

HARNEY COUNTY COURT MEETING

June 3, 2009

The Harney County Court convened on Wednesday, June 3, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in Judge Steven E. Grasty's office. Members attending were Judge Steve Grasty and Commissioners Dan Nichols and Jack Drinkwater. Also attending were Road Supervisor Eric Drushella, County Treasurer Nellie Franklin, County Planning Director Brandon McMullen and County Court Secretary Sharon Johnson. Public attending were Debbie Raney of the Burns Times Herald, Harold Gibson and Buck Windom.

Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Drinkwater made a motion to approve the May 20, 2009 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.

The Court briefly discussed changing the meeting date of the first County Court meeting in July. It was decided to hold the meeting on July 8 rather than July 1.

Brandon McMullen, County Planning Director, was present to explain that the Planning Commission met on June 2 to discuss the technical updates to the Comprehensive Plan. He said they approved proposed changes and are now requesting a public hearing to review those proposed changes. He also said that the document will be available to the County Court for review on Monday, June 8. It was decided that a work session will be held with the County Court and the project consultant on June 17th following the regular County Court meeting. The public hearing will be held on July 8th. Further discussion followed.

Chris Siegner, Director of Harney Behavioral Health, was in attendance to discuss the HBH education assistance policy. He described the research he had done, as requested by the County Court, with other Counties and provided examples of their policies. He also covered proposed changes to the current HBH policy. A lengthy discussion followed. The Court decided to take some time to review the information provided before making a decision on the policy. The decision will be made at the June 17 County Court.

County Treasurer Nellie Franklin and Judge Grasty explained the management letter presented by Oster Professional Group which outlines suggestions relative to the County's system of internal controls. All issues outlined in the letter have been addressed.

Dan Jordan of Steens Mountain Insurance was present to provide details on the County's insurance policies. He also noted that the Weed Control premium was not as much as expected so he presented a refund check for \$255.00 to the Court.

The next item of business discussed was the Idaho Power Boardman to Hemingway transmission line project. Judge Grasty explained that currently there are no proposed routes. Idaho Power has devised a Community Advisory Process to conduct a comprehensive and inclusive public process to locate proposed and alternative routes for the project. Idaho Power has asked the County to supply the names of a few people who might be agreeable to sitting on a committee.

The Court then reviewed a letter from the Burns Butte Sportsmen's Club that expressed thanks to the County Court for money donated last year. It went on to explain the activities BBSC provides to the community.

Harold Gibson and Buck Windom, representing the Oregon Hunter's Association, were present to gather information on the Campbell land trade to dispel some rumors that have been circulating. Judge Grasty explained that he hasn't heard anything new about the trade. He said the original rumor that it would be an 11 to one trade was completely inaccurate; that Mr. Campbell had listed 11 parcels that he was interested in but was not expecting all of them to be included in the trade; that list has now been narrowed down to five possibilities. Discussion followed.

Thad Hillman stopped by to ask about a disaster declaration due to drought conditions. The Court will do some research to see if a disaster has been declared in other Eastern Oregon counties.

The meeting was recessed for lunch at 12:00 p.m. and reconvened at 1:30 p.m.

The public hearing to approve the budget was opened at 1:30 p.m. Present were Judge Grasty, Commissioner Nichols, Commissioner Drinkwater, Holly Smith, Jean Cain, Pete Runnels, Eric Drushella and Sharon Johnson.

The Budget Committee reviewed a letter from Kids Club of Harney County. The letter explained the changes made since termination of the affiliation with Boys & Girls Club. The Club also requested a \$14,000.00 donation from the County as has been done in past years. Carrie Winstead, Executive Director and Ron Wolff of the Kids Club were on hand to explain their budget and their program. Commissioner Nichols commended the Board and those that have been involved in the restructure and what it has taken to get there. Landfills and DEQ requirements for Financial Assurance were discussed at length. Mr. Runnels made a motion to approve adding a transfer line in Fund 208 for \$1000.00, Fund 209 for \$1,000.00, Fund 210 for \$1,000.00, Fund 211 for \$20,000.00 and Fund 212 for \$1,000.00 for the purpose of Financial Assurance on these landfills as

required by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously. Judge Grasty noted that there was no public present for comment. Commissioner Nichols mentioned that he had heard complaints from the public about the automatic annual 3% property tax increase. A lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Runnels made a motion to approve the budget, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously. The hearing closed at 2:30 p.m.

Commissioner Drinkwater made a motion to approve Resolution #2009-08 In the Matter of creating a Financial Assurance Plan for Harney County Rural Landfills Closure and Post-closure costs, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Drushella asked for direction on the next step in the process of the straightening out of the road at Alvord Ranch and the land swap that is part of the project.

The Court went into Executive Session at 2:35 p.m. as authorized by ORS 192.660(h) to consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed and came out at 3:10 with no action being taken.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Johnson
Secretary, Harney County Court