



***In the County Court of the State of Oregon for Harney County  
Minutes of the County Court  
March 1, 2016***

The Harney County Court convened in the Harney County Circuit Court Room at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2016. Members attending were Judge Steve Grasty, and Commissioner Pete Runnels and Commissioner Dan Nichols. Also attending were Eric Drushella, Road Department; Shana Withee, OSU Extension; Deanna Atwell, Finance; Brandon McMullen, Planning Department; and Tammy Johnston, Deputy Clerk.

Others in attendance included Emily Erwin and Jeff Rose, BLM; Donna Schnitker, Early Childhood Center; and Chelsea Harrison, Harney County Chamber of Commerce. A list of public attendees is on file with these minutes.

Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Runnels made a Motion to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2016, meeting, seconded by Commissioner Nichols, with no further discussion the Motion carried unanimously.

**Voucher Approval**

**Opportunity for Public Comment**

Mary Ausmus discussed a recent Oregonian article that stated Harney County paid the Public Information Officer \$6,400 per month. Judge Grasty said the amount cited in the article was incorrect, she was paid \$400 per day and did not work every day. She then asked what agency asked the FBI to come to Harney County during the occupation. Judge Grasty said the FBI came to Harney County because the crime took place on Federal property. She then asked if the Court knew of any Civil Rights lawsuits against Harney County. Judge Grasty was not aware of any pending lawsuits.

Charmaign Edwards discussed wilderness study areas and the rights of ranchers and property owners. Judge Grasty said that the Court has always stood up for private property rights of owners in these areas.

## **Old Business**

### **Discussion regarding the Juntura Cut-Off Road**

Judge Grasty and Eric Drushella discussed the Juntura Cut-Off Road including the cost of the project, funding, and partnership with Malheur. The Court agreed by consensus to fund 50% of the project and it will be moved into the budget process. The County is expecting a check from Secure Rural Schools for \$1.2 million, which will be going into the Road Department fund. This project is scheduled for 2018.

## **New Business**

### **Resolution #2016-01 In the Matter of Adopting a Supplemental Budget and Making Appropriations**

Commissioner Runnels made a Motion to sign Resolution #2016-01 In the Matter of Adopting a Supplemental Budget and Making Appropriations (CJ2016-18), seconded by Commissioner Nichols, with no further discussion the Motion carried unanimously.

### **Donna Schnitker, Early Childhood Center, with a Hub report**

The Early Learning Center is currently in the contract process for the Frontier Hub and the Early Learning Division has asked for a new contract. There were not a lot of negotiations but Donna presented the Court with a review of the outcomes, metrics, baselines and targets which the hub and the County will be held accountable for the metrics in the contract. Donna explained that because we are a small hub and we already have fairly substantial early learning programs now in both counties, she felt expecting us to have huge gains would not be possible because the majority of children are already being served by early childhood programs. Donna said the Early Learning Division agreed and she felt the metrics were very reasonable but data tracking will be very important to demonstrate efforts toward the metrics. Donna presented a document to the Court outlining the three (3) outcomes and associated metrics which included 1) The early childhood system is aligned, coordinated and family-centered, 2) Children are supported to enter school ready to succeed; and 3) Families are healthy, stable and attached. The Court expressed their gratitude to Donna for all her hard work and dedication to the Early Childhood Center and the children of Harney County.

### **Recap of the National Association of Counties conference in Washington D.C.**

Judge Grasty and Commissioner Runnels discussed the National Association of Counties conference in Washington D.C. on February 20-24, 2016. During the flight to the conference, Judge Grasty was able to get a few minutes with Governor Kate Brown. Judge Grasty and Commissioner Runnels first met with Senator Ted Ferrioli and Representative Cliff Bentz, discussing issues such as funding for groundwater studies, ODOT paving project funding between Slater Elementary School and the Courthouse, recap of the occupation (frequent topic of discussion), and requested a 60-day extension from the Department of Energy for a tax credit on the Bio-mass project. Saturday was a day full of committees and sub-committees with the National

Association of Counties (NACo) to discuss public lands issues in the Western Interstate Region (WIR) region. A presentation was given by the Endangered Species Coalition, which is a group trying to make changes in the Endangered Species Act. Another presentation was from the Executive Director of the Western Governors Association, who discussed the goals of their association, which are very much in-line with the goals of NACo. In the afternoon, three (3) sub-committees met, which included 1) Resolutions, 2) Public Land Payments, and 3) Federal Land Management. One message that seemed to be universal was that cooperation, collaboration, and coordination is beginning to work and making a difference in other counties. Sunday was the Public Lands steering committee and Judge Grasty and Commissioner Runnels were scheduled to speak for 20 minutes but it ended up being one (1) hour. Representatives from the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service discussed the fire budget. On Monday, they met with Robert Bonnie (Under Secretary) and Tom Vilsack (Secretary) of the USDA. They also met with Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell. Judge Grasty showed a PowerPoint presentation entitled "The Harney County Story," which was a handout they gave to all the congressional offices, and the Secretaries and Under Secretaries.

Emily Erwin, with notification on the BLMs Planning 2.0 proposed rule change  
Emily Erwin and Jeff Rose presented the Court with a fact sheet and discussed BLM's proposed rule to improve the resource management planning process. Highlights of the proposed rule included early public involvement, planning assessment, high quality information and best available science, landscape-level planning, planning framework, protest, and reaffirmation of FLPMA policy. For further information, go to [www.blm.gov/plan2](http://www.blm.gov/plan2). Jeff said he would also put a link to "Planning 2.0: Improving the Way We Plan Together" on the local BLM website.

Discussion of the Heating District work  
To be discussed at the next County Court meeting.

Review of the Budget Meeting schedule  
Judge Grasty presented the Court with the Budget Board Meeting schedule for 2016. Schedule will be put on the County website.

Signing of the Grant Agreement for the Comprehensive Goal 5 Update Program  
Brandon McMullen discussed the 2015-2017 Technical Assistance Grant Agreement (DLCD Grant Number TA-17-155) (CJ2016-16). Commissioner Nichols made a Motion to approve to sign the 2015-2017 Technical Assistance Grant Agreement (TA-17-155), seconded by Commissioner Runnels, with no further discussion the Motion carried unanimously.

Review of Water Use Requests

### **Correspondence to Review**

Grant County Resolution #16-06 In the Matter of the Occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

Kenneth Delano, Jr., Harney County Surveyor

Kenny Delano sent a letter to the Court announcing his resignation as of May 1, 2016. With the Court's approval, Judge Grasty will place an ad for a new Harney County Surveyor. This is a court appointed position.

Jerry Grondin, Oregon Water Resources Department, planned Harney Basin groundwater-level measurements starting February 29, 2016

Judge Steven Grasty, Members of the Joint SEAC/NEACT, late funding request support

**Scheduling**

Next County Court on Wednesday, March 16, 2016, at 10:00 a.m.

**Late Items**

**General Deliberation by the Court (no decisions will be made)**

**For the Record**

**Adjournment**

The meeting recessed at 12:15 p.m., and reconvened at 1:30 p.m. for Executive Session. No action was taken during Executive Session. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.