

Union County Board of Commissioners
April 4, 2018

Present: Commissioner Steve McClure
Commissioner Jack Howard
Commissioner Donna Beverage

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

Public Comments

Letter of Support Request

Joanne Smith, representing the American Legion Auxiliary and Daughters of the American Revolution, requested a letter of support to the Federal Aviation Administration and Pentagon requesting a flyover on Memorial Day. This has been done in the past and she would like to see it continue.

There was a consensus to provide the letter of support as requested.

B2H Public Comment

Jim Kreider, 60366 Marvin Road, La Grande, requested that the Commissioners submit a letter to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) so that the County will continue to have standing and go on record with an opinion that the line does not need to be built. The PUC will decide upon Idaho Power's (IP) 2017 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) on April 10. The IRP's key action item number six asks the PUC to acknowledge preliminary construction of the B2H transmission line, which would then give the Energy Facilities Siting Council (EFSC) the green light to move forward with the siting and construction phase. Two major assumptions on why the B2H line was needed are not happening in the previously expected timeframe; this means that there is not an immediate need for the line. More time is needed to see how the industry develops. A letter from the Commissioners requesting more time to look at the need more thoroughly would show the PUC that the county is concerned.

B2H Public Comment

Irene Gilbert, 2310 Adams Avenue, La Grande, stated that there are several ongoing concerns with the need for the B2H line. The Department of Energy (DOE) has not determined that IP's application is complete; if accepted, the minimum time from issuance is 267 days. She is aware of at least 50 contested cases, which can take three to four months at minimum. Then appeals would begin. The argument that IP needs the B2H line is not accurate. It would be more appropriate for the PUC to make a decision about B2H need one year from now.

Airport Master Plan Public Comment

Craig Dixon, 2002 Jupiter, La Grande, stated that the Airport Master Plan shows that the Blue Mt. Hangars would be demolished and it is impacting potential sales. To resolve that financial impact, he recommended that the County remove the demolition and relocation from the Master Plan and consider it again in seven years when the next update will begin. Hearing that it was unlikely that the County would make changes to the plan, he would like an addendum in the plan that would outline the County's commitment to fund the demolition and relocation of the hangars, if that should happen.

Commissioner McClure stated that it was his understanding that an agreement would be drafted to reflect the County's commitment to making the Blue Mt. Hangars whole if demolition and relocation is necessary. It should be done through the County's legal counsel and in coordination with the Public Works Director.

Commissioner Howard stated that there is a substantial investment in the airport; it is one of the high points of the County's economic development. He was concerned about the uncertainty of the Blue Mt. Hangars that is created by the Airport Master Plan. His primary concern is to protect the Airport Master Plan process. The private owners should have some assurances, but it may be a separate process from adopting the Airport Master Plan.

Commissioner McClure concurred and added that the agreement with Blue Mt. Hangars should be agreeable to both parties without changing the Airport Master Plan.

Mr. Dixon stated that the owners' preference is to change the Master Plan. He believes the FAA will be more focused on the runways. He does not think that the FAA will have a problem with the County sending back an amended plan with changes reflecting where the hangar would be relocated.

Commissioner McClure stated that it would be a good idea to have a conversation with the FAA to see if the process would have to be restarted to add the agreement.

Commissioner Beverage concurred that the Master Plan should not be delayed and an agreement with the Blue Mt. Hangar owners should be taken care of.

B2H Public Comment

Fuji Kreider, 60366 Marvin Road, La Grande, stated that the B2H process has taken many years and the County has sent letters to agencies in the past regarding its opinion. She urged the Commissioners to send a new letter to the PUC; IP's IRP action item number six is the most significant concern. Breaking ground for B2H should be delayed at least until after the 2019 analysis.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she would need more information before she would comment on the issue.

Commissioner McClure stated that he would support writing a letter to the PUC to maintain the County's standing. The letter could include a few points of concern without listing details. He suggested that the Commission direct the Administrative Officer to draft the letter.

Commissioner Howard objected to sending a letter to the PUC. He stated that the County had done a good job of engaging the public in a broad manner over the last year. The County is not making progress when there is a group of interested citizens known by IP and the PUC as anti-B2H. He thinks the County would be spinning its wheel to object to action number six. The County lost its best opportunity to get real strong public input when the B2H committee disbanded because the committee was controlled by one group that is seen as opposing B2H. The County should not take marching orders from any particular group with a particular perspective. Commissioner Howard opposed writing a letter based on the communication breakdown. He stated that the anti-B2H group is not objective.

Ms. Kreider stated that she had not met anyone in favor of the transmission line. She wants to engage with others, but it is really hard to figure out how someone would be in favor of the line. She stated that it would be sad if Commissioner Howard's objection was based on the closure of the advisory committee.

B2H Public Comment

Irene Gilbert stated that many people attended the public B2H meetings and no one voiced support for the transmission line. She stated that the Commissioners thought it would be more efficient for the public to present their comments to the Commission directly, which was the reason for disbanding the advisory committee.

Commissioner Beverage recessed the meeting and called it back to order.

Healthcare Reform

Commissioner Beverage stated that healthcare reform was a topic of discussion at the last work session and public comment was taken. Due to lack of support from the Commission, the resolution was not placed on the last agenda for a vote. She was asked to place it on this agenda for a vote.

Commissioner Howard asked if the public would be allowed to offer comments during the current session. Commissioner Beverage stated that public comments had been taken at previous meetings and would not be accepted at this meeting.

Commissioner Howard requested to designate the proposed resolution as Resolution A. Commissioner Beverage concurred.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Resolution A. The motion did not receive a second and Commissioner Howard withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Howard made a motion to lay the item on the table for future consideration. Commissioner McClure seconded.

Commissioner McClure stated that resolutions from other cities and counties submitted by Mr. Whitaker were in direct conflict with public comments made in earlier meetings. It has been described as having no specific Legislation, but the City of Milwaukee has a fact sheet with defined specifics. He stated that he was reluctant to pass the resolution because it is to support a single payer healthcare system in Oregon.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she would not support the resolution because funding would increase taxes. Most Oregonians with low incomes are already covered by the Oregon Health Plan. This means that the middle class will pay as much as or more than they do now, and premiums are already more than a mortgage. It is her opinion that the government should not be in charge of healthcare.

Commissioner Howard stated that the resolution remains on the table and can be reconsidered at a later time. Discussions indicate that there is some interest in supporting changes to the healthcare system, but there is a clear consensus that it would turn into a gut and stuff. He doesn't support the resolution as it is written and would not take it to the Association of Oregon Counties.

The resolution should be rewritten with broader support that would address poverty that is related to healthcare risks and the consequences of failures to have an adequate system.

Commissioner Beverage stated that the Commission would not take public comments during the current meeting considering they had been taken at previous meetings and work sessions.

Roll call to leave Resolution A on the table: Commissioner Howard, yes. Commissioner McClure, yes. Commissioner Beverage, yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Elected Official, Department Head & Employee Comments

No comments were offered.

Consent agenda

Commissioner McClure moved approval of the Consent Agenda, which included claims journals from March 21 and 22. Commissioner Howard seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Howard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Matters

Bid Award Recommendation – Airport Wastewater System Improvements

Mrs. Burgess presented a bid tabulation for the wastewater system improvements at the airport.

Brett Moore, Anderson Perry & Associates, explained that the airport's wastewater system is problematic; they have worked through the design process for the replacement. Bids were advertised and four bids were received. He recommended awarding the bid to M2 Construction, LLC as it was a responsive bid and was the lowest apparent bid.

Commissioner McClure stated that improvements would include a 10 inch gravity feed at the airport bordering Pierce Road. The current system has grinder pumps and it is very expensive to maintain. When the U.S. Forest Service fire cache building was designed it was intended for eight people, but it now services 60 to 70 people so the wastewater system is inadequate. The City of La Grande will pay up to \$250,000, a grant will cover \$150,000, leaving approximately \$200,000 for the County. This needs to be completed before the new buildings are constructed and it is the least expensive option.

Commissioner Howard asked if the County could recapture the costs in the future. Commissioner McClure stated that some funds could come from the Economic Development fund since this is a long term investment and not just a wastewater improvement.

Commissioner McClure made a motion to award the Airport Wastewater System Improvements contract to M2 Construction, LLC. Commissioner Howard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Court Order 2018-12, Appointment to the Union County Advisory Council for the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization

This court order would appoint the following applicants to serve:

Shannon Cleveland expires December 31, 2019

Arline Franco expires December 31, 2019

Bridget Thamert	expires December 31, 2019
Angelic Peters	expires December 31, 2019
Liberty Avila	expires December 31, 2019
Rochelle Hamilton	expires December 31, 2019
Maurizio Valerio	expires December 31, 2019
Sherlyn Roberts	expires December 31, 2019

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Court Order 2018-12. Commissioner McClure seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Court Order 2018-13, Appointment to the Union County Vector Control District Budget Committee
Mrs. Burgess stated that there were two vacancies on this committee. Lloyd Baker showed an interest to serve and if approved, his term would begin immediately and expire December 31, 2018.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Court Order 2018-13. Commissioner McClure second. Motion carried unanimously.

Court Order 2018-14, Appointment to the 4-H & Extension Service District Budget Committee
Mrs. Burgess stated that Julie Hickerson resigned and left an unexpired term. Approval of this court order would appoint Kim Hilton to the committee with a term to begin immediately and expire December 31, 2018.

Commissioner McClure moved approval of Court Order 2018-14. Commissioner Howard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Beverage recessed the meeting and called it back to order at 10:00 a.m.

PUBLIC HEARING: First Reading of Ordinance 2018-02, Adopting Updates to the La Grande/Union County Airport Master Plan

Commissioner Beverage opened the public hearing.

Airport Master Plan Public Comment

Jim Holloway, 504 S. 12th Street, La Grande, stated that tenants would appreciate knowing the airport construction timeline. They would like to protect their investments and have time to move aircraft elsewhere instead of being left out in the weather.

Commissioner Beverage closed the public hearing.

Commissioner McClure stated that prior to passing the first reading, he would like the issue of the Blue Mt. Hangars resolved. He does not want the plan sent back to the FAA for a revision. It doesn't make sense that the plan lists hangar demolition costs, but not the cost of rebuilding them. The County can't move the hangars without paying for them. He suggested that staff work with County counsel and the Public Works Director for clarification of options.

Commissioner McClure made a motion to table the First Reading of Ordinance 2018-02 until more information is available.

Commissioner Howard stated that he would be concerned about sending the plan back to the FAA without acting on it. He noted that there was a consensus to support the cost of demolishing the Blue Mt. Hangars. He asked Doug Wright, Public Works Director, if there was a deadline to be concerned about.

Mr. Wright stated that the five year CIP is in place and the County will want to keep moving forward with its projects. There is no risk in adopting the changes to the Master Plan. The County can come to an agreement with the owners of the Blue Mt. Hangars that will allow projects to stay on track.

Commissioner Howard stated that it sounded like Mr. Wright is suggesting that the Commission consider an approval to an amendment before the Master Plan is adopted. He stated that FAA's timeline does not present a problem, but the County's CIP may be an issue.

Mr. Wright stated that when the FAA issues a grant for the environmental and preliminary design for the next project, the County will want to be on schedule to receive those grants. He agreed that the County could work with the users to resolve the concerns.

Commissioner Howard stated that the Commissioners were considering an ordinance that would adopt updates to the Airport Master Plan. He would only be willing to second the motion to table it if it would not jeopardize the plan. The plan is adequate enough to approve and he would be willing to support it on its own merits. He is not predicating his support for the plan on an amendment. He did not want to take any risks or fall behind schedule, but would defer to Commissioner McClure and the County's legal counsel. He would support tabling the ordinance only if it would not jeopardize the plan; if it is unclear then he would support adopting the ordinance.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she was concerned about effects on projects if the approval is delayed. She concurred that the County wants to work with tenants.

Commissioner McClure suggested that County counsel meet with attorneys for the Blue Mt. Hangar to draft an agreement that would be attached to the Master Plan. If the ordinance is passed without an amendment, it would be with a clear understanding that the County is committed to working with the tenants.

Commissioner Howard stated that he was worried about creating third party rights.

Commissioner McClure made a motion to change his previous motion to reflect an approval of Ordinance 2018-02. Commissioner Howard seconded.

Commissioner McClure stated that delaying the Master Plan would create issues for airport projects. He does not want to delay that process, but wants the other issue with the Blue Mt. Hangars resolved.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she would support passing the first reading of Ordinance 2018-02 and would like more information before considering the Second Reading.

Commissioner Howard stated that the germane motion is in regards to passing the ordinance without a contingent conduct or intervening occurrence.

Wyatt Baum, County counsel, suggested that from a procedural standpoint, that the motion to approve was made and seconded. If the County would like, it can give him direction to work with Mr. Wright to contact FAA regarding funding for rebuilding the hangars.

Commissioner Howard called the question to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2018-02. Commissioner Howard, yes. Commissioner McClure, yes. Commissioner Beverage, yes. Motion carried unanimously.

There was a consensus to direct Mr. Baum to work with Mr. Wright in collecting additional information from the FAA.

Commissioner Howard asked about costs to rebuild hangars and where that responsibility lies.

Commissioner McClure stated that the U.S. Forest Service should be at least partially responsible for the cost of relocating the hangar because they objected to its location. There should be an agreement in place before the hangar is affected. The private owners of the hangar have a substantial investment in the hangar and property rights with a 90-year lease with the County; they should have some assurances that the County will make it right.

Commissioner Howard suggested that the question about hangar rebuilding cost be addressed at the next Commission meeting.

The Second Reading of Ordinance 2018-02 was scheduled for Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 10:15 a.m.

Mrs. Burgess read Ordinance 2018-02 in its entirety and noted that public notice of the public hearing was given in the La Grande Observer on March 23, 2018 and also posted on the County website.

Executive Session

Commissioner Beverage recessed the meeting for an executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) and called it back to order.

Next Meeting and Location

The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled to take place at the Joseph Annex Building on April 18, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment

Commissioner Beverage adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorcinda Johnston
Sr. Dept. Specialist II