

Harney County Court Minutes December 1, 2010

→The Harney County Court convened December 1, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. in Judge Grasty's office. Members attending were, Judge Steven E. Grasty and Commissioners Dan Nichols and Jack Drinkwater. Also attending were, Ellen (Nellie) Franklin, County Treasurer; Randy Fulton, Economic Development Officer; Sheriff Dave Glerup; Chief Deputy County Clerk, Derrin (Dag) Robinson; and County Commissioner-elect, Pete Runnels.

→Public attending were Jen Hoke, Chamber Director; Chris Pratt, Mary Ausmus, Len Vohs, Burns Mayor; and Randy Parks, Burns Times Herald.

→Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

→Commissioner Drinkwater made a motion to approve the November 22, 2010 county court minutes as mailed. Commissioner Nichols seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

→Financial and statistical reports were reviewed and approved by court's signature. There were no vouchers presented for approval, as they will be approved on December 8.

→Mary Ausmus asked if the court was "helping bail out the ambulance?" Judge said he didn't have any idea what she was referring to. Judge Grasty stated that topic has not been discussed by the court at all.

→Howard Palmer, Road Historian shared with the court a set of plans for Theimer Park that he had come across in old county records. It was something that the county court had developed years back. They entail a ski run at the North where the cabin sits now. Judge Grasty had asked him to bring this to the court to discuss some possible economic benefits, and to discuss some brainstorming ideas with the CRT. Judge Grasty reiterated, winter recreation is what brought a lot of economic benefit to Central Oregon. This is just another idea to run with possibly.

→Nellie Franklin, County Treasurer, shared with the court a contract with an employee from Harney Behavioral Health (HBH) for continuing education expenses. It was agreed in that contract and promissory note that Employees of HBH are required to reimburse the County for continuing education expenses paid on their behalf if they do not continue employment for a certain time period. Judge Grasty said he will meet with Mr. Siegner (HBH Director) regarding the matter. Commissioner Nichols thanked the Treasurer for keeping track of these contracts.

→Fred Flippence, representing the Library Foundation Board was present to give an update. Mr. Flippence reviewed the annual statement of the funds, and it has on average grown at a rate of 9%. The foundation struggled through the embezzlement that occurred. Working with Myer Memorial Trust, a Grant was still awarded to do the Teen Room at the Library. Sheriff Glerup updated the court on the status of the restitution and the defendant regarding the embezzlement of funds of the Library foundation.

→In the Matter of Contributions to the Employee Health Savings Accounts for 2011, Dan Nichols moved to contribute \$2500.00 as a lump sum to each employee's Health Savings Account. Judge Grasty second. Discussion ensued. Mrs. Franklin asked if it was intended to be monthly, or as a lump sum. Judge Grasty explained that for new probationary employees, it is monthly, and for "old" employees, it is intended to

be lump sum. He explained that, unfortunately, federal law does not allow for those employees Medicare eligible to have a Health Savings Account. Judge Grasty Called for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

→In the Matter of the Building Inspection Program, The court reviewed a letter from Inspections, Inc. regarding their contracted services to the County to provide this program. They are requesting a contract guarantee of \$185,000 per year. By consensus, the court felt that can not be accomplished. Judge Grasty suggests that the court advertise for Requests for Proposals for this service, and see if there is another option, he hopes to get it advertised as early as next week. The current contract was not renewed at its annual date; however, it contained a clause allowing it to continue month to month until it is re-negotiated. Judge Grasty also wants to meet with the local contractors, and get their immediate input before the court moves forward in any direction.

→Cody Hodges of Rural Advocacy Solutions was present to discuss a health impact study regarding windmills, and the Echanis project specifically. Judge Grasty explained that this is an opportunity to get some research done, on the positive side, as a proactive stance. Judge Grasty moved to approve the grant application to do this assessment. Commissioner Drinkwater second. Discussion ensued. Mr. Hodges stated it's not a large grant, around \$12, 500, but enough to do this specific assessment. Judge Grasty called for the question, the motion carried unanimously.

→Sondra Lino, Economic Development Specialist, Greater Eastern Development Corporation was present to discuss GEODC's responsibilities and programs.

→The Court reviewed a proposal asking Senator Jeff Merkley to support a request for an amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill or other action necessary to establish a test area for Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS). The court will discuss this again at the next court meeting, and solicit input from local pilots.

→At 1:31 the court held an executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(h) to consult with legal counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed. The Court re-convened in regular session at 2:20 pm, no action taken.

→The court reviewed notices of water use requests; there were no objections to any requests.

→Nellie Franklin introduced Stephanie Sanders, who will serve an internship in the County Treasurer's office this year.

→The Court planned to meet after adjournment along with Commissioner-Elect Pete Runnels, and discuss goals and priorities for 2011.

→There being no further business, the Court adjourned at 2:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Derrin Robinson, CRA CEA
Chief Deputy Clerk

