



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

February 5, 2008

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

County of Lake County
State of Oregon

WORK SESSION

The Lake County Board of Commissioners met in Work Session on Tuesday, February 5, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. The following members were present: Chair, Ken Kestner, Dan Shoun and Bradley J. Winters. Also present: Administrative Assistant Bob Pardee and Clerical Assistant Nicole Cobian.

Additions: Rick DuMilieu – Road Department Update
Delete 'Financial Update' from Mental Health

Road Department

Mr. DuMilieu reported on the financial impact of snow removal. He then indicated that he is very worried there will be flooding as a result of the volume of snow and the compaction in the ditches all the way to Goose Lake.

Ray Simms, Town Manager, reported that the Town of Lakeview is \$10K over budget in contracting services for snow removal. He strongly suggested a meeting for emergency planning for when this snow begins to melt.

Mr. DuMilieu further reported that there will be some difficult decisions in how the roads are cleared, and where priorities are made. He then indicated that the wind has been the Road Department's worst enemy. There are several roads that are one lane at this time, and if we get more wind these roads will close up. The only way to open these roads will be with a Rotary snow blower. He then reported that the unit the Road Department has now is a 1970 model, and parts need to be fabricated since they are no longer available commercially. He then strongly emphasized that there is a need to purchase a replacement snow blower this spring.

Mr. Simms reported that the Town of Lakeview is extremely appreciative of the Declaration of Emergency Resolution approved by the Commissioners last week. He has been in conversation with John Snider from Congressman Walden's office regarding the need for additional support in acquiring the resources needed to address this unusual snow load. He then summarized what he has learned regarding the process to acquire Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding, and the need for local decision making authority from local Federal Resources.

Discussion then followed regarding the process of acquiring Federal Resources for support and the reporting needs.

Commissioner Winters expressed the concern that when an emergency declaration is made, there is a need for immediate assistance, with 'paperwork' to follow.

Commissioner Kestner suggested that this needs to be addressed moving forward, and the need to get back on schedule with regard to the agenda.

Commissioner Winters reported that there has been an ability to leverage the use of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) snow blower at the Airport as a result of the Emergency Resolution.

Mr. DuMilieu thanked Sheriff McDonald for providing a pick-up and resources to haul fuel over the weekend.

United States Forest Service (USFS) Energy Corridors

Karen Shimamoto reported her concerns regarding her ability to respond when an emergency is declared. She then indicated that the USFS is very willing to provide assistance with regard to equipment once an agreement is in place to ensure reimbursement.

Commissioner Winters asked Ms. Shimamoto if she had leeway to respond for the 'good of the people'.

Ms. Shimamoto indicated only on National Forest land. She then indicated that it might be possible to justify some assistance on outlying County Roads, but not likely on City Streets. There are many issues to address.

Commissioner Kestner indicated that there may be an immediate need and justification for assistance on County Roads to ensure access to the Forest for Search and Rescue efforts.

Ms. Shimamoto asked who the contact person would be. The Board indicated that anyone on the Board, or Mr. Pardee, would make themselves readily available, but Commissioner Winters should be the primary contact.

Ms. Shimamoto also reported that 10 year stewardship contracts are forthcoming, and she has left messages for Jim Walls.

Ms. Shimamoto then introduced Catherine Callaghan. Ms. Callaghan reviewed the provided packet of information regarding the Energy Resource Update / Energy Corridors that are either in process or scheduled for Lake County. These are primarily Power Transmission lines, but also include a proposed Natural Gas Pipeline (Ruby Natural Gas Pipeline).

Discussion followed regarding these lines, including the various participants, future impact, and current activities. Ms. Callaghan explained the proposed timelines and the planning process taking place through the USFS.

Commissioner Winters posed the question regarding whether a Utility Tax would be forthcoming for any pipeline coming through the County. He then expressed surprise that the Ruby Natural Gas Pipeline hasn't brought any information before the Board of Commissioners, considering the aggressive timelines they have.

Ms. Callaghan indicated that the industry tends to have an aggressive approach on projects, but doesn't anticipate these timelines will be met, based on history.

Commissioner Winters asked what the right-of-way would be across the forest.

Ms. Callaghan indicated a 50 foot permanent (always cleared).

Discussion followed regarding the path for these proposed pipelines, and how the right-of-way would be managed.

Ms. Callaghan then reported on various work that has been done regarding Wind Energy research in the area. These include Winter and Coleman rims, and Bull and Summit Prairies. There has been a 3-year permit issued to Ridgeline Energy to allow test equipment (Wind Anemometers) to be placed for data collection.

Discussion followed regarding accessibility to Power Transmission lines in the area.

Ms. Callaghan then reported on a proposed 'Pumped Storage' project in the Summer Lake area. The concept would be to pump water from Summer Lake to an upper reservoir, with the intent to use that stored water to generate power. There has been no formal proposal to come before the USFS at this time.

The Board thanked Ms. Shimamoto and Ms. Callaghan for bringing this information to the Board.

Commissioner Shoun asked if there was an appropriate means of including the County in Agency emergency planning in the future for 'all risk' situations.

Ms. Shimamoto indicated that she will 'check into it'.

Warner Creek Correctional Facility (WCCF) Update

Chuck Seeley, Superintendent of the Facility, presented the 'Focus on Accountability' report from the Department of Corrections (DOC) for the Board to review.

Mr. Seeley reported that he wishes to discuss the use of Inmate Work Crews. He indicated that he currently has three work crews that can be used on a regular basis. Unfortunately the resource opportunity has been limited for localized projects. He predicted that if Ballot Measure 40 passes, there will be a significant increase in Inmate population around the state.

Mr. Seeley's vision is for WCCF to continue to work with the community to have programs in place to assist inmates with their future success when they are released. He has begun to work on developing a program that will capitalize on renewable resources and energy projects. He is also working to create various certification programs for inmates that are restricted to the facility.

Mr. Seeley then indicated that there is a real struggle within the DOC to retain the work crew staff needed for forest projects, as there is not enough local work to justify a program with the funding needed.

Commissioner Winters asked if the issue of working the crews in the forest was a matter of them being inmates or of funding from the Federal Government. Mr. Seeley indicated that it is 'a little of both'.

Mr. Seeley would like to have a staff member more involved in understanding the use of Title III dollars, and whether WCCF can provide resources and training opportunities for future projects.

Discussion followed regarding the use of Title II and Title III monies and planning. There was also discussion regarding the potential impact of the Biomass project, and fuels production.

Mr. Seeley reported that there has been a real challenge to not compete with local workforce issues. The group discussed the impact of Inmate Work Crews and the positive impact on the operation of the Facility. He then reported that WCCF is working to be more creative in the future planning for work crews, and how to keep the facility working towards providing positive impacts to the community.

Commissioner Kestner indicated that he hopes to keep the private business / inmate crews productive. He also strongly encourages keeping crews busy, but not just with 'grubbing weeds' and moving rocks. He would like to see more vocation opportunities open up for the inmates.

Commissioner Shoun asked if Mr. Seeley finds a local level problem with local Land Management agencies cooperation. Commissioner Shoun also asked if Director Max Williams with the DOC has ever met with the local agencies to talk about localized opportunities.

Mr. Seeley indicated that he can make that happen. He then acknowledged that the DOC has not done as good a job as they could have in planning for the work opportunities in the local areas.

Commissioner Winters suggested having a meeting of local representatives before calling a meeting with Mr. Williams. The Board agreed and Commissioner Winters indicated that he will coordinate a meeting of the various local entities that should be involved.

Greg Pittman indicated that he is working hard towards having a 'green management' program that can share resources for Fuels Management on State lands.

Lake County Mental Health (LCMH)

Randy Hart, Director of LCMH reported to the Board that the over all stability of the work group has steadily improved. Client services are increasing, and additional services are being expanded into the Christmas Valley area. He also reported an increase from 5 to 30 clients in Child Services since September 2007.

Commissioner Kestner asked how the general public (families, parents, etc.) are responding to the current operation. Mr. Hart indicated that the community is slowly beginning to realize there are improved services and beginning to return for services.

Commissioner Kestner asked if there were specific areas that need improvement. Mr. Hart indicated that there is a need to increase the number of clinicians to better meet the needs of the community.

Mr. Hart also reported that there has been a position created internally to ensure quality assurance issues are addressed, including documentation, billing and business practice to ensure positive audit results, and build community and profession trust.

Commissioner Winters suggested that auditors often will ask for information going back as far as seven years, and encouraged Mr. Hart to keep this in mind for the future of the operation.

Mr. Hart agreed and indicated that while there is still room for growth and improvement, there has been much positive activity. This is regularly stressed in the daily morning staff meeting, with emphasis on keeping the 'whole system' productive, positive and client oriented.

Mr. Hart described how a Therapeutic Foster home operates and his efforts with Charley Tracy, a local Department of Human Services (DHS) representative, to establish this type of program in the community. There is the possibility of two in the Lakeview area, and one in the Christmas Valley area.

Commissioner Winters encouraged Mr. Hart to keep the Juvenile Department involved in this planning process.

Mr. Hart then indicated that this is already happening and Eric Shpilman, Director of the Juvenile Department, has expressed excitement about this process.

Mr. Hart also reported a significant increase in Psychiatric Services in the community, which has also produced positive results.

Mr. Hart also reported that there have been no crisis calls for over thirty days, which is generally a positive reflection on the services being provided.

Mr. Hart then introduced LouAnn Choate, who gave an update on the financial status of LCMH. Mr. Hart reported that there have been significant steps taken to involve staff with cost accounting and accountability.

Ms. Choate explained the impact of Amendment #9, 12 & 13.

Commissioner Winters had questions on the spreadsheet attached to Amendment #9.

Ms. Choate reported that she will assemble an 'Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Spreadsheet' to track Amendments and their fiscal impact.

Commissioner Kestner asked if these Amendments and the proposed increased revenue to the County, was a result of the State 'liking us', or was there some other factor involved. Mr. Hart indicated that these Amendments are a result of the State having more monies to spend and that each County receives a percentage of the available monies.

Ms. Choate then passed out a spreadsheet to summarize the existing financial information related to LCMH operations.

Mr. Hart discussed the Drug Free Community (DFC) grant, and how these dollars are distributed. There has been a delay in funding from Lutheran Community Services (LCS), which is forthcoming.

Discussion followed regarding a question that has arisen since the County took over Mental Health operations. There is a need to have a fiscal agent identified. There are also verbage changes necessary to identify the fiscal agent. These changes will come before the Board tomorrow.

Mr. Hart indicated that the DFC grant is a five year grant, and the County needs to reapply for this funding. He then asked if the County is going to hire a grant writer to pursue these monies or not.

Commissioner Winters asked if it was necessary to hire a grant writer in the past.

Mr. Hart indicated that the challenge is that there are about three other counties applying for this grant. These counties have grant writing teams assembling their grant proposals. He then questioned how far is the County is willing to go to assemble a professional and/or aggressive grant application. Mr. Hart indicated this is a competitive process, and many counties are hiring grant writers to submit a professional thorough application.

Commissioner Shoun indicated that the County needs to consider the investment for a grant writer for the potential \$500K return.

Mr. Hart indicated that whoever writes this grant really needs to know something about the Mental Health industry.

Commissioner Winters asked if there is an Administrative Fee that comes out of this grant.

Mr. Hart indicated yes and that it currently is around \$1K per month to manage the grant.

Ray Simms, Town Manager of Lakeview, indicated that he had discussion with Debbie Utley regarding grant writing resources and suggested using the Economic Development District for help in writing this grant.

Commissioner Shoun asked Mr. Hart to gather more information regarding who the involved parties are and options for grant writers for tomorrows meeting.

Mr. Simms asked if the School Districts in the County, or the Education Service District should be involved or if they have grant writing resources.

Mr. Hart also indicated that there is a United Prevention Intervention Coalition (UPIC) meeting scheduled for Thursday at 11:00 at the Mental Health office to 'brainstorm' regarding this grant.

Senate Bill (SB) 360 Update

Greg Pittman with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) updated the Board regarding SB360 and its intent. It is primarily geared toward Urban Interface Fire Protection (where State lands abut private lands).

Mr. Pittman went on to update the Board regarding the activities of the local committee that was formed. They have met three times to identify and classify the properties in Lake County (618 tax lots) that meet the criteria identified in SB360.

He then indicated that letters have been sent to these land owners with information regarding SB360. This has resulted in approximately 400 letters being sent (due to land owners owning multiple tax lots that are affected). The letter contained information regarding a public meeting that has been scheduled to answer any questions they may have regarding SB360. The meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2008 at the Fairgrounds.

Commissioner Winters had questions regarding how properties were classified. Discussion followed regarding the various qualifiers that apply.

Mr. Pittman indicated that after a list of affected properties has been finalized, this list will be certified with the County and a mailing will go to affected property owners.

Commissioner Kestner asked if there will be any impacts on personal property insurance as a result of the 'ratings' that are determined. Discussion followed.

Mr. Pittman indicated that if an identified property owner doesn't comply with the criteria of SB360 (become 'certified'), that the property owner might be held liable for up to \$100K for suppression costs in the event that a wildfire start on that owner's property.

Discussion followed regarding whether there could be Title III dollars available to assist property owners in meeting the criteria of SB360.

Mr. Pittman further reported that the response from postcards that will be issued to these property owners will help create a database to track properties that are compliant, and whether they are vacant lands or otherwise.

Discussion followed regarding this program, and various means of assisting property owners and State Forestry in implementing this program. The group reviewed two maps that Mr. Pittman brought showing locations of identified properties.

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

Ron Ellison approached the Board with an update on the AARP Tax Program. He thanked the Board for their previous support and providing space for AARP to work from. This program is in its seventh year.

Mr. Ellison then indicated that 357 tax returns were completed last year free of charge to those qualifying as a Senior, Disabled or Veteran.

Mr. Ellison asked the Board for the use of space for one or two days per week, and the use of a photocopier.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed schedule of operation.

Commissioner Shoun asked Mr. Pardee what space is available. Mr. Pardee reported that he has worked with Mr. Ellison regarding the use of space in the Lobby of the Courthouse. This seems to be a good option.

By consensus, the Board agreed to allow the American Association of Retired Persons to use space in the Courthouse Lobby up to two days per week to prepare tax returns for qualifying individuals.

Mr. Pardee reminded the Board that there is a fee ordinance in place with regard to photocopying. The current fee is .25 per copy for public use. He then asked the Board to formalize whether this fee is to be waived for AARP's use of the photocopier.

By consensus, the Board agreed to waive the copy fee for the American Association of Retired Persons on a limited basis.

Business Department

The Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Schedule was discussed. Changes to the schedule were also discussed.

The Board discussed the need to appoint a Budget Officer for this fiscal year.

Commissioner Kestner reported that he has spoken with Ken Gerschler regarding the process of appointing a Planning Commission member.

Airport

Commissioner Winters reported that he has spoken with Mr. Pardee at length regarding the proposed Request for Proposals for Airport Management Services, and had his questions answered.

The Board discussed Withrotor Aviation's proposed ground lease at the Airport. More information is needed. The Board agreed they would like to have the Airport Advisory Committee review this request and bring a recommendation to the Board.

Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Steering Committees

The Board discussed their participation with various AOC Steering committees. Commissioner Winters indicated that he is on the Transportation Committee.

Liaison Updates

Commissioner Winters reported that Modoc Northern Railroad (MNRR) and their Insurance Broker have given a verbal confirmation that MNRR has Liability Insurance. Written notification is still pending.

Commissioner Winters then reported on the Emergency Declaration Resolution that was acted on last week. He further reported that he has spoken with Ken Murphy from the Office of Emergency Management, and as a result of these communications and the Emergency Resolution he was able to leverage assistance from ODOT to provide the services of a snow blower at the Airport to ensure the runway was clear and operational.

Discussion followed regarding how to best communicate with, and establish a proper agreement with the various Federal Resources in the area.

Commissioner Shoun reported that there is a great deal of interest in the idea of evaluating how Public Lands are managed. He then indicated that he will be continually involved in this process.

Commissioner Winters again expressed concerns regarding the Travel Management plan.

Commissioner Kestner reported that interviews are on-going for the Fairgrounds Manager position.

There being nothing further to come before the Board, the Lake County Board of Commissioners Work Session adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert R. Pardee
Administrative Assistant

Board Approval,

Ken Kestner
Chairman

Dan Shoun
Vice Chairman

Bradley J. Winters
Commissioner