

Gilliam County Court
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2019

Judge Farrar called the regular Gilliam County Court meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Gilliam County Courthouse in Condon, Oregon. Present were Judge Elizabeth Farrar, Commissioner Leslie Wetherell, Commissioner Sherrie Wilkins, Chief of Staff Lisa Atkin and Court Administrative Assistant Teresa Aldrich.

REVISIONS TO AGENDA

None.

IN THE MATTER OF PUBLIC COMMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence: The Judge read two thank you notes from local groups. The first note was received from Columbia Basin Rodeo Club, thanking the Court for the special grant funds the club received. The grant funds were used to help the rodeo club host a high school rodeo at the Gilliam County Fairgrounds. The second note was received from Gilliam County 4-H member Brynne Hallowell, thanking the Court for their contribution to the Gilliam County Auction Committee which helped with the purchase of her 4-H animal.

Public Comment: Judge Farrar opened the public comment portion of the meeting. The Judge explained that the Court process was to listen, and may or may not include a response to matters raised.

Susie Crosby read a prepared statement from the State of Jefferson Citizens Committee. Summary of statement: the Committee identified a lack of representation for rural and frontier counties in the Oregon Legislature. They presented a declaration and petition to the Court seeking support for the withdrawal from the State of Oregon to form the new State of Jefferson. Public present in support of the State of Jefferson included Wayne Standiford, Rick Watkins, Susie Crosby and Carletta Hughes. Les Ruark spoke against the formation of the State of Jefferson. Judge Farrar noted the Constitution is clear on how a state is formed and the County has no power or authority in this. She suggested the Committee seek legislative sponsors to carry the bill. Wayne Standiford stated that the primary goal of the Committee's action seeking a new State was to put Salem on notice that rural Oregon wants equal representation in Salem and a unified State.

IN THE MATTER OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Wilkins, second by Commissioner Wetherell, to approve the Consent Agenda. Farrar – Yes; Wetherell – Yes; Wilkins – Yes; **Motion Carried.**

The Consent Agenda included the following:

Approval of October Bills Pending Review

Approval of October 2nd Regular Meeting Minutes

Approval of October 2nd Work Session Minutes

Approval of October 23rd Special Meeting Minutes

Approval of Amendment No. 3 to ODOT Grant #32393

Approval of FY 2019-20 Transportation of Veterans in Highly Rural Areas Grant Agreement

Re-Appointment of Marta Mikkalo to the Gilliam County Planning Commission

IN THE MATTER OF FRONTIER TELENET

Judge Farrar noted the Frontier Telenet meeting was held in Fossil on October 23rd. The Judge reported the USAC E-Rate monies are still coming in. Day Wireless has submitted a management plan to the board. Judge Farrar expressed she would like to see the management plan go out in a RFP. Judge Farrar will work on a RFP to present to the board. Also noted, the Roosevelt Shelter connectivity site to Gilliam County is in need of serious repairs. The Judge informed the Court that the meeting minutes will now be in print as well as in recordings.

IN THE MATTER OF THE LIBERTY THEATRE

Judge Farrar invited Boyd Harris, a realtor with Mountain Valley Land Company and prospective buyer Shea Volker to address the court. Shea Volker informed the Court of his plans to purchase the theatre and assume the loan with Don James/Gilliam County. Currently the closing date is scheduled for December 5. Boyd Harris added the title company has requested documentation from the County for filings and deed re-conveyance. Following discussion the Court agreed to accept the terms as presented. The Judge will contact legal counsel to draft new loan documents, which will be brought back to the Court for final approval. A special meeting may be called to allow the Court time to approve the new loan documents before the closing scheduled for December 5.

IN THE MATTER OF PERS EMPLOYER INCENTIVE MATCHING FUNDS

County Treasurer Nathan Hammer presented the following two options for the Court's consideration.

PERS has introduced an Employer Incentive Fund (EIF) to provide a 25% match on lump sum payments made (minimum \$25,000) to support reduction in employers' unfunded actuarial liability. Gilliam County's current liability is 189% making the County eligible to apply for the EIF, the application is due by December 2, 2019. The Treasurer

recommended taking advantage of this program. The County's current unfunded actuarial liability is \$3.7 Million. Maximum payment permitted is \$1.2 Million. The 25% match being offered to pay down the County's unfunded actuarial liability is a higher rate of return than alternative investment options making the PERS EIF highly attractive. The Treasure normally has authority to make investment options without the Court's involvement but given this option is not an institutionalized investment the Treasurer is seeking County Court approval.

Secondly, PERS has introduced a program in which the County can pay down unfunded actuarial liability with no matching. The intent would be to include this as part of the budget process next year.

After a discussion, the Court agreed to move forward with the two options.

IN THE MATTER OF APPOINTMENT OF GILLIAM COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBER

The Judge read to the Court one letter of interest received from Chris Fatland.

Motion by Commissioner Wilkins, seconded by Commissioner Wetherell, to appoint Chris Fatland as a member of the Gilliam County Library Board. Farrar – Yes; Wilkins – Yes; Wetherell – Yes; **Motion Carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF CAPITAL INVESTMENT GRANT AWARDS

Judge Farrar reviewed with the Court the three applications received for the Fall Capital Investment Grant Awards. The three applications received were from the Elks BPOE 1869, Arlington TV Co-op and the Port of Arlington. Judge Farrar reviewed the recommendations for the Elks BPOE from the Grant Application Review Committee, which consisted of Chis Patnode, Nathan Hammer and Teresa Aldrich. The Court discussed funding the request, in the amount of \$30,800, to replace the HVAC system, a decrease of \$3,082 from the requested amount of \$33,882 due to the matching percentage guidelines.

Motion by Commissioner Wetherell, seconded by Commissioner Wilkins, to award a Capital Investment Grant to Elks BPOE in the amount of \$30,800 to be funded from the FY 2019-20 SIP Discretionary Line Item; with conditions imposed as discussed and pending a fully executed grant agreement. The County Judge is authorized to prepare and execute the grant agreement. Farrar – Yes; Wilkins – Yes; Wetherell – Yes; **Motion Carried.**

The Arlington TV Co-op grant request was for \$159,347 to provide high quality, high speed, low cost internet connectivity and access to cable entertainment to the citizens of Gilliam County. Judge Farrar reviewed the recommendations from the Grant Application Review Committee. The Court expressed concerns about the financial

documents and business plan presented being outdated. In addition it was also unclear if the current fiber project was completed, which the Court previously provided funding for. The discussion also questioned if the Co-op was diverting resources to cover the required match and the fact that the Court just extended the loan. The Court wants the Co-op to be successful and expressed the following items they would like to see in future applications: a detailed survey, listing questions asked and the answers, number of customers, market share, and an advertising plan. The Court felt based on the documents presented, to not fund.

The Port of Arlington grant request was for \$90,350 to extend the water and sewer infrastructure to the end of the Port's Island Park. Judge Farrar reviewed the recommendations from the Grant Application Review Committee. The Court expressed concerns about the lack of supporting documents, next step plans, and the fact that this same application has been denied twice from the Court. The Court discussed and was unclear if the previously funded project to update the bathrooms has been completed. Based on the documents presented, the Court felt the application was incomplete, and shouldn't be funded. Judge Farrar stated she will send letters and/or the required grant agreements, if applicable, to all three applicants.

Commissioner Wetherell:

- Congratulated the Condon School Board on the passing of the bond.
- Congratulated the Courthouse on their 1st Place in the community Scarecrow Contest.
- Attended the North Central Public Health meeting October 8th.
- Attended Tri County Court (via phone) on October 23rd.
- Attended the County Road Tour on October 30th. Expressed the tour was great.
- Attended the Arlington Artisan Show and sale at the Gronquist Building on November 2nd.
- Attending the North Central Public Health meeting on November 12th.
- Attending Irrigation Tour on November 13th.
- Attending the AOC Conference on November 19-21st.
- Expressed interest in an Elected Officials Seminar she received from Sheriff Bettencourt.
- Wanted to address some rumblings she has heard about the brevity of County Court Meetings. The Court has changed and overhauled the meetings, with the installation of the consent agenda, item briefings, and limited last meeting additions to the agenda. The information packets available to the Court prior to the meeting allows the Court to be ready to take action if needed. Noted she is looking forward to the Department staff reports soon.

Commissioner Wilkins:

- Attended Tri County Court on October 23rd.
- Attended Frontier Telenet Meeting on October 23rd.
- Attended a NORCO work session on October 24th.
- Attended the Gilliam County Road Tour on October 30th. Well worth the time, she enjoyed spending time with the Road Master and Road Committee members.
- Attended Trunk or Treat in Arlington on October 31st.
- Attending EOCCO workshop on November 7th.
- Attending Port of Arlington meeting on November 12th.
- Attending AOC Conference on November 19-21st.

Judge Farrar:

- Updated the Court the Fiber Council is up and running, having had their first meeting last week. Josh Hendricks has been appointed, Meetings are being set up with potential customers. The council is starting to look at pricing. Judge Farrar and Rita Rattray will keep the Court updated.
- The County newsletter is coming back. Rachel Weinstein will be working on the newsletter with the first edition coming in January 2020.
- Clarification was sought on the non-represented employees floating holidays. Should the days be tracked by fiscal year or calendar year? Consensus was to follow the CBA, which is fiscal year. This will allow for easier record keeping.
- The Court will be gifting a holiday ham to employees.
- All Staff Meeting will be held on November 12th.
- Discussion on how the policy reads regarding the decision of time-off gifted on Christmas Eve Day. The policy reads, the Court makes a decision yearly at the discretion of the Court. Consensus of the Court was to gift ½ day on Christmas Eve Day.
- Discussion of Court meetings to be held in December and January. Court will hold two meetings in the month of December, on the 4th and 18th. The meeting on December 18th will be held at the Gronquist Building in Arlington. Discussion on the January meetings, since the 1st Wednesday is New Year's Day, Court will be held the 8th and possibly the 22nd.
- Scheduled meeting with the City of Boardman on November 12th, regarding building codes.

IN THE MATTER OF ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Les Ruark asked permission to address the Court. Les Ruark expressed concerns regarding the SIP funds procedures and economic jurisdiction with the Port. He also asked the Court to consider noticing commission vacancies even when it is a re-appointment, this could prompt more people to serve. Finally he asked the Court to be careful in the pursuit of a non-partisan commission.

IN THE MATTER OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Judge Farrar noted the following:

- Next Tri-County Court and Frontier Telenet meeting is scheduled for January 29th in Sherman County.
- Next County Court meeting will be held December 4th.
- Special Meeting to Consider Liberty Theatre.

IN THE MATTER OF ADJOURNMENT

It appearing to the Court that there was no further business to be conducted at this time, Judge Farrar adjourned the meeting at 11:48 a.m.

GILLIAM COUNTY COURT

By _____
Elizabeth Farrar, Judge

By _____
Leslie Wetherell, Commissioner

By _____
Sherrie Wilkins, Commissioner

Teresa Aldrich _____
Court Administrative Assistant