Harney County Court Meeting

January 2, 2013

The Harney County Court convened in Judge Steven E. Grasty's office at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 2, 2013. Members attending were Judge Steve Grasty, Commissioner Dan Nichols and Commissioner Pete Runnels. Also present was County Treasurer Nellie Franklin and Court Administrative Assistant Sharon Johnson. Public attending were Samantha White and Barb Cannady.

Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Commissioner Runnels made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2012 meeting, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

During Public Comment Ms. Cannady presented a list of projects that she "would like to see the Court take on." She went on to explain those projects.

Judge Grasty spent a few minutes explaining the ongoing problems with the Courthouse heating system.

County Treasurer Nellie Franklin was present to have new bank signature cards signed for all banks that the County has accounts with. Maria Iturriaga is being removed from the signing authority as she has retired as Harney County Clerk. Newly elected Clerk Derrin Robinson will now be on the signature cards. Commissioner Runnels made a motion to sign bank signature cards to include Derrin Robinson, Treasurer Nellie Franklin, Commissioner Pete Runnels, Commissioner Dan Nichols and Judge Steve Grasty; Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Tom Andrade, Oregon Department of Forestry, briefed the Court on the Oregon Forestland Interface Fire Protection Act. He explained that there was a committee of seven people from Harney County tasked with classifying lands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry. The committee consisted of Charles Cagle, Herb Vloedman, Joe Pettyjohn, Chris Cook, Scott Williamson, Jim Withee and Steve Grasty. He said that the Committee conducted public meetings and hearings and most importantly initiated interface fire protection standards in Harney County. Discussion followed.

Judge Grasty explained Resolution #2013-01 in the matter of the establishment of Valic as a Deferred Compensation Plan provider for County Employees. Discussion followed. Commissioner Runnels made a motion to approve Resolution #2013-01, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Judge Grasty mentioned that he has accumulated a number of items to discuss and work through with the Court and suggested that they meet after lunch in a work session to discuss those issues. He noted that no decisions will be made.

The next item of business was a Court Order Designating an Official County Newspaper; Commissioner Runnels made a motion to sign the Court Order, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously. Judge Grasty noted that there are four other annual Orders that will come before the Court at their next meeting.

Judge Grasty said that he had received a phone call from the land owner who owns the land surrounding the one acre parcel that Bill Burstow applied to have brought to auction; he explained the conversation and discussion followed.

The Court then discussed the process for the sale of County owned lands that are available to be brought to auction.

The discussion returned to the issue of selling the parcel that Mr. Burstow applied to be brought to auction. It was decided that Judge Grasty would review the deed records for that parcel and a decision whether or not to sell would be made during the next County Court meeting. Judge Grasty asked County Road Supervisor Eric Drushella to review the parcels listed and make a recommendation to the Court.

It was the consensus of the Court to hold a hearing on the Assignment of an Ambulance Service Area during the next County Court meeting, on January 16, at 2 p.m.

There were no Water Use Requests to be reviewed.

The Court briefly discussed the State's time table for the filling of the Watermaster vacancy in Harney County and the possibility of a Court member being on the interview committee. Commissioner Nichols volunteered to sit on that committee.

Judge Grasty provided an update on Sage Grouse and the topic was discussed for a short time.

Judge Grasty reported that he had been following up on the red flashing light that was recently installed on a tower on Burns Butte. He said he has spoken with the tower owner and is awaiting documentation that the light is not required.

Judge Grasty then covered several items that he had gathered over the last few weeks: an invitation from the Air National Guard to a briefing about an "air space expansion concept"; a commitment to Bob Alverts for a $5,000.00 donation for a Cheat Grass study; Stewardship contracting with the Forest Service; the installation process for the new general ledger software; Commission on Children and Families funding and the Hub proposal. Several of the topics were discussed briefly with no action being necessary.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Sharon Johnson

Sharon Johnson
Administrative Assistant