

**01-06-16**

Judge Shaffer called the regular Gilliam County Court meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. The meeting was held at the Gilliam County Courthouse in Condon, OR. Present were Judge Steve Shaffer, Commissioner Michael Weimar and Commissioner Dennis Gronquist. Absent: None.

IN THE MATTER OF ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

RUTE Foundation Systems Memorandum of Understanding

Columbia Gorge Bi-State Regional Energy Zone consultant David Van't Hof contract renewal

IN THE MATTER OF APPOINTMENT TO THE CULTURAL COALITION

Leslee Hammer has agreed to serve on the Board of the Cultural Coalition for another term.

**Motion** by Commissioner Weimar, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to approve the appointment of Leslee Hammer to the Board of the Cultural Coalition for another three year term; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF APPOINTMENTS TO EASTERN OREGON COORDINATED CARE

The nominees for appointment to the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization Community Advisory Council are Gilliam County Juvenile Director Vicki Winters and Judge Steve Shaffer.

**Motion** by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to appoint Steve Shaffer and Vicki Winters to the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization Community Advisory Council; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF ANNUAL DESIGNATIONS

**Motion** by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to approved designate Voting Precincts Arlington No. 1 and East Condon No. 6 and West Condon No. 7; designate County Roads outside of incorporated areas of Arlington, Condon and Lonerock; designate Gilliam County depositories Bank of Eastern Oregon and Banner Bank and Oregon State Local Government Investment Pool; designate Newspapers of

Record The Times-Journal and East Oregonian; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

#### IN THE MATTER OF GILLIAM COUNTY BUDGET OFFICER

**Motion** by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to appoint Gilliam County Treasurer Nathan Hammer as Gilliam County Budget Officer; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

#### IN THE MATTER OF COURT MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

Judge Shaffer offered to give up his appointment as the Frontier Telenet Board member if one of the other Commissioners would like the job. Commissioner Gronquist said, as the alternate, he didn't think it would be good timing to appoint him to be on Frontier Board, there was just too much going on. Judge Shaffer said he would be willing to serve on the Frontier Board for another 3 year term to expire 12-31-2018. Both Commissioner Gronquist and Commissioner Weimar agreed to continue to serve on their current designated Committee appointments.

**Motion** by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to accept the County Court assignments as currently designated:

#### **JUDGE STEVE SHAFFER**

Courthouse Administration

NORCOR Board Member (Alternate-Dennis Gronquist)

Gilliam County Court Security Committee

Frontier Regional 911

Frontier Telenet Board Member (Alternate-Dennis Gronquist)

Frontier Digital Network

MCCOG Board / MCCOG Six Rivers Board / MCCOG Four Rivers Board

The Oregon Consortium (Alternate-Michael Weimar)

Tri County Community Corrections Board Member

North Central Public Health Board Member (reappointed 12-16-15)

Community Counseling Solutions Advisory Board

Gilliam County CCO Community Advisory Council

South Park and Recreation Committee

Central Oregon Workforce Consortium (Alternate-Michael Weimar)

*AOC Legislative Committee*

*AOC Energy, Environment & Land Use Steering Committee*

*AOC Public Lands & Natural Resources Steering Committee*

*AOC Veterans Steering Committee*

**COMMISSIONER MICHAEL WEIMAR**

County Road and Weed Commissioner

Mid-Columbia Council of Governments

Lower John Day Area Commission on Transportation (Alternate-Dennis Gronquist)

Wolf Depredation Advisory Committee

CAPECO Board

Board of Property Tax Appeals

*AOC Transportation Steering Committee*

*AOC Economic & Community Development Steering Committee*

**COMMISSIONER DENNIS GRONQUIST**

Shutler Station Industrial Park Commissioner

Gilliam County Safety Committee

Gilliam County 9-1-1 Board

Gilliam County Emergency Management Planning Council

Gilliam County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council

Gilliam County Economic Development Strategic Plan Advisory Committee

Gilliam County Investment Advisory Board

Columbia Ridge Landfill Citizens Advisory Board

Vote: Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

#### IN THE MATTER OF PUBLIC CONTRACTING RULES

Judge Shaffer said the Oregon Legislature changed the Public Contracting mandatory dollar amount for Request for Proposals (RFP) from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Judge Shaffer said that after conversation with legal counsel he thought Gilliam County has well written public contracting rules, but a number of regular expenditures are now over \$5,000 and as a result he would like to open discussion of changing Gilliam County's RFP minimum from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for an RFP. He informed legal counsel Will Carey is working with a law firm in Eugene that is rewriting the public contracting rules manual. Carey said the court could either write an amendment to the current rules or the Court could adopt the language in the new manual when it's completed. Judge Shaffer thought it would be a good idea to review the new public contracting manual when it is released. The Commissioners agreed.

#### IN THE MATTER OF WI EQUIPMENT SETTLEMENT UPDATE

Commissioner Weimar spoke with Road Master Dewey Kennedy who said there wasn't any equipment he needed. Commissioner Weimar thought it better to let WI sell the remaining equipment and then pay the County the proceeds. After a brief discussion it was decided that Judge Shaffer would call WI CEO Jack Ingram and ask him to do that.

#### IN THE MATTER OF GILLIAM COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

Gilliam County Transportation Director Marla Davies was present to give her semi-annual report. Davies said there have been some procedural problems in the state procurement process for a new vehicle she has on order. Davies informed she issued three Requests for Quotes (RFQ) for the vehicle from Schetky, Creative Bus and Western Bus companies. Western Bus opted not to bid. Schetky and Creative Bus both provided quotes with Creative Bus as the low quote. Davies informed there was a tire error on the Schetky original quote that was corrected on the revised RFQ. Schetky's original bid came in at \$53,104 and the revised bid was \$52,996. Low bidder was Creative Bus quoted \$46,134. Davies elected to go with the Schetky 2015 MD-1 bus because it is American made and of superior quality being built from the ground up. Davies spoke with Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) procurement representative Christine West and explained that the Dodge Caravan quoted by Creative Bus didn't not meet the specifications she requested in the RFQ. The Dodge had an aftermarket lift and was built on an after-market chassis. Davies informed American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant vehicles are required to be purchased through ODOT. ODOT approved the

2015 MD-1, but Davies wanted to make sure she was in compliance with the Court's procurement process. Judge Shaffer asked if Davies Transportation Board approved her decision. Transportation Board Member Mike Cronk was present and affirmed the Transportation Board approved of the decision. Commissioner Gronquist said the Court needed to confirm they are allowed to approve the more expensive vehicle. He said historically the Court has been required to accept the low bid, unless there is a good reason to choose a higher one. Davies said she another RFQ she will be issuing later in January and wanted to make sure the next vehicle purchase follows the Court's procurement procedures so she asked for direction from the Court. Commissioner Gronquist said the Court needs to consult with legal counsel to make sure they have permission to accept a higher bid if that bid is for a superior product. If legal counsel says they can, then Davies will only need to request permission to issue the RFQ. Commissioner Weimar asked who would own the vehicle title. Davies informed it will be owned by ODOT, but will have Gilliam County's name on it. At the end of the vehicle life ODOT will surplus the van to Gilliam County and the County can sell the van and keep the money.

Davies then distributed a Joint Use Agreement drawn up by legal counsel Will Carey. The agreement is between Gilliam County and the South Gilliam County Rural Fire Protection District for use of their building in Lonerock to house one of her Transportation vehicles. The only change to the document Davies would like to make is to omit the word Special and have the agreement simply read, Gilliam County Transportation.

**Motion** by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to approve the Joint Use Agreement between Gilliam County and the South Gilliam County Rural Fire Protection District for use of their building in Lonerock for storage of a Gilliam County Transportation vehicle. Discussion: Commissioner Weimar said he would prefer to receive documents like this in his packet so he can review them ahead of Court. Vote: Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

Davies presented Judge Shaffer and the Commissioners with a summary of new proposed insurance coverage for her volunteer drivers. Davies informed that County volunteer drivers have been without excess insurance since July 1, 2015 when CAPECO dropped their RSVP insurance program. Davies strongly advocated for insurance for her volunteer drivers. She said she didn't want County volunteers to incur a financial burden for volunteering. Commissioner Gronquist asked Davies to come back next Court meeting to discuss the issue further. Judge Shaffer thought there should be further clarification of the definition of County volunteers ahead of making any decision.

Davies informed she was awarded a second \$45,000 Veteran's grant. She will receive funds retroactively to October 1, 2015, but funds won't arrive until later in January.

Davies gave Judge Shaffer and the Commissions a handout listing grants she is hoping to apply for in 2016. She met with her Transportation Board and said they were largely in agreement. One thing Davies will be looking to fund a very part time person to fill in for

her when she is out of the office. She and Family Services Director Teddy Fennern try to fill in for one another, but both are really too busy with their own work to do that. Davies informed she is implementing a new policy of quarterly meetings with her drivers for safety and convenience reasons. Davies said she is going to need to find funds to build a larger bus barn for the new bus. She also needs to find somewhere to clean her vehicles. They are used constantly and get really dirty. Davies would like to have an interior hose bib at both barns. Judge Shaffer said he thought it was important for Transportation to remain housed in the Courthouse so there would be a central location for public ease. Regarding a part time employee Judge Shaffer said has some ideas he will be discussing with the Commissioners. Davies said she thinks there is also great need for a local driver in Condon with a regular route twice a week to help transport seniors to the Clinic, Wellness Center and take them grocery shopping. Commissioner Gronquist had reservations about whether a program like that would be logistically viable, but encouraged Davies to pursue options. Judge Shaffer asked if Davies was applying for state or federal dollars. Davies said all of the grants she applies for are federal dollars. Judge Shaffer said he thought Davies did an excellent job advocating for rural populations.

Davies informed there will be a speed limit increase for portions of Eastern Oregon effective March 1, 2016 increasing the speed limit for cars to 70 mph and 65 mph for trucks.

Davies attended the Oregon Public Transit Conference (OPTC) and was asked to do a presentation on her volunteers, titled Frontier Premiere, Gilliam County Transportation: Welcome to the Frontier Partner and Davies distributed a copy to Members of the Court.

#### IN THE MATTER OF COURT MEMBER REPORTS

Judge Shaffer informed he met with Four Rivers Early Learning Hub Coordinator Christa Rude regarding grant dollars Gilliam County receives currently receives from Healthy Start and Head Start that will now be going directly to Four Rivers to be distributed directly back into the community. As a result Rude will need to hire a part time person to conduct field work in Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties. What the Hub is proposing finding a way to intertwine that position with some of the data collection Family Services Director Teddy Fennern is required to do quarterly at day cares and pre-schools. Rude is putting together a proposal that will address the staffing needs of Early Learning, Coordinated Care Organizations, Family Services and Transportation. The Coordinated Care Organization will be giving the Early Learning Hub \$50,000/year to address future staffing needs in the Tri-County area.

#### IN THE MATTER OF RUTE FOUNDATION SYSTEMS PROJECT UPDATE

RUTE Foundation Systems, Inc. Principal Doug Krause and Port of Arlington Manager and Gilliam County Economic Development Officer Peter Mitchell were present to discuss

a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) RUTE has written for the Gorge Training Facility (GTF). Krause would like Court Members to sign an Economic Development Agreement MOU between RUTE Foundation Systems, Inc. and Gilliam County. The MOU will have the Gorge Training Facility switch from being a non-profit corporation to an Oregon Benefit Corporation. Krause said he understood the Gorge Training Facility would only be viable if a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is negotiated with Columbia Basin Electric Co-op. In initial discussions with Columbia Basin, the turbine would only be eligible as a non-profit public owned project. As an Oregon Benefit Corporation (OBC), the GTF would still be completely independent from RUTE. The corporation would have a Board of Directors and be independently managed. The reason for converting the GTF to an OBC is so the project would be eligible for Production Tax Credit (PTC) dollars. The dollar figures on Krause's flow chart were created using projected annual figures from Brian Skeahan's analysis. Krause then multiplied them by 10, reflecting revenue and expenses over a 10 year period. He opined that if you add up the projected revenue from the PPA and the PTC funds would bring in over \$7 million to pay off a \$4 to \$5 million dollar construction debt. The \$1.5 million dollar debt in the Career Technology Education (CTE) debt box reflects the \$150,000 a year taken out of the PPA to pay for CTE education. Commissioner Gronquist asked if there is currently a signed PPA with Columbia Basin. Krause informed that there currently is not. Krause thought that having a signed Economic Development Agreement MOU would be a necessary step toward obtaining a PPA. Judge Shaffer informed that Columbia Basin got the go ahead a week ago from the BPA to enter into a PPA with the Gorge Training Facility. The next step will be to negotiate the exact terms of the PPA. Commissioner Gronquist asked how much the Turbine project will cost Gilliam County. Krause said the bottom line is that he doesn't know for sure. He has a turbine quote from GE and a construction quote from a respected contractor and those figures say it will cost somebody about \$4.2 million to develop the GTF project. It then becomes how to finance the Turbine. The USDA Loan Guarantee program would be one option. In order to receive financing there is going to have to be 25% since banks will only finance a turbine project up to 75%. Krause said that if RUTE weren't in the picture he would still advise the County to do the project because it is a good project for work force training and CTE education in area schools. Judge Shaffer said his concerns with turning the GTF into an Oregon Benefit Corporation is that could affect the projects ability to secure the \$2.5 million EDA grant. Krause said he wasn't too worried because there are small demonstration projects all over the country who receive both tax credits and grant money. Judge Shaffer said that he will have a hard time putting County money toward the cost of the GE Turbine ahead of the PPA. He noted that Tommy Wolfe the CEO of Columbia Basin said it could take as long as 18 months to secure the PPA. Judge Shaffer said he understood that time frame might with RUTE's needs. Judge Shaffer asked Krause to clarify what the Economic Development MOU would mean for Gilliam County and what financial investment is RUTE planning to make in their manufacturing facility in Arlington? Krause said by year one or two, at the point RUTE goes commercial, Shutler Station will look a lot like an operational pre-cast concrete yard. There will be a concrete batch facility, there will be precast forms, forklifts, etc. Eventually

there will be a large pole building for storing precast beams and a couple of 30' to 40' overhead cranes moving beams from stage one to stage two around the facility. Judge Shaffer asked EDO Mitchell if the Court should have legal counsel review the MOU. Mitchell said an Economic Development Agreement would be a two-step process. The first step would be to sign the non-binding MOU showing a commitment to the project and the second would be to transition that document into an Economic Development Agreement that would be a framework for project development. Commissioner Gronquist said that he has given this project a lot of thought, and while it has nothing to do with RUTE, but informed he would not sign the MOU. Krause said the benefit of the MOU to the County would be RUTE's commitment to locating its manufacturing facility in Gilliam County. Commissioner Gronquist asked what RUTE was contributing to help get the project off the ground. Krause said the right now RUTE is committed to selling the foundation footer for \$100,000 under market value and is spending time and money moving the GTF forward. Krause posed the question back to the Court, "If we don't want to do economic development agreements then what are the terms the County is considering?" Commissioner Gronquist said to be frank, he doesn't like the project. He has given the project a lot of thought and doesn't think it is a good investment for Gilliam County and that didn't have anything to do with RUTE in particular. He said he doesn't think the GTF as an educational entity will be successful. Commissioner Gronquist said that there are too many unknowns, there still isn't a PPA and therefore presented too much risk to Gilliam County. He felt by continuing to sign MOU agreements that he would be leading RUTE on. He would be willing sign letters of support, but not commit to investing over a million dollars of County funds for the GTF. He noted that he has been reluctant to say this because he has not wanted to try and influence Judge Shaffer or Commissioner Weimar. Judge Shaffer interjected that he believed the GTF is a great opportunity for Gilliam County. He is confident the County will recoup whatever money they invest in the project. Judge Shaffer said he works with the renewable energy industry all the time and fully understands what the return on investment will be with a PPA with Columbia Basin. He stated that he felt it would be a much better investment than a number of other projects the County has invested in. If the County's investment were as low as \$1.5 million vs \$4 million the revenue the County would earn, based on a 20 PPA is the current norm within the industry. Krause said he thought it was time to stop going around in circles and advance to the project development phase. The remaining questions will be answered during the development process. Krause felt the County should be supportive of the project even if they don't want to invest financially. However, the County needs to recognize that the real lever is the \$1.5 million that needs to go to GE in the next three months to secure the turbine. Krause said if RUTE can show the bank there will be an adequate rate of return, have secured a loan guarantee, are close to securing a PPA and have raised \$1.5 million in equity they should be able to get a loan. After the GTF is up and running RUTE will be manufacturing footers in Arlington. Krause said there will be a RUTE type business in the area even if it isn't in Arlington. Judge Shaffer asked Mitchell his opinion. Mitchell said the bottom line is that Krause is looking for \$1.5 million to get the GTF facility off the ground. Krause is working off Skeahan's analysis. The County's



investment would be \$1.5 million and if the foundation footer looks to be successful Gilliam County will end up with RUTE's manufacturing facility. Mitchell agreed that there are complications with getting energy projects up and running, but if the Court has real interest he thought the County should move forward with the project. Judge Shaffer said right now he sees his role as helping to facilitate the PPA with Columbia Basin since that is a necessary step. Commissioner Weimar said if a PPA is successfully negotiated, it won't hurt either Columbia Basin or Bonneville if the GTF ultimately doesn't get built. Commissioner Weimar advocated for continuing to negotiate the PPA. However, he said he had a problem with the language in the MOU stating "Since October the GTF has been proven by independent experts, a well-founded, financially secure wind project and is ready for financing work." Commissioner Weimar stated there were still too many unknowns to be able to make that claim. Judge Shaffer said that he had to agree with that assessment until there is a signed PPA. Krause noted he has sent out the financial plan several times that shows the project is financially secure. Commissioner Weimar asked who had vetted the financial plan for thoroughness and accuracy. Mitchell said that Skeahan had and had previously presented that to the Court. Commissioner Weimar noted that was only one person's evaluation. Krause said Ormand Hildebrand the owner of PaTu Wind Farm had also approved the financial plan. Commissioner Gronquist noted the Court had previously agreed that Skeahan's data was sound. Commissioner Weimar continued to question the accuracy of Skeahan's data without it being independently verified. Mitchell said it was a very robust model, that Skeahan used the industry standard used to evaluate turbine projects. Commissioner Weimar said he thought RUTE's cost projections were too low based on conversations with his brother who works in the wind industry. Mitchell said that Skeahan had used trade standards, but understood Commissioner Weimar is questioning if Skeahan's assumptions would hold up to independent scrutiny. Judge Shaffer said that is exactly why he brought Jeff Schott on board, to verify aspects of RUTE's financial plan. Krause said he had two quotes from top industry people – a turbine quote and a construction quote – and it shouldn't be more complicated than that. Krause said he would be happy to have a conversation with Commissioner Weimar's brother. Times-Journal Publisher, Maclaren Stinchfield, asked if the Court had received Schott's analysis. Judge Shaffer said they had not, that he had asked Schott to hold off on further work until after the current Court meeting. Krause asked the Court to agree to have Schott continue with his analysis? Members of the Court agreed. Judge Shaffer agreed to call Columbia Basin to ask how converting the GTF to an Oregon Benefit Corporation might affect the PPA. Mitchell asked the Court to what level of participation they were willing to commit to. Did they want to be a \$1.5 million stakeholder, or were they interested providing the GTF loans or grants to get the project up and running? Or did the Court not want to see the project developed. Commissioner Gronquist informed Mitchell that without information from Schott and Columbia Basin they don't have enough information to make that decision. Commissioner Weimar agreed. Krause also stressed the importance of the MOU in showing banks and other entities such as Business Oregon that the Court is seriously committed to the project. The MOU is not binding so they can change their mind. Krause asked Members of the Court to voice

concerns as they arise. He can't answer questions he doesn't know about. Commissioner Gronquist ask Krause exactly what he needed the \$1.5 million for. Krause said the \$1.5 million would be the cash equity he needed to secure a bank loan. Krause asked how RUTE could secure the batch plant at Shutler Station. Judge Shaffer said he preferred the County retain ownership of the batch plant and lease the facility to RUTE. Judge Shaffer asked Krause how long it would take to show the wind industry that RUTE's foundation footer was structurally sound. Krause said that would take a week and a half. Krause explained there is a finite element model that defines the mechanics of the entire structure. When you put a million pounds of dead load on the beams, the beams react in a specific way that can be measured to microns. That data will be sent to the finite element model which will produce statistical performance outputs. Krause used the analogy of a building. When a completed building stands up people don't wait years to assess its performance. When the Turbine goes operational and encounters the first wind there will be a second set of performance data that will be evaluated. Those figures will be sent back to RUTE's engineering firm Barr. Barr is the structural engineering firm that has engineered all of the wind turbines in the area. Barr will analyze the finite element model results. Krause believes Barr will conclude there is less than 2 microns of error and that the foundation footer is sound and a performed as expected. Barr would then release that information to the industry and that will generate interest in buyers coming to the GTF to take a look. Krause said by that time he is anticipating attracting capital investment. What will take longer will be generating a specific industry quote. The process will involve going to the proposed site, conducting soils testing, etc. and the entire process can take up to 18 months. However, during that time the finite element model will continue to generate data and give the industry time to learn more about footer. RUTE will likely have beams under construction within six months in order to give them time to cure so they will be ready to go when orders come in. Judge Shaffer is looking for more information ahead of the next Court meeting.

#### IN THE MATTER OF THE CONTRACT NO. JUV-0115-16

Contract No. JUV-0115-16 is between Gilliam County and Community Counseling Solutions for a School Based Counselor Program in the amount of \$10,250. The funds are coming from a Youth and Community Grant – Youth Investment in the amount of 5,250; and Juvenile Crime Plan Grant in the amount of \$5,000. These funds will be used to continue the School Based Counselor Program. The position used to be held by Rebecca Humphries and is now held by Katie Hamms. Commissioner Gronquist asked if the contract language is the same as last year. Judge Shaffer informed it is. Commissioner Weimar asked if the \$10,250 was funding a part time position. Judge Shaffer informed the position is full time and these funds are just a portion of the money that funds this position.

**Motion** by Commissioner Weimar, seconded by Commissioner Gronquist to accept Contract No. JUV-0115-16 between Gilliam County and Community Counseling Solutions

for the School Based Counselor Program; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes;  
**Motion carried.**

#### IN THE MATTER OF DAVID VAN'T HOF CONTRACT RENEWAL

Judge Shaffer opened discussion of contract renewal for Energy Consultant David Van't Hof. Hof was hired by the Columbia Gorge Bi-State Regional Zone to lobby the State of California on behalf of Oregon and Washington to open up the California border for the purchase of renewable energy sales. The contact is paid for by Gilliam, Sherman and Klickitat counties. Last year Gilliam County made a \$7,000 initial payment and then after a performance review the County paid the remaining \$3,000. Judge Shaffer asked if the Commissioners decide to renew Van't Hof's contract for one more year the County authorize a \$5,000 initial payment and a second \$5,000 payment after a performance review. The matter was tabled until the next County Court meeting January 20, 2016.

#### IN THE MATTER OF COURT MEMBER REPORTS CONTINUED

Judge Shaffer informed he met with State Representative Greg Smith regarding possible State funding available for fiber in Gilliam County. One change Judge Shaffer noted from previous discussions was that Rep. Smith is working on the possibility of a forgivable 0% interest loan. The other potential funding discussed was finding Business Oregon work force dollars. If the County could document that fiber would add 8 to 12 jobs in the County work force dollars might be an option. Judge Shaffer said he told Rep. Smith that without access to fiber the County faces the possibility of losing 12 to 14 jobs from the Regional 911 call center. Rep. Smith has asked Judge Shaffer and Rob Myers to write a white paper outlining their request. He and Myers are currently working on that. Judge Shaffer informed he spoke with Regional Solutions and was informed that fiber is currently not a priority for them. Judge Shaffer said he will continue to work on obtaining funding for the fiber backbone from Arlington to Condon.

Judge Shaffer, met with Governor Brown's Energy Advisory Task Force. The task force continued to work on mapping transmission lines through northeastern Oregon. Of major concern is placing transmission lines over high value farm land. Judge Shaffer said he is still looking for that high value farm land in Gilliam County.

Judge Shaffer informed Juvenile Court volume has increased due to traffic stops along I 84 where there has been illegal activity with minors in the vehicle. This has increased Juvenile Director Vicki Winter's work load.

Judge Shaffer informed NORCOR working groups continue work to make NORCOR leaner. Judge Shaffer is part of the Revenue and Efficiency group and the Juvenile group. There has been continued discussion in the Efficiency group that they won't ever be able to make the Juvenile side efficient and continue to discuss shutting down. The Juvenile

group is looking at any way they can trim costs and bring in additional revenue to keep the Juvenile side operational. Judge Shaffer said he continues to point out to the Efficiency group that NORCOR's original mission was to be both an adult and juvenile facility and believes NORCOR should remain as such. He informed that Juvenile currently houses between 16 and 20 juveniles. Only one in four of those juveniles comes from the four county region. NORCOR currently charges between \$85 and \$130/day for juveniles from outside the four county region. Sherman County Commissioner McCoy did an analysis that revealed the daily average cost of housing juveniles from the four counties is \$350/day. If fees are too high law enforcement will transport juveniles elsewhere; if fees are too low then the four counties will continue to pay more disproportionately. As a result the Juvenile group is looking toward a combination of bed reduction, streamlining of services which would allow for staff reduction and raising day fees to keep NORCOR competitive with other facilities. Commissioner Weimar asked what the daily cost is per juvenile. Judge Shaffer said the Efficiency group is in the process of working on that. The cost per adult per day is \$120, but there are additional cost to housing juveniles such as education and health care.

Judge Shaffer informed he had a meeting at the Courthouse on January 5<sup>th</sup> and learned there is real concern about the safety and security of the Courtroom during trials. There is discussion of putting in card key locks similar to those at Courthouse entrances that could be used during trials to limit public access.

Commissioner Gronquist informed he and Court Administrator Leanne Durfey have not met with Waste Management since December 16<sup>th</sup> County Court.

Commissioner Weimar informed he attended a CAPECO meeting, but his other two meetings were cancelled due to weather.

#### IN THE MATTER OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY MODIFICATION

Gilliam and Wheeler Counties have been working towards transitioning from the Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation (GEODC) to Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD). When Gilliam County began the process GEODC was without an Executive Director. Bank of Eastern Oregon CEO Jeff Bailey asked Gilliam County to delay the transition until they hired a new Director. GEODC now has a new Executive Director Tillman Carr. Carr has decided GEODC doesn't want to release Gilliam and Wheeler counties to join MCEDD due to the fact that could set a precedent. At an earlier meeting Tillman Carr and Economic Development Administrator David Porter informed Judge Shaffer Gilliam County could write resolution to leave GEODC and send the resolution to the Economic Development Administration to sign off on the release. Judge Shaffer said that in his most recent conversation with Porter he learned that Business Oregon is going to make it incredibly burdensome for Gilliam County to change Regional Economic Districts. Judge Shaffer asked the Commissioners for permission to seek Congressional help in facilitating the move to MCEDD. Gilliam and Wheeler

Counties will have to apply separately. Commissioner Gronquist asked what counties are affiliated with MCEDD. Judge Shaffer answered the affiliated counties are Klickitat, Skamania, Hood River, Wasco and Sherman. Judge Shaffer noted that Gilliam County works closely with Klickitat and Sherman counties on renewable energy. Skamania County is very interested in having Wheeler County join MCEDD because they have a number of natural ties such as securing rural schools and timber issues. Members of the Court agreed that in almost all realms Gilliam County is more closely aligned with MCEDD and Judge Shaffer should continue to work to facilitate the transition.

IN THE MATTER OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

**Motion** by Commissioner Gronquist, seconded by Commissioner Weimar to approve the December 2, 2015 Regular Meeting minutes, the December 2, 2015 Executive Session minutes and the December Claims pending review; Shaffer – Yes; Gronquist – Yes; Weimar – Yes; **Motion carried.**

IN THE MATTER OF THE NEXT COURT MEETING

The next Gilliam County Court meeting will be held on January 20, 2016 beginning at 10:00 a.m., at Gilliam County Courthouse in Condon.

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 1:57 p.m.

GILLIAM COUNTY COURT

By \_\_\_\_\_

Steve Shaffer, Judge

By \_\_\_\_\_

Dennis Gronquist, Commissioner

By \_\_\_\_\_

Michael Weimar, Commissioner

*R. Weinstein/Recorder*