



HARNEY COUNTY COURT

Office of Judge Steven E. Grasty

450 North Buena Vista #5, Burns, Oregon 97720

Phone: 541-573-6356 Fax: 541-573-8387

E-mail: steve.grasty@co.harney.or.us

Websites: www.co.harney.or.us ♦ www.harneycounty.org

Community Meeting

Burns High School – Monday, January 11, 2016

Comments/Questions

As promised at the community meeting on January 11, 2016, below is a list of questions, answers by Judge Grasty and comments that took place at the meeting.

Questions

Resident expressed frustration – why are we always giving?

- This is a long-standing question when it comes to federal land use decisions. One that Harney County has been, and will continue to, work on in collaboration with our federal partners.

When do we receive?

- Harney County has been involved in a number of collaborative efforts involving local, state and federal partners, in addition to local land owners and the environmental community to solve local issues. We have created the High Desert Partnership to continue and expand on this collaborative approach so that the community has a say in these decisions.

What are you going to ask for in Washington, DC?

- Once the occupation ends I will go to Washington, D.C. to talk about the following:
 - How do local communities get heard in the process?
 - How do we change the status quo – change the paradigm of how local communities figure into land management decisions?
 - How do we get solutions that are long lasting and become part of the culture of federal decision making?

Why ask now, since we haven't in the past?

- These questions have been asked over and over from rural communities in the west for years. I have asked them time and time again. Unfortunately, sometimes it takes a crisis to get attention. We have the attention now and I intend to take full advantage of it.

What can we do as citizens?

- Get involved. Ask your state and federal elected officials to assist with the efforts coming out of this community to be heard and to have a more active role in land use decisions on public land.

What committees are available to serve on?

- Harney County will be posting a list of all committees appointed by the court on the county website.

Question directed toward Rep. Bentz - What are you going to do if this happens in Owyhee?

- Ultimately, this is a question for Rep. Bentz to answer. However, in an effort to assist other counties we have supplied them with a list of questions for their consideration. Those questions are as follows:
 - If an armed occupation occurs in your community what will be your reaction?
 - Are all on the governing body of a like mind on this?
 - How will you handle it if you are not?
 - Have you discussed what such a situation with your city, state and federal agencies, and with the residents of your community?

- How will you provide for public safety if 40 or 50 armed militia show up in front of your courthouse?
- Are there those in your community prepared for, or thinking of, a similar action now that one has occurred? Should you be talking to them? Can you head it off?
- Can we make a conversation happen with the agencies that heads this off from becoming a national trend?

Would the County offer a venue for a constitutional speaker?

- The fairgrounds is available to be rented by those that fill out an application, pay a fee and provide proof of insurance to the fair board. Further, in order to maintain public safety, county buildings are not available to individuals or groups committing criminal acts.

If I were doing this how long would it take for law enforcement to get me out?

- It is hoped that an armed occupation similar to the one at the refuge would be handled the same no matter what its source. However, the ongoing frustration of having no end in sight is a disappointment for us and many in the community.

Question directed toward Rep. Bentz - What can we, as a community, do to help the Hammonds?

- Will share this question with Rep. Bentz.

What is it going to take for the Bundy's to leave?

- He said he would leave if the community asked him to leave. We asked, but he didn't leave. This question can only be answered by Bundy.

Bundy, what does it look like if you get the land back?

- A question for Mr. Bundy.

What do you expect to get from officials in DC?

- The Court hopes to get a commitment from the federal government to rapidly respond to the concerns we have raised for years.

Directed towards DC – what is the real difference between public and private lands? What are we protecting?

- Question to be answered by those in D.C.

Can the area be closed off to supplies?

- The strategy of law enforcement does not yet include doing so.

Directed to the Bundy's – is it really about the ranchers or is there a bigger agenda?

- Another question that many in this community would like an honest answer to.

Comments

- There will be stress management classes at the Senior Center, Tuesday and Thursdays; and at the Hines City Hall on Monday and Wednesday.
- The Conservation Agreement showed good collaboration with the Refuge.
- Higher ups in federal agencies need to listen to locals.
- We manage our resources with science and should not be scared of litigation or environmentalists.
- We should demand the release of the Hammonds until the law is changed.
- Supports law enforcement.

- Bundy brought the situation to our attention.
- The Committee of Safety does not support violence; did not support the Refuge take over and doesn't agree with all that Bundy says.
- The community has to agree to disagree.
- There are some benefits to having public lands in Harney County.
- We have heard nothing from Obama about Hammonds – doesn't he care about ranchers?
- Expressed discontent toward the Federal government, but recognized that here in Harney County they are friends and neighbors. The problem is with the higher-ups in DC.
- We wouldn't have this light on us if not for the Bundy's.
- Money from grazing fees should stay local.
- Scared by what's happening – shouldn't have to be scared in her own home town.
- Wants the militia gone.