



In The County Court of the State of Oregon for Harney County
Minutes of the County Court
September 17, 2014

The Harney County Court convened in Judge Steven E. Grasty's office at 10 a.m. on Wednesday September 17, 2014. Members attending were Judge Steve Grasty and Commissioner Pete Runnels. Commissioner Nichols was excused, as he was attending meetings relating to Payments In Lieu of Taxes in Washington D.C.

Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Runnels made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 3, 2014 meeting, Judge Grasty seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment Offered:

Mary Ausmus asked Barbara Cannady about her letter from the last court meeting, and stated that issue is a private civil matter and isn't happy with tax dollars are being spent on a private problem. Ms. Cannady stated she may have worded her letter wrong, as it was in relation to the road inventory map.

Herb Vloedman mentioned a fire concern at the wildlife trail. The Court suggested, at the very least, the County tobacco prevention person get *no smoking* signs posted.

Judge Grasty commended Mr. Vloedman for his efforts in getting the new "*Welcome to Harney County, We Honor Veterans*" signs installed.

Jennifer Williams was present to share with the court her efforts to bring a movie and a speaker here to speak about Traumatic Brain Injuries. She asked if the court had any ability to assist with the funding of the presentation and help in sharing the word of the event. It will be at Burns High School on September 22. Judge Grasty stated the court normally doesn't provide unbudgeted funds in the middle of the year but he will look at the public health budget and see if a program might fit. The Court thanked Mrs. Williams for her efforts.

Barbara Cannady commented that she recognizes there are three issues with the road inventory map, Forest roads, Meadowlands roads, and private roads. She said she is having trouble getting the word out about the map and encouraged folks to look at the whole map.

Old Business:

Judge Grasty gave a brief report on the sage grouse matter. He is still concerned about what the expectations are regarding land use from the counties.

Judge Grasty stated the road inventory map hearing is still open and will remain so until closed by the court on October 15th. He stated there has been an additional letter submitted as testimony from Andrea Davies and it is included as an exhibit to these minutes.

Commissioner Runnels reported that ODOT has agreed to the setting of the Speed Limit on South Egan Road to 35mph. The Court will ratify that decision at the next meeting.

New Business:

The Court reviewed the results of the recent county land sale. Five parcels sold. Each sold at the starting bid which was 50% of the real market value. The court will be accepting bids to salvage the property on South Court Ave., and then later try to sell it as a bare lot. Commissioner Runnels moved to sign Bargain and Sale Deeds for accounts #10810, #45162, #1272, #20985 and #48084. Judge Grasty seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

The Court discussed the need for supplemental budgets for Diamond landfill, Early Learning Hub Fund, and probably Drewsey landfill. Diamond landfill had to have a new trench dug and it is not budgeted. Early Learning funding is much greater than was budgeted. The Court is not required to reconvene the budget committee but will notify them as a courtesy.

The Court reviewed an Order in the Matter of Appointing a Pool of Members to serve on the Board of Property Tax Appeals. Judge Grasty moved to appoint Steven E Grasty, Dan Nichols, Peter Runnels, Denise Christensen-Campbell, Hilda Allison, and Robert Oswald as pool members, Commissioner Runnels seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The County Clerk will appoint Boards of Property Tax as deemed necessary from the Pool.

The Court reviewed a Quitclaim Deed in the matter of property owned by Jeff and Sherri Hussey, as discussed at last court meeting, relinquishing reservation for road right of way. Commissioner Runnels moved to sign the Quitclaim Deed, Judge Grasty Seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Court discussed a pending resolution in the matter of unexpected occurrence or condition within the Weed Dept. Fund. It will be presented for approval at the next county court meeting.

Eric Drushella, Roadmaster, reported that the Andrews Maintenance station survived a wildfire the night before. Commissioner Runnels asked a general question, "Why, if there is a county Burn ban, would the federal agencies be allowed to do prescribed burning?" This seems to be an ongoing issue, as it relates to noxious weeds as well.

Judge Grasty reported six individuals have submitted letters of interest to be appointed to the fair board. They are Sunday Male, Lisa Grant, Jerry Staley, Vern Brown Sr., Steve Rickman, and Toni Ford. The Court will fill the vacant positions On October 1st.

The Court recessed at 10:40 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., as there was an agenda appointment at that time.

At 11:23 a.m. the Court reconvened to have a discussion with a Citizens Working Group wishing to discuss the possibility of a Public Lands Ordinance. Kenny Bentz stated they would like to see the county have an ordinance similar to what Grant County has. Jim Sproul, Grant County resident, shared what their ordinance looks like. (A sample is included as an exhibit with these minutes.) He said this is simply a tool. A lengthy discussion ensued. Brandon Barron stated a more important issue is how it would apply to the Malheur Forest travel management plan. They are trying to give the County some ability to defend the wishes of the people here. They are seeking a change in how the federal lands in Harney County are managed. Judge Grasty felt some of the language is unnecessary, as the County is already doing most of this. He stated County Counsel has looked at this and believes there isn't anything in that ordinance the Court doesn't already have authority over. Mr. Sproul stated they don't want to be the enemy here. Brandon Barron suggested by having this ordinance in place, the policy is covered for changing administrations, both at the County Court level and District Office level. Mr. Barron referred to Owyhee County, Idaho's management plan, for coordinating with Federal agencies. Judge Grasty said the County's land use plan is basically that. Judge Grasty explained that the Court continues to strive for a good working relationship with the federal agencies and mentioned several examples of that relationship currently. Judge Grasty stated he would like to get to the end of the road inventory map matter, get a decision made, and then look at this again. Judge wants to make sure the map issue is separate from this. Mr. Barron asked how it affects the map. Judge Grasty explained it is about perception. There is a perception the court is "doing something" to "someone," and the language used is very important. The court takes on Cooperating Agency status on many issues with the BLM and has for some time. A lengthy discussion continued about the process of coordinating and cooperating status, and access on public land and through private land. Kenny Bentz said this is not being presented as always adversarial, we are better off if it is supporting the correct decision in any matter, with local input. Judge Grasty asked the group to let the Court get through the Road Inventory Map first, and then look at this further.

There being no further business, the Court adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Derrin Roberson".

Derrin (Dag) Roberson, C.R.A.; C.E.A.
Harney County Clerk