

7-15-2015

Judge Shaffer called the regular Gilliam County Court meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held at the Gilliam County Courthouse in Condon, OR. Present were Judge Steve Shaffer, Commissioner Mike Weimar and Commissioner Dennis Gronquist. Absent: None.

IN THE MATTER OF FIBER OPTIC DISCUSSION

Robert Waltenburg, Co-Superintendent of the North Central Education Service District (NCESD) was present to discuss current and future internet service for the schools in Gilliam County. Internet to the schools is currently delivered by a wireless system transmitted via microwave. The wireless system slows with increased number of users and can't handle the needs of 100 computers and students during high use periods such as testing. He said microwave was a great stop-gap measure in the late 1990s in rural communities where there was a lack of infrastructure. Waltenburg thinks the NCESD needs to switch to fiber optic going forward. Glass can transmit data exponentially faster than radio waves can. Judge Shaffer asked Waltenburg to give the Court an overview of the current Frontier Telenet infrastructure. Waltenburg used a dry erase board to draw the locations of towers and wireless transmission chokeholds that could be eliminated by converting to fiber optic. Fiber is buried in bundles so the infrastructure would be there to light up almost unlimited fiber to meet future needs. The current system is at capacity and Frontier Telenet has over \$400,000.00 in the budget for a radio upgrade at their hub in Condon. Waltenburg said in his capacity as Mayor of Dayville he sympathized with the decision before the Court and he questions the value of Frontier Telenet spending that much money on a radio upgrade that would be good for another 2 or 3 years versus spending \$150,000.00 to convert their existing hub for fiber optic and using the remaining funds toward bringing the fiber backbone to Condon. Judge Shaffer said the Oregon Legislature just allocated about \$2 million for Wheeler County to bring fiber to Condon and as far beyond as money can take it. Judge Shaffer said there is real need for a fiber optic upgrade for health, safety and education in Gilliam County. There was a renewed Court discussion of the pros and cons of how to best allocate the \$1.1 million the Court has available for fiber optic in fiscal 2015-16. Present in the Courtroom were members of the Arlington TV Co-op and J & N Cable. Commissioner Gronquist asked Alan Cunningham for had any comment. Cunningham said the Arlington TV Co-op is asking the Court to fund construction, training and equipment for their hub in Arlington. The hub would enable them to light up fiber for essential services in Arlington and that Frontier Telenet could use their hub for free rather than leasing it from someone else. From there, the TV Co-op will finance bringing TV and fiber to the homes in Arlington. With \$500,000.00 the Co-op could begin their project this fiscal year and the County could fund the remaining funds in fiscal 2016-17. Port of Arlington Manager and Gilliam County Economic Development Director Peter

Mitchell said he believed he could find enough grant funds next year to fund the backbone through the rest of Gilliam County if the Court chose to fund the Arlington TV Co-op this year. Waltenburg said if the fiber optic backbone were extended to Condon, Frontier Telenet could light up both Arlington and Condon from their current hub in Condon. John from J & N Cable said in that scenario he could spend the estimated \$4000.00 necessary to purchase the switches he would need at either end to be compatible with fiber optic. J & N would be willing to feed service to Arlington and do the engineering for the TV Co-op to allow them to provide essential services within Arlington. No fiber optic decision was made and the Court decided to take up the discussion again at a later date.

IN THE MATTER OF EXECUTIVE SESSION ORS 192.660 2(e) (h)

Judge Shaffer declared the meeting to be in Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660 2 (e) (h) real property transactions and legal counsel. Separate minutes were taken and will be filed in the office of the County Clerk

IN THE MATTER OF TRI-COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER: SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

Tri-County Veteran Service Officer Bryan Hunt was present to give his semi-annual report on veteran activities.

- In Gilliam County Hunt conducted 35 veteran interviews, had four claims granted, three claims denied and two new medical claims were processed. During the same period he filed one appeal. Recoveries totaled \$33,197.13.
- Tri-County wide he conducted 151 total interviews, filed 7 new claims, had 9 claims granted, 5 claims denied, one claim reopened and there were 5 new medical claims processed. Recoveries totaled: \$256,213.15.

Hunt said he is at the end of his 2014-15 Enhancement Expenditures Plan and has \$2,031.55 left over, however not all of his bills have come in yet. He reported he traveled a lot in June using Oregon Outreach funds. This coming year the State of Oregon is increasing funding by \$500,000 for Veteran Services. Hunt expects his budget to remain largely the same as last year. He thinks his training budget will increase because the State of Oregon is planning on conducting more trainings. Hunt is primarily funded by the Federal Veteran's Administration. Judge Shaffer thanked Hunt and asked him to keep the Court informed when he will not be in the Courthouse. Hunt agreed to do so.

IN THE MATTER OF COLUMBIA RIVER MOBILE HOME PARK PROPERTY TAXES

County Assessor Dave Messenger and County Appraiser Chet Wilkins were present to discuss property taxes at the Columbia River Mobile Home Park. They have targeted 11 mobile homes at the Park they advised be removed from the County tax rolls. Eight of the homes have very low value and three others are missing. In exchange for removing the home from the tax rolls the Park will pay to have the homes removed. The loss to the County tax in taxes and interest through July 16, 2105 would be \$1494.65. There was a brief Court discussion of how much time to give the Park to remove the mobile homes. The Court decided to give the Park owners until September 1, 2015. Messenger will send a letter to the Park and will draft a Resolution to remove the homes from the tax roll by the next County Court meeting.

IN THE MATTER OF OMITTED PROPERTY APPEAL

Dave Messenger said there is a potential settlement in the Omitted Property Appeal with Waste Management LLC. It is being negotiated by the Department of Justice, the Department of Revenue and Gilliam County. Waste Management believes they were double assessed on the property in question. The settlement would involve refunding already paid taxes on the omitted property. The refund to Waste Management would be \$50,904.02.

IN THE MATTER OF HOMESTEAD REBATE PROGRAM

Judge Shaffer said he would entertain a motion to approve the Homestead Rebate Program for 2015-16.

Motion by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to authorize the Assessor to process the Homestead Rebate payments for 2015-16 in the amount of \$309,305.00 in the Economic Development line item #232-100-520-2803, for property taxes not to exceed \$500.00 for each qualifying homestead; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF BIDS FOR FAIRGROUNDS PROJECTS

Gilliam County Fair Board Chair Chris Fitzsimmons and Fair Board Member Gary Bettencourt presented electrical bids received for upcoming Fairgrounds projects. Fitzsimmons has been having a difficult time finding contractors to bid the work. Fitzsimmons requested bids from three electrical contractors and received two, one from Hire Electric and the other from Coburn Electric; Hage Electric elected not to bid on the project. Hire Electric was the low bidder. They gave an overview of their priority list.

1. Beef Barn – Paddle Fans

2. Sheep Barn – T8 Strip Fixtures
3. Sheep Barn – 5 LED Fixtures
4. Exhibit Hall – T8 Strip Fixtures

Columbia Basin contracted an energy audit at the Fairgrounds. If they comply with the audit they will be eligible for an \$1100.00 rebate from Columbia Basin.

Local resident Bill Kerwin, is a licensed and bonded contractor who provided the Fair Board with a bid for labor, \$55.00/per hour for two workers, on future work. The Fair Board will pay for materials. There was a brief Court discussion of how to structure bids on remaining Fairgrounds projects. It was decided the Fair Board should request that future bids be done building by building.

The Fair Board has a tractor to surplus. They have purchased a new 1980's John Deere tractor. The Court decided to surplus the tractor at the next County Court meeting. Sheriff Bettencourt added he has a Sheriff Office vehicle the Court can surplus also.

Motion by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to approve the \$12,470.00 bid from Hire Electric for electrical work at the Gilliam County Fairgrounds; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Judge Shaffer informed there were two additions to the agenda, 3.6 the Gilliam County Dental Insurance Plan and 3.7 the Oregon Department of Transportation Fund Exchange Agreement.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ODOT FUND EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

Judge Shaffer informed there is a correction that needs to be made to the Oregon Department of Transportation fund exchange agreement.

Motion Commissioner Weimar, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to approve ODOT'S correction to the 2015 Oregon Department of Transportation Fund Exchange Agreement, replacing a period with a comma on page one; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF GILLIAM COUNTY DENTAL INSURANCE PLAN

Gilliam County Court Administrator Leanne Durfey informed the Court the current County dental plan is being discontinued. The County has to select a new plan by July 24, 2015. The requirement is the County replacement plan must provide comparable or better coverage. The Insurance Committed has recommended two options close to the current plan. The Committee also recommended sending out the plan information so employees could vote on which plan to choose. Members of the Court agreed.

IN THE MATTER OF COUNTY AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE AND DISABILITY SERVICES

Judge Shaffer said, as discussed at the June 17th County Court meeting in Arlington, the County would like to have Community Counseling Solutions Director, Kimberly Lindsay be the Gilliam County representative for the Oregon Health Authority Agreement No. 147788 and Mental Health Services and for the Oregon Department of Human Services Agreement No. 148065. County counsel Will Carey recommended the County appoint Lindsay as the authorized representative rather than make her a direct County hire.

Motion by Judge Shaffer, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to appoint Community Solutions Director Kimberly Lindsay as Gilliam County's authorized representative to the Oregon Health Authority Agreement No. 147788 Addictions and Mental Health Services and Agreement No. 148065 for the financing of Community Developmental Disability Services for the period 7-1-2015 through 6-30-2017; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATIONS FOR COUNTY RIGHT-OF-WAY

The Court was presented with two right-of-way applications from Columbia Basin Electric Co-op for doing electrical work at Lower 8 Mile and at Lone Rock Road.

Motion by Commissioner Weimar, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to approve the right-of-way applications by Columbia Basin Electric Co-op for work at Lower 8 Mile and Lone Rock Road; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF WORKERS COMPENSATION RESOLUTION No. 2015-10

Judge Shaffer informed Workers Compensation Resolution No. 2015-10 selects the same coverage categories as last year.

Motion by Commissioner Weimar, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to approve Resolution No. 2015-10 to extend workers compensation to Gilliam County Police Reserve, Search and Rescue and the County Chaplain; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF SPECIAL PROJECTS GRANTS

Judge Shaffer informed that when South County Special Project Grants were awarded, there was an error on the spread sheet and the Court did not have the funds available they thought they did. As a result, the Court awarded South County grants in excess of \$4,615.00 of what was available. There was a brief Court discussion of how resolve the error.

Motion by Judge Shaffer, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to apply the error to the 2016-17 Special Project Grant cycle and funds available to South by \$4,615.00; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Weimar, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to approve the June 17 County Court meeting minutes, the June 17 Executive Session minutes, the July 1 County Court minutes and the July 1 Executive Session minutes; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF WEED DEPARTMENT QUARTERLY REPORT

Weed Control Officer Don Farrar was present to deliver his Weed Department quarterly report.

- Farrar had a meeting with the Oregon Department of Agriculture regarding funding for County Weed Programs. The Association of Oregon Counties will be involved and will likely take the lead through natural resources, Gil Ridell.
- The Weed Department made 28 releases for Toadflax.
- All county and state roads have been treated for summer annuals and spot treatments are ongoing.
- Independence Park has bare ground and summer annuals have been treated with spot treatment, with those ongoing.
- Oregon State Parks fields have been treated.
- Work for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is 70% completed. Farrar has treated leafy spurge on the John Day River. Horn Butte has been completed, but there is still work on 30 Mile. Farrar is still having trouble with the BLM Trimble Juno GPS devices.
- The Courthouse grounds and Park have been treated and fertilized, as have the schools, Fairgrounds, Bus barns and Fire Halls.
- Farrar noted he has had landowners call for more bio Control in Diffuse Knapweed.
- Bonneville Power Administration lines are being treated and are 25% complete.
- Union Pacific Railroad Skeleton Weed treatment is 25% complete.
- Survey and treatment of Skeleton Weed and Yellow Star Thistle in Clem is ongoing.
- Farrar had a complaint from a landowner of Skeleton Weed on the freeway which has been taken care of.
- Farrar attended the annual County Weed Control Association meeting in Bend.

IN THE MATTER OF TREASURER QUARTERLY REPORT

County Treasurer Nathan Hammer was present to give his quarterly report.

- WI Construction's lease at the Shutler Industrial Park expires August 25, 2015. Hammer gave members of the Court an Excel spreadsheet summary of WI Construction's payment history he created using data from WI's books. Hammer noted there are some differences between what WI Construction thinks they owe the County and what he calculated WI Construction owes. He calculated WI's concrete credit at \$63,373.56. WI also owes money on the 3.67 acres they are leasing from the County. The cost of the first acre is \$750.00/month and the price of the remaining 2.67 acres is \$945.00 per acre/per month. WI is current on payments for the first acre, but have not made any payments on the remaining acreage. Hammer said the balance on the remaining equipment is worth the \$410,676.41.
- Hammer met with the County auditors ahead of the October audit.
- Hammer said that with the exception of the Nana's Kitchen lease which is in chapter 11 bankruptcy, all other County leases are current.

IN THE MATTER OF RENEWAL OF THE AGREEMENT WITH DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Planning Department Director Michelle Colby was present to discuss renewal of the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Department of Energy said the agreement needed to be tabled because it has not been reviewed by Will Carey.

IN THE MATTER OF PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCY

Planning Director Michelle Colby informed the Court she received a resignation from one of her Planning Commission members. Colby has asked the person to stay on through the Public Hearing she has scheduled on August 4th. Colby said an ad will be out in the Times Journal this week and will run for three weeks. Interested persons are asked to respond by August 4th. Appointments will be on the August 5th agenda. She informed that the Commission can appoint up to 7 members, so if she receives a large pool of people interested in being on the Planning Commission the Court can add more appointments, but the total needs to remain an odd number.

IN THE MATTER OF CORRESPONDENCE

Judge Shaffer informed the Court had received a nice thank you note from Pat Shaw for the flowers and she also thanked Commissioner Gronquist for his phone call.

IN THE MATTER OF COURT MEMBER REPORTS

Commissioner Weimar attended a Transportation System Plan meeting. The plan is coming together and hearings are due to be completed by the end of September. On the long range project list is the intersection of Main Street and Hwy. 206 in Condon. There are some planned road designation changes and upgrades within the County to

reflect increased traffic flow and loads due to increased wind farm activity. Rattlesnake Road has already been changed. Four Mile and Ridge Road are other roads that have or will receive new designations. They have also discussed having a bicycle kiosk for shelter and water along Hwy. 206 between Condon and Cottonwood Canyon State Park.

Commissioner Weimar and Road Master Dewey Kennedy will conduct interviews later that afternoon for the two job openings in the Road Department. He said he felt confident they would find hires given the pool of qualified applicants.

Judge Shaffer informed the County has hired Theresa Jamieson on a temporary basis to fill the vacant custodial position at the Courthouse. Judge Shaffer said the County would wait until sometime in October to hire a permanent person for the position.

There has been a delay in the South Gilliam County Rural Fire Department Services building project due to building code issues with the building manufacturer regarding foundation requirements for the building. The project is stalled and as a result the Road Department replacement project has also been delayed.

There will be a Tri-County Court meeting July 29, 2015 beginning at 10:00 a.m. that will be held at the Gilliam County Courthouse in Condon.

IN THE MATTER OF NEXT MEETING

The next Gilliam County Court meeting will be held on August 5, 2015 beginning at 10:00 a.m. and will be held at the Gilliam County Courthouse, Condon, OR.

It appearing to the Court there was no further business to be conducted at this time and not additional matters to be considered Judge Shaffer adjourned the meeting at 1:53 p.m.

GILLIAM COUNTY COURT

By _____
Steve Shaffer, Judge

By _____
Dennis Gronquist, Commissioner

By _____
Mike Weimar, Commissioner *R. Weinstein/Recorder*