

Union County Board of Commissioners Meeting
November 1, 2017

Present: Commissioner Steve McClure
Commissioner Jack Howard
Commissioner Donna Beverage

Commissioner McClure opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and the pledge of allegiance was given with all three commissioners present.

Public Comments

Microenterprise Assistance Area Economic Intergovernmental Agreement

Lisa Dawson, Northeast Oregon Development District (NEOEDD) Director, stated that the purpose of the agreement is to create a microenterprise area for Wallowa County, Baker County, Union County and the City of La Grande. This will assist in the application of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. She stated that the City of La Grande agreed to consider being the lead.

Commissioner Howard asked how the City of La Grande would distinguish their time and contributions. Ms. Dawson stated that there are CDBG requirements for governing entities that receive the funds; those funds will pass through the City and then be paid to NEOEDD. She was unsure if the City had considered specific contributions. She stated that applications are due December 31, awards are made in March 2018 with one year for implementation.

Commissioner McClure stated that the counties take turns applying for grants for housing improvement programs.

Mrs. Burgess, Union County Administrative Officer, stated that the microenterprise grant is normally very small. Ms. Dawson stated that the City will request a \$50,000 grant. Mrs. Burgess stated that when the County was the applicant, the County's contribution was the oversight and administration of the grant. Commissioner McClure stated that there is value in having the City provide that oversight and administration.

Commissioner Howard waived the regular order and rule of the chair.

Commissioner Howard made a motion to approve the Microenterprise Assistance Area Intergovernmental Agreement contingent upon approval by the City of La Grande. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Blue Mt. Translator District Update

Alex McHaddad, Blue Mt. Translator District Administrator, stated that he plans to provide quarterly updates to the Commissioners. Some previous administrative deficiencies are now being resolved. In late July, there was news that hundreds of Union County property owners would be improperly assessed a service charge on their 2017-18 property taxes. In 2016, none of the exemption letters were processed. An updated exemption list has now been provided to the counties. In August, the District was informed that eleven of seventeen channels would be displaced as a result of T Mobile's purchase of a 600mH frequency from

the Federal government during FCC's incentive option. As T mobile takes command of this frequency to roll out wireless internet access in rural areas, rural television translators have found themselves in the carrier's line of sight for the initial rollout. This is causing extreme financial difficulty for the District as 30% of its budget must now be spent on unbudgeted expense of hiring a consulting firm to find new channels, the purchase of new equipment, and wages for engineering staff. Only \$1.75 billion was earmarked to reimburse large television operations throughout the United States for the cost of this channel repackaging. Congress has not provided any funding to reimburse low power television stations, such as the District, for the cost of displacement. During a recent conversation with Congressman Walden, he is sympathetic to the District needs, but his committee will not review reimbursement for television translator operations until next year at the earliest. In the meantime, the District would like to begin discussions with Baker and Union Counties on obtaining funding for the channel repacking expenses. In 2017, there were over 250 direct paying members in Union County, in addition to 603 members who paid over property taxes in Union County. These individuals rely on BMTD for news, education and weather. They hope to expand its local content offerings with the creation of a local news channel managed by Brent Clapp Media Services. The state of the District is not as strong as they would like, but it is stable and managed by the pairing of a diligent board and competent staff.

Commissioner McClure asked about the T Mobile transfer timeline. Mr. McHaddad stated that the transfer would take place November 27, 2017. Commissioner McClure asked if there were sources for new channels. Mr. McHaddad stated that they found all the channel space they were looking for; they have enough money for the transfers, but it had been earmarked for other things. Commissioner McClure asked if service interruptions were anticipated. Mr. McHaddad stated that there would be some brief interruption of services, but it would not be an extended amount of time.

Commissioner Howard stated that he always saw a great potential for the District, especially in regards to people with low incomes and during emergencies. He was happy that local services were being discussed and encouraged additional discussions take place with the Union County Emergency Services. He requested to see more information about next year's budget.

Commissioner McClure stated that one of the biggest administrative problems for the District is how it is funded; it is almost on a volunteer basis. Mr. McHaddad stated that attempts had been made to change the statutes, but there have been no major updates since the 1970's.

Elected Officials, Department Head & Employee Comments

Snow Removal Policy

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, presented the updated Snow Removal Policy and stated that it was expanded to include various modes of communication that were suggested by the Commissioners. The intent is to include as many avenues and mediums of communication as possible.

Commissioner McClure noted that the policy indicates various modes of communication that may be used, which provides some flexibility.

Commissioner Howard stated that he was very happy with changes and would like to see a follow up presentation at the end of the snow season. Commissioner McClure concurred.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she had reviewed it and thought it was great.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of the Snow Removal Policy. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Search & Rescue Building

Sheriff Rasmussen, Union County Sheriff, stated that there is a potential location at the gun range for a Search and Rescue building; they are working with the City of La Grande and awaiting a signed agreement. The location provides ample space to build in phases if needed and would provide space for equipment for the Sheriff's Office, Search and Rescue, and possibly Emergency Services.

Commissioner McClure asked about funding sources for the project. Sheriff Rasmussen stated that Search and Rescue has a donation fund established that would assist with the first phase. Commissioner McClure asked if there were any funds in the account; Sheriff Rasmussen stated that there was some money in the fund and more may be needed to complete the project.

Commissioner Howard asked if there would be incurred or built-in costs for the County as the stages develop. Sheriff Rasmussen stated that it was still unknown, but they are not asking the County to contribute funds at this point.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Howard moved approval of the Consent Agenda, which included claims Journals for October 17, 18, 19, 25, and 26; Commission Meeting Minutes from August 23 and September 20. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Matters

Maintenance/Emergency Services Roof

Mrs. Burgess stated that the Emergency Services building roof has needed replacement for some time and the expense was discussed during the budget process. Obtaining bids for the project was a challenge due to the shape and multiple layers that would need to be removed prior to installing a new roof. Two bids were received:

- Palmer Roofing - \$39,975
- Upson Roofing Company - \$51,613

Both bids were higher than anticipated and above the amount budgeted for the project. After further research, a contractor was located that offered a different solution that would not require removing the roof layers. This alternative would include the installation of a roof coating over the existing roof. The County Facilities Maintenance Lead, Dennis Ferguson,

completed a lot of research about this alternative and found that it is becoming more popular. He has also observed the application process while it was being completed for another building downtown. Two proposals were received to provide this alternative, consisting of a foam and silicone roof coating:

- Eagle Cap Construction - \$18,000, with an additional cost for a 20-year warranty
- Alternative Construction Concepts - \$16,500, including a 20-year warranty.

Mrs. Burgess recommended contracting with Alternative Construction Concepts in the amount of \$16,500 for the foam and silicone roof coating including a 20-year warranty.

Commissioner McClure asked if the Building Department agreed that this alternative would not require the removal of roof layers. Mrs. Burgess stated that the alternative is very light and is considered a repair not a reroof; the proposed expense is within the amount budgeted.

Commissioner McClure asked about the severity of the leak. Mrs. Burgess stated that it is quite bad and expanded over the last two years to affect the maintenance building area as well. JB Brock, Emergency Services Manager, stated that the current fix for the leak involves an elaborate system of hoses and mop buckets.

Commissioner Howard asked if the materials had been tested in the local climate. Mrs. Burgess stated that the recommended contractor is the same contractor that completed the work downtown. Commissioner Howard noted that Eagle Cap Construction is a local business and is using the materials in this area. Mrs. Burgess added that Alternative Construction Concepts has also used the materials in this area and applicators must be trained and certified.

Commissioner McClure asked if the work could be completed this fall. Mrs. Burgess stated that it was not likely that it could be completed so soon since it must be applied at a high temperature, but she would pursue the possibility. She stated that an area of the roof has been patched to prevent further leakage until the project can be done.

Commissioner McClure asked Mr. Brock his opinion about the work. Mr. Brock stated that the alternative coating procedure was a reasonable solution and would address the structural issues needed to make it successful.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to contract with Alternative Construction Concepts in the amount of \$16,500 for the foam and silicone roof coating and 20-year warranty for the Emergency Services building. Commissioner Howard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Court Order 2017-38 Appointment to the Natural Resources Advisory Committee

Mrs. Burgess stated that this vacancy was advertised and one application was received. Approval of this court order would appoint Katherine Boula as an environmentalist representative; her term would begin immediately with no expiration date since the committee is project specific.

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of Court Order 2017-38. Commissioner Howard seconded for purposes of discussion.

Commissioner Howard noted prior comments in reference to his abstention on the vote.

Commissioner Beverage stated that the first Natural Resources Advisory Committee meeting would take place at the end of November and would be structured to create an outline for the real work that will begin in 2018.

Commissioner McClure stated that Katherine Boula has been a part of the community for a lot of years and he saw no issue in appointing her to the committee.

Roll Call on Court Order 2017-38: Commissioner Beverage, yes. Commissioner Howard, abstain. Commissioner McClure, yes. Motion carried.

Next Meeting and Location

The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled to take place at the Joseph Annex Building on November 29, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment

Commissioner McClure adjourned the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorcinda Johnston
Sr. Dept. Specialist II