Stacy Warren, Associate Planner, presented Court Order 2020-23, to the Commissioners for their consideration.

A petition from Kent Milaeger to annex property into the La Grande Rural Fire Protection district with the purpose of improving fire protection was received.

Union County received a letter on February 19, 2020 from the La Grande Rural Fire district stating it was prepared to annex the subject property. Confirmation was received from the Oregon Department of Revenue that the legal description and map was acceptable.

Public Comment

Commissioner Anderes opened the public comment opportunity. None were received.

Commission Discussion/Action

Commissioner Scarfo made a motion to approve Court Order 2020-23 Annexing Property into the La Grande Rural Fire Protection District. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Elected Official, Department Head & Employee Comments

Property Transfer/Lease Agreement – Public Works Grader

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, presented the Property Transfer Lease Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration. The County will transfer the property currently used for grader storage to the City of Elgin for a lease granting perpetual storage of the Elgin grader in the city's covered Public Works shop.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the Property Transfer of a Public Works Grader to Elgin. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

21-inch Rule Letter

Commissioner Anderes presented the draft 21-inch rule letter and read aloud for Commissioner consideration.

This message is a public comment from the Board of Commissioners on the Environmental Assessment to amend the Wildlife Standard of the Eastside screens. Eastern Oregon's Nation Forests have become overstocked, fire-prone and insect infested. Active forest management is needed across all eastside forests to restore forest health.

Commissioner Beverage recommended adding the wording "and reduced fire resiliency" to the last paragraph of the letter.

Commissioner Scarfo made a motion to approve the letter as amended to be submitted during comment period regarding Eastside Screens. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of the consent agenda including the August 19 meeting minutes and August 19, 20 & 26 2020 claims journals as presented. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Matters

Land Sale Agreement Addendum

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Land Sale Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration.

This is a second addendum to a sale agreement between Union County and Bull Antler Resources, LLC. On July 30, 2020, Tim and Kristi Nelson submitted a written request for a one-year extension on condition 5.3 of the sale agreement the County entered in with them on August 18, 2020. Condition 5.3 of the agreement required the buyer to complete construction of a multi-use shop of at least 4,000 sq. ft. within 2 years from the date of the agreement. If not completed, the County could terminate the lease and purchase the property back at the sale price.

Mr. & Mrs. Nelson indicated in the extension request that their business is moving in a positive direction and their intent is to begin construction in the Spring of 2021.

Commissioner Beverage relayed in this case the business has been doing well, and hasn't had time to finish.

Commissioner Scarfo supported Commissioner Beverage's comment, adding that the delay is understandable during COVID-19 restrictions and challenges.

Commissioner Scarfo made a motion to approve the Land Sale Agreement Addendum with Bull Antler Resources Trucking LLC through October 2021. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

IMPACT Grant Agreement

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer and Aaron Grigg, Center for Human Development Mental Health Director, presented the IMPACT Grant Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The total grant amount is \$562,945.27 for a 2-year period which will expire June 30, 2022.

Mr. Grigg provided a brief summary to the Commissioners regarding the entirety of the grant and what the funds will be used for. It will offer services to person experiencing mental health challenges and engaged in the law enforcement process.

**Commissioner Scarfo made a motion to approve IMPACT Agreement.
Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Sale Agreement & First Right of Refusal

The sale agreement was not ready for approval and has been postponed until the September 16 Commission meeting.

Good of the Order

Commissioner Beverage asked if public comments should be read that were provided by email prior to the meeting. Ms. Gilbert had already addressed her comments, and Commissioner Anderes noted receipt of her comments. Shelley Burgess read a comment received August 31 from Ed Shaul, 3036 N. Alexis Way Meridian Idaho, regarding timber harvest on MERA.

Commissioner Beverage asked that the NRAC item be placed on the next work session agenda if ready. She expresses a desire to see it completed by the end of the year.

Next Commissioners Meeting

The next scheduled work session will be held on Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 9 AM.

The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 9 AM.

Adjournment

Commissioner Anderes adjourned the meeting at 10:04 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore / Senior Department Specialist