

Harney County Court Meeting

February 17, 2010

The Harney County Court convened on Wednesday, February 17 at 10:00 a.m. in Judge Steven E. Grasty's office. Members attending were Judge Steve Grasty, Commissioner Dan Nichols and Commissioner Jack Drinkwater. Also attending were Road Supervisor Eric Drushella and County Court Secretary Sharon Johnson. Public attending were Randy Parks of the Burns Times Herald and Kim Tiller. Bill Renwick, Linda Johnson, Nellie Franklin, LaDene Hurd, Maria Iturriaga and Brandon Baron were present for portions of the meeting.

Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Drinkwater made a motion to approve the February 3, 2010 minutes as mailed, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

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

There was no public comment.

Patty Dorroh, Director of the Harney County Commission on Children and Families, was present to explain the Drug Free Communities Grant re-application. She explained that the Commission had been awarded the five year grant in the fall of 2008 and that each year grantees are required to submit a continuation application. She went on to explain the program. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to sign the year three Drug Free Communities Grant continuation application, Commissioner Drinkwater seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Bill Renwick, representing the High Desert Partnership, was present to explain his earlier request for letters of support from the Court for three projects and their corresponding appropriations requests. Mr. Renwick explained each project. The Court agreed to write support letters.

The discussion turned to the Steens Mountain Advisory Council (SMAC) and the fact that there are several positions open. It was decided to invite representatives from the BLM to the next County Court meeting to discuss the topic further. The Court agreed to write a letter of support for Richard Jenkins to serve on the SMAC.

Judge Grasty mentioned having recently received three documents from the BLM: 1) a copy of the Finding of No Significant Impact and signed Decision Record to move hazardous substances away from the main school building in Fields and to develop a parking lot, 2) a Notice of Proposed Decision to implement the proposed action for replacing a water trough in the Webb Spring-Dutch Oven pipeline system and 3) Notice

of Proposed Decision to Implement Skull Creek Allotment Livestock Kind Conversion Environmental Assessment.

Ted Tiller, County Assessor & Tax Collector, appeared to discuss the need for new software for the Tax and Assessment Department. He said that he had been doing research and watching other counties who had purchased new software. He explained that the software provider notified him recently that they would no longer be supporting the old software as Harney County is the only county still using it. He then explained two options that he had been looking at and presented the Court with estimates in the \$200,000.00 range from each. Judge Grasty noted that the County has been saving \$20,000.00 per year for several years and that there is approximately \$190,000.00 set aside for the purchase. A lengthy discussion followed.

Fuel bids were opened and read aloud. Bids were received from Ebar Oil and Ed Staub & Sons. Ebar's bid read as follows (per gallon): Burns Area Gas: \$2.4951; Burns Area Diesel: \$2.337 and Burns Area Furnace: \$2.3424. Diamond Diesel: \$2.367; Drewsey Diesel: \$2.377; Andrews Diesel: \$2.427; Card Lock gas: \$2.4951. Total gallons purchased - all locations: \$373,586.00. Ed Staub's bid read as follows (per gallon): Burns Area Gas: \$2.5504; Burns Area Diesel: \$2.3907 and Burns Area Furnace: \$2.3957. Diamond Diesel: \$2.4407; Drewsey Diesel: \$2.4407; Andrews Diesel: \$2.4807; Card Lock gas: \$2.5504. Total gallons purchased - all locations: \$382,244.60. The Court asked Road Supervisor Eric Drushella to review the bids and make a recommendation.

The Court then discussed Extension Services and possible changes in that program. Judge Grasty noted that a webinar would be broadcast on Friday the 19th at 10 a.m. to discuss county staffing, multi-county (area) staffing, central administration, etc.

Judge Grasty explained that the State Farm Bureau notified the County Court that there is a grant available to expand bandwidth service to rural areas. Discussion followed. Judge Grasty noted that the grant application is 155 pages long and that it would cost about \$15,000.00 to have it written. The Farm Bureau has offered to share the cost of preparation of the grant.

Eric Drushella returned to the meeting and told the Court that based on his calculations the apparent low bidder for fuel was Ebar Oil. Commissioner Drinkwater made a motion to accept the bid from Ebar Oil, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was recessed at 12:05 p.m. for lunch and resumed at 1 p.m.

Brandon Baron of Paramore Real Estate was present to explain the offers from Roaring Springs Ranch on two parcels that had come to auction several weeks ago that were not sold. It was decided that research needs to be done and the issue will be revisited at a later date.

The Court then discussed a letter from the Burns Paiute Tribe regarding the Sheriff's Office hiring one of the Tribe's police officers who had completed training while working for the Tribe.

Planning Director Brandon McMullen explained that the Community Wildfire Protection Plan Core Team had updated the CWPP Action Plan and Priorities for 2010 and are looking for a sign-off by the County Court. He also noted that the update is an annual action. Commissioner Drinkwater made a motion to approve the Plan and Priorities for 2010, 2011 and 2012, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

The first evidentiary hearing for Project 3 of the Technical Assistance Program was opened at 2 p.m. Written comments from the Oregon Natural Desert Association were entered into the record. Stan Foster of PARC was the consultant/contractor on the project and attended by phone. Mr. McMullen explained that this is the final project of the Technical Assistance Program and gave an overview of the changes; the changes were discussed extensively. The Court determined that they would like to have the Planning Commission discuss the suggested changes, particularly to Section 4.130, and then attend a County Court meeting to discuss further with the Court. The hearing was left open until 2 p.m. on April 7, 2010.

Commissioner Nichols updated the Court on the CCP.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Sharon Johnson
County Court Secretary