

Harney County Court Meeting

June 1, 2011

The Harney County Court convened on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in Judge Steven E. Grasty's office. Members attending were Judge Steve Grasty, Commissioner Dan Nichols and Commissioner Pete Runnels. Also attending were Road Supervisor Eric Drushella and County Court Secretary Sharon Johnson. Public attending were Pauline Braymen for KBNH Radio, Debbie Raney of the Burns Times Herald and Barbara Cannady.

Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Runnels made a motion to approve the May 18, 2011 minutes, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Statistical and Financial reports were reviewed and vouchers approved by Court's signature.

Judge Grasty congratulated Eric Drushella and the Road Department for the excellent job they did during the recent flood. He noted that the County Road Department took the lead on installing the culverts under Highway 20.

Judge Grasty noted that word from the legislature on the future of the Oregon Youth Authority facility in Burns is very good. The Burns facility will be unaffected in the proposed closure of 125 beds statewide. He said that the Harney County community deserves credit for this outcome.

Judge Grasty then mentioned that tomorrow, June 2, is the date for the Sage Grouse meeting with the Local Implementation Team and that he would be attending. He said that the County had sent out over 900 postcards alerting landowners of the meeting and encouraging them to attend.

The first item of business was the signing of a Bargain and Sale Deed on the sale of land, formerly known as the Crane Landfill, to Richard and Nancy Adams. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to sign the deed, Commissioner Runnels seconded, motion carried unanimously.

An application by Susan Opie for an approach off of Anderson Valley Road was discussed briefly, Road Supervisor Eric Drushella stated that he had looked at the proposed location and was okay with the approach being built. Commissioner Runnels made a motion to approve the application, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Angie Johnson, Unit Forester of the John Day Unit of the Oregon Department of Forestry was present to provide an update on ODF programs. A brief discussion was held regarding a recent Customer Satisfaction Survey that was sent out by ODF –

Judge Grasty explained that Harney County's relationship with ODF was excellent. Ms. Johnson then asked for an update on the burning of the slash piles at Theimer Park. Judge Grasty said that quite a bit of work was done when weather was cooperative and that the job will be finished this fall. The discussion then turned to ODF's areas of responsibility, their accomplishments and concerns.

Agreement #27403 between ODOT Public Transit Division and Harney County for General Public Transportation Operations was reviewed. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to allow Judge Grasty to sign the Agreement for the Court, Commissioner Runnels seconded, motion carried unanimously.

A Vehicle Use Agreement between Harney County and the Oregon State University Extension office was discussed. Judge Grasty noted that this is a new request by the State and that the County has provided a vehicle for use by the Extension Agent for several years. Commissioner Runnels made a motion to sign the Agreement, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Judge Grasty told those present that he had received a copy the official letter of resignation from Justice of the Peace Dewey Newton to Governor Kitzhaber. Judge Newton will be retiring effective September 1, 2011. Because his term is not yet up his retirement will necessitate an appointment by the Governor to fill the position until the next General Election.

Judge Grasty noted that tomorrow, June 2, from 6 to 8 p.m., the Oregon Department of Transportation will hold a public meeting on the DRAFT Surface Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in the basement meeting room of the Courthouse. Judge Grasty explained that he is unavailable to attend; Commissioner Runnels volunteered to attend the meeting.

At 11 a.m. bellydump truck rental bids were opened. Road Supervisor Eric Drushella explained the process that would be used to utilize bellydump operators. He said that all bids would be "accepted", a list would be created in order of bid amount – lowest to highest; then when a truck is needed the lowest bidder would be called first. He will work his way up the list as trucks are needed. Bids opened were: King Trucking, \$105/hour; Vade Bailey, \$98.50/hour; Brad Bailey, \$98.50/hour; Retrievers LLC, \$103/hour; Harney Wood Products, \$105/hour; Jerry Raymond, \$85/hour (with County supplying the fuel); Otley Logging, \$95/hour and ACW, \$120/hour. Mr. Drushella recommended accepting all bids; he also said that all bidders will need to meet a list of qualifications before being used. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to accept all bids with lowest bidders being called first when the need arises, Commissioner Runnels seconded, motion carried unanimously.

The annual letter from the Office of the Secretary of State, Audits Division, regarding their review of the Harney County Audit was discussed. Three areas of the audit were noted to be addressed. Discussion followed.

Water Use Requests were reviewed; no action was necessary.

Judge Grasty explained that a work session would be held beginning at 2 p.m. to discuss the transition of Harney Behavioral Health, a County Department, to Symmetry Care a non-profit organization. Discussion followed.

The discussion returned to the Sage Grouse Strategy and the upcoming meeting of the Local Implementation Team. Judge Grasty explained that the sole purpose of the meeting is for the LIT to review the boundaries and allow public input on those boundaries.

Jim Bentz joined the meeting and asked to speak to the County Court regarding historical use of roads for trailing livestock. A lengthy discussion followed.

The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:05 p.m. and reconvened at 1:30 p.m.

The Public Hearing to Approve the Budget was opened at 1:35 p.m. Those present were Judge Grasty, Commissioner Nichols, Commissioner Pete Runnels and Budget Committee members Jean Cain and Holly Smith. County Financial Administrator LaDene Hurd and Court Secretary Sharon Johnson were also present.

A request from Renee' Buermann for the Wisdom In Nature (WIN) project for \$3,500.00 was reviewed by the Budget Committee. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to make the \$3,500.00 contribution to WIN from an existing budget line, Commissioner Runnels seconded, following a short discussion the motion carried unanimously. Discussion regarding the budget resumed. Judge Grasty noted that the Sheriff had recently requested \$500.00 towards the training of a Chaplain. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to award \$500.00 to the Chaplaincy within the Sheriff's Department budget, Holly Smith seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Smith made a motion to approve the Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012, Commissioner Runnels seconded, motion carried unanimously. The Hearing was concluded at 2:10 p.m.

There being no further business the County Court meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m. and the Court went into a Work Session to discuss Harney Behavioral Health.

Respectfully Submitted

Sharon Johnson
Secretary, Harney County Court