

Board of Commissioners Meeting  
March 17, 2010

Present: Commissioner Mark D. Davidson  
Commissioner Steve McClure  
Commissioner R. Nellie Hibbert

Call To Order

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

Public Comments

Mary McCracken, 63036 Buchanan Lane, La Grande, stated she was in the Commission meeting last month talking about the trees that had been remarked by Forest Capital. She stated in that meeting that they were remarked after a visit from Commissioner Hibbert. She has evidence now that the remarking of the trees had nothing to do with Commissioner Hibbert's visit. Commissioner Hibbert thanked Mary for clearing up her comments from the previous meeting.

Dennis Wilkinson, Cove, explained that in OAR 345.022.0030 land use it states that if the applicant chooses Energy Facility Siting Council determination regarding land use then the council appoints a member of the local governing body as a special advisory group. Dennis asked if this had been done. Commissioner McClure stated that it has been done and Hanley Jenkins, Planning Director, is the County representative. Dennis also referenced OAR 345.022.0080(c) explaining that it reads; this standard protects scenic values that local or Federal land management plans identify in their land management plans as important. If a proposed facility would affect the scenic values identified as important or significant the applicant must propose appropriate measures. Dennis stated that the only appropriate measure he sees would be to have no wind farms. He explained that it has been stated that the Commissioners cannot do anything about this project but he does not agree. He thinks there a lot of things the Commissioners can do. Dennis asked Commissioner McClure as a candidate if he was going to accept or has accepted any campaign money from Horizon Wind Energy. Commissioner McClure stated that he has not and will not accept any campaign money from Horizon Wind Energy.

Stephen Donnell, 2505 East L Ave., La Grande, came to the Commissioners to voice his concerns about the Wind Farm. He stated that it is required that the State agency must comply with the requirements of the local Planning Ordinance. The County Commissioners determine whether or not the request for approval of any land planning issue meets the requirements. He asked the Commissioners if they are going to have the County Planner review the request to make sure it meets all of the County requirements.

Commissioner Davidson explained that the Planning Department has reviewed the preliminary application and their response for request for additional information and will continue to participate in that process. His understanding of it is that the Commissioners

do not have the final decision. The Department of Energy's Energy Facility Siting Council takes the County's Ordinances and they apply them in that order. When they make a final decision than by Statute the County is required without delay and without a hearing to issue a Conditional Use Permit to the applicant.

Stephen asked if the Commissioners are going to put a value on the visual impact for the community in the SIP negotiations. Commissioner Davidson stated that the SIP negotiations are confidential until an agreement has been reached.

Jed Farmer, 64884 Little Creek Lane, Union, came to the Commissioners to comment about the Wind Farm. He stated that if the SIP is not put in place, the project will be put on the tax rolls which will generate around six million dollars in taxes. The SIP has two categories that are included in it in the Statute, the taxing on the first 25 million and a community service fee. He would like to see the Commissioners negotiate as much of the funds as possible through those two categories. He also stated that he believes the role of the County should be to support the wildlife concerns from the Land Use Ordinance as it applies to the agencies that come up with the findings.

Jim Miron, Union, came to the Commissioners to comment about the wind farm. He stated that he is against the wind farm project and locating this industrial project so close to Union. He would support renewable energy but this project should not go forward. He feels that the project is too big and out of scale to the area. He stated that he believes the property values will decline. He would like to see the Commissioners oppose the project and put out a Resolution opposing it to make it known to the Siting Council.

Charles Gillis, 601 N. Ave. La Grande, came to the Commissioners to ask them some questions about the wind farm project. He asked if there was anything that the Commissioners would change from the Telecaset Wind Farm. Commissioner McClure asked for his comments and if he would like to have a discussion he could come in and talk to the Commissioners individually.

Ed Shaul, 62179 Starr Lane, La Grande, explained that most people that live outside of the City of La Grande have a view of the wind generators. It does have a visual impact on other parts of the Valley other than Union. He stated that in some projects that the County has been involved in there has not been complete transparency and he hopes the Commissioners will be more open and willing to let the people know what is happening with the wind farm project.

Bonnie Dunn, stated that she would like the Commissioners to consider looking at everything that is involved in this wind farm project. Consider what the project will do to wildlife as well as tourism.

Patty Bingaman, 65883 McKennon Lane, Imber, urged the Commissioners to actively pursue adopting conditional use standards for wind power generator facilities in Union County. She believes that eventually there will be wind generators on the valley floor if

there are not conditional use codes in place for the County. She stated that she is concerned about the requirements for wind generators to meet the standards for the big game wildlife habitat.

Faye Stein Swanson, 68562 Telecaset Lane, Union, came to the Commissioners to testify that the wind towers are making her sick. The last two days the wind towers have been shut down and she has felt better. She has everything from heart palpitations, stress, anxiety and vertigo. It is important to not have other people go through this sickness that she has which is the wind tower syndrome. She stated that the company does not care about our health or well being and she feels that the Commissioners should care for the community and preserve the beauty and tranquility that was once Union County. It was her dream to live in Telecaset and now there is no where else for her to go. The Commissioners have the right to stop this project.

#### Animal Control Equipment Bid

Becky Wortman, Animal Control officer, explained that the Animal Control Department has a new vehicle and they need new equipment to house the animals. The old box has too many repairs to fix it. Becky gave the Commissioners a proposal for the purchase of the equipment. The recommendation was to purchase a new animal control container from Barreto Manufacturing at a cost of \$6,000.

Commissioner Hibbert asked if it is in the budget to purchase the equipment. Becky stated that there are funds to purchase the equipment but it is not in the capital line item.

Commissioner Davidson asked how many compartments the existing box has. Becky stated that there are two, but one has a door that is not in working order.

**Commissioner Hibbert moved approval of the recommendation from the Sheriff's office as presented. Commissioner McClure seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### 2010 Union County Community Plan Update

Vicky Brogoitti, Director of Commission on Children and Families, came to the Commissioners to request their approval on the update to the 2010 Community Plan for Children and Families in Union County. She explained that most of the Community Plan is now database entry so the only information that can be provided is the executive summary. The process for updating the Plan began with the completion of the last Plan in which was stated that a Readiness Assessment would be completed around the focus issue which was Youth Substance Abuse Prevention. The Assessment showed that the community was in a state of denial or resistance that the issue really existed. They have been doing outreach to make people aware of the issue of underage substance abuse. They reported an increase in having families eating out together. It was a reminder that parents are a role model to the youth. The findings of a norms assessment are used to provide direction for future steps for the Community Plan.

Through the assessment the Commission is planning a lock up your alcohol and prescription medication campaign.

Vicky stated that they were asked to identify other community issues that have been identified in the earlier planning process. Teen pregnancy and parenting is a new issue that was added to the community issues list. Union County's teen pregnancy rate is climbing. They have also added the issue of educational access and equity. This issue came about because when the plan was originally submitted there was not a charter school district in Union County. Now there are three of six districts that are charter districts. It is causing a shift in numbers. The numbers for students that receive free and reduced lunch has changed quite a bit by the changes in the charter system.

Vicky stated that she feels like they have a strong prevention committee.

**Commissioner McClure moved approval of the Update to the 2010 Community Plan as presented. Commissioner Hibbert seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### Consent Agenda

**The February 22 and 25 and March 4 and 11 claims journals; and the February 24 and March 3 and 11 Public Works claims journals; and the January 6 Board of Commissioners minutes were approved as presented on the consent agenda.**

#### Ag. Service Center Lease

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, brought several lease agreements to the Commissioners for approval. The first lease needs to be considered as the Commissioners role as Union County Commissioners. This lease is between the 4-H and Extension Service District and Union County. This is for the office space that is occupied by the Assistant Watermaster. It is funding that the County would pay to the 4-H and Extension Service District. All of the leases that she is presenting are replacement leases to those that were in existence with the Soil and Water Conservation District. This lease is up at the end of Union County's fiscal year which ends June 30, 2011. The amount of the lease is \$165.75 a month.

**Commissioner McClure moved approval of lease between the 4-H and Extension Service District and Union County as presented. Commissioner Hibbert seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Shelley then presented the rest of the leases. As Commissioners they serve as the Board of Directors for the 4-H and Extension Service District so she is asking the Commissioners to consider the rest of the leases in that role. The next lease is a lease amendment with the State of Oregon for the office space for the Watermaster. This agreement is paid for by the Department of Administrative Services on behalf of the Water Resources Division. This lease expires on June 30, 2011. The rental rate is \$179.20 a month. There is a lease amendment with the State of Oregon Department of Agriculture for the entomologist that is housed in that building. This lease expires June 30, 2011 at a rate of \$159.38 a month. There is a lease with the Confederated Tribes of

the Umatilla Indian Reservation. This lease expires October 31, 2013. There was an agreement in the sales agreement to continue this lease's terms which had been agreed upon before the sale of the building. The lease is for \$1370.62 a month. The last lease is between the 4-H and Extension District and the Soil and Water Conservation District which was also agreed to during the negotiations of the building purchase. It is a ten year lease that would expire October 14, 2019. It entitles them to 800 square feet at no charge.

**Commissioner Hibbert moved approval of the lease agreements as presented. Commissioner McClure seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Appointment to Hospital Facility Authority

Court Order 2010-17, In the Matter of Appointment to the Hospital Facility Authority of Union County, was presented for consideration. This Court Order will re-appoint Craig Nightingale and Mark Davidson to this committee as well as appoint Dale Basso to replace Eric Valentine's position on the committee. **Commissioner Hibbert moved approval of Court Order 2010-17 as presented. Commissioner McClure seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Appointment to Union County Budget Committee

Court Order 2010-18, In the Matter of Appointment to the Union County Budget Committee, was presented for consideration. This Court Order will appoint Lanny Hildebrandt and John Bozarth to the Budget Committee. **Commissioner McClure moved approval of Court Order 2010-18 as presented. Commissioner Hibbert seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Wilhelm  
Department Specialist