

**CROOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
OF MARCH 27, 2024, WORK SESSION
Open Portion**

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of Commissioners met in a regularly scheduled Work Session on March 27, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Administration Conference room located at 203 NE Court Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

Court Members Present: Commissioner Susan Hermreck and Commissioner Brian Barney

Absentees: Commissioner Seth Crawford

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: Legal Counsels Eric Blaine and John Eisler; Executive Administrative Assistant Sarah Puerner; Finance Director Christina Haron; Undersheriff Bill Elliott; Natural Resources Policy Coordinator Tim Deboodt; Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis; District Attorney Kari Hathorn; Assessor Jon Soliz; Extension Manager Kim Herber; Contract County Administrator Andy Parks; Library Director Sarah Beeler; Health and Human Services Director Katie Plumb; Juvenile Director Erika Frickey; Chief Information Officer Stephen Chellis; Road Superintendent Brad Haynes; Sheriff John Gautney; Christina Hannigan; Amy Albert; Mitch Madden; Katie McDonald; Hannah Elliott; Jason Elliott; Office Manager Alex Solterbeck; Cindy York; Stephanie West; Shannon Alleman; Shelby Fisher; Mona Glade; Breyanna Cupp; Stephanie Wilson; Linda Pepper; Randy Davis; Stephanie O'Neal; Julie Lancaster; Mike Ervin; Debbie Palmer; Monty Kurtz; Courtney Voss; Heather Roberts; and members of the public.

WORK SESSION

The meeting was **called to order at 9:00 a.m.**

Public Comment: None

Discussion item #1: Request to work with Insight Global to fill vacancies:

Requester: Amy Albert/ Stephen Chellis

Details: Amy Albert, HR Generalist, attended the Work Session to present an option for filling vacancies that have been open for over a month. HR and IT propose working with Insight Global to fill three IT Department positions. Insight Global specializes in IT staffing, even in remote areas. The costs for these positions are as follows: an Application Manager at \$16,240.60 to \$21,667.80, a Business Systems Analyst at \$13,906.80 to \$18,516.20, and an IT Manager at \$16,240.60 to \$21,627.80. These expenses are within the IT department's budget. This item will be moved to the April 3rd Regular Session as a discussion item.

Discussion item #2: Discussion regarding non-standard work scheduling policy:

Requester: Andy Parks

Details: Andy Parks, Contract County Administrator, attended the Work Session to discuss the non-standard work scheduling policy. The County's departments have diverse service delivery requirements, leading to varying work schedules across the organization. Previously, departments independently managed their schedules,

resulting in inconsistencies due to the lack of a County-wide policy. In response to considerable feedback regarding non-standard work hours, administration and HR staff collaborated with department directors to create a framework for non-standard work scheduling alternatives. This new policy aims to address the changing needs of the County and its employees, improve recruitment and retention, and reduce personnel costs due to decreased employee turnover. The policy includes five types of work schedules: remote, flexible, compressed, hybrid, and on-site. This item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 3rd.

Discussion item #3: Teen Internship Grant from the State Library of Oregon acceptance, \$3600.00:

Requester: Sarah Beeler

Details: Sarah Beeler, Library Director, attended the Work Session to discuss a recently awarded teen internship grant. Crook County applied for and received notification of acceptance this week. An MOU has been received and will be forwarded to County Counsel for review. The next step involves collaborating with HR to hire two teen interns who will assist with the summer reading programs at the Crook County Library. This item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 3rd.

Discussion item #4: Donation of land for small branch library in Paulina:

Requester: Sarah Beeler

Details: Sarah Beeler, Library Director, attended the Work Session to discuss the potential donation of land for a small branch library in Paulina. Ms. Beeler expressed interest in exploring the use of Crook County property for this purpose, which would also serve as a community bonding space and benefit school children in Paulina. Commissioner Hermreck has offered to donate land for the project. There may be site development and planning costs involved, and legal assistance might be needed for land acquisition. Ms. Beeler intends to move forward by consulting with the Paulina School District and the Road Department about this potential option.

Discussion item #5: Republic Services service update:

Requester: Jacquie Davis

Details: Courtney Voss and Erica Haitsma from Republic Services attended the Work Session to update the Commissioners on service issues within Crook County. Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis and Commissioner Crawford met with Republic Services staff to identify areas needing improvement. Courtney and Erica presented the improvements made since that meeting: New Vehicles: Republic Services has purchased heavy-duty vehicles designed for non-paved roads; Office Hours: The main office will now be open five days a week; Call Center: Call center agents are being retrained to provide accurate and updated information; Customer Notifications: They are reinstating the mail program and adding automated customer notifications to increase the amount of information customers receive; Credit System: A credit system for missed services will be implemented; and Route Optimization: They will start a route balancing and re-routing process to ensure routes are the right size for drivers to complete in a day, helping eliminate daily roll-overs. Ms. Haitsma also provided the annual financial report for the franchise agreement, noting a projected 10% rate increase for services starting on July 1, 2024.

Discussion item #6: PBS Environmental Contract Amendment:

Requester: Jacquie Davis

Details: Jacquie Davis, Landfill Manager, attended the Work Session to discuss a contract amendment with PBS Environmental. PBS Environmental handles environmental monitoring at the landfill and prepares quarterly and annual reports for DEQ. The amendment includes updated pricing for 2024, reflecting a \$20,000 increase due to a 20% rise in laboratory costs and additional costs for a split sampling event required in Fall 2024. County Counsel will review the amendment, and if there are no issues, it will be moved to the consent agenda for final approval on April 3rd.

Discussion item #7: Request to purchase a new transport car:

Requester: Erika Frickey

Details: Erika Frickey, Juvenile Director, attended the Work Session to request the purchase of a new transport vehicle. The current vehicle in the Juvenile Department's fleet has over 200,000 miles and has experienced numerous issues over the past year, including non-functional heating and a door that no longer opens, creating unsafe conditions for staff and community members. This van is used to transport youth across the state, making a reliable vehicle essential. The purchase of a new vehicle was approved, with \$53,000 allocated in the Juvenile Department's budget for this fiscal year. The new vehicle, a Dodge Durango, is priced just under \$50,000, allowing the department to also purchase an aftermarket law enforcement partition.

MOTION to approve purchasing a vehicle for the Juvenile Department and to be signed out of Court. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 2-0.

Discussion item #8: Health Communications Subcontract:

Requester: Katie Plumb

Details: Katie Plumb, Health and Human Services Director, attended the Work Session to discuss the health communications subcontract. Health & Human Services advertised for this project in February 2024, using platforms such as LinkedIn and professional organizations including the Central Oregon Health Council, Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials, and the Roundhouse Foundation. The application deadline was March 4th, and one application was received. It was reviewed by six members of the HHS leadership team, resulting in an 85% average score with follow-up questions for the applicant. The leadership team recommends proceeding with a contract for the proposal submitted by JSC Consulting, LLC. The project proposal is for \$50,000, which is covered by state public health modernization funds granted to the county for FY24. This item will be discussed further at the April 3rd Regular Session.

Discussion item #9: Update on current Title III funds and eligible uses:

Requester: Christina Haron

Details: Christina Haron, Finance Director, attended the Work Session to provide an update on the current Title III funds and their eligible uses. The County receives these funds under the Secure Rural Schools Act, which Congress has reauthorized multiple times since 2000, with various extensions and amendments. Title III funds must be used for specific purposes, including: Implementing activities under the Firewise communities program; Reimbursing the county for search and rescue and other

emergency services, such as firefighting and law enforcement patrols on public lands; Covering training costs and equipment purchases directly related to emergency services provided on public lands; Developing and carrying out community wildfire protection plans; and Providing or expanding access to broadband telecommunications services.

Discussion item #10: Request to expend up to \$300,000 of Title III Federal funds:

Requester: Christina Haron

Details: Mitch Madden from the Sheriff's Office attended the Work Session to present on Patrol and Emergency Services and request the expenditure of up to \$300,000 of Title III funds. The presentation covered Search and Rescue, wildfire response, major events, and the lack of preparedness regarding the incident command trailer and SAR Communications vehicle. The Sheriff's Office aims to develop a comprehensive IT/Communication System for a Mobile Incident Command Post (MICP) to enhance coordination and response capabilities. They received a Class A motor home from OSU Crook County Extension, equipped with workspaces, HVAC, power, water, and data cables, which will be used for emergency response on public lands. Title III funds, as specified in P.L. 115-141, section 302(a)(2), can reimburse counties for such activities. The anticipated \$250,000 expenditure in FY24 will require a supplemental budget to reallocate funds from Materials and Services to Capital Outlay. This request will be discussed on April 3rd, initiating a 45-day public comment period.

Discussion item #11: Community Development Monthly Update:

Requester: Will Van Vactor

Details: Randy Davis, Building Official, attended the Work Session to provide the monthly update for the Community Development Department. February saw a high volume of complaints. Dollar General is under review for a potential building in Juniper Canyon. The Building Department is experiencing a seasonal slowdown, with 148 building permits issued in February. There are currently 269 active commercial permits and 724 active residential permits. A total of 806 inspections were conducted for both commercial and residential projects. Fire and Rescue are undergoing a significant remodel, and the Jockey Room Project for the Fairgrounds is in review. Progress at the Justice Center is steady. Overall, both commercial and residential projects are proceeding well.

Discussion item #12: Update on ODA review of Central Oregon Crop Protection

District:

Requester: Tim Deboodt

Details: Tim Deboodt, Natural Resources Policy Coordinator, attended the Work Session to provide an update on the ODA review of the Central Oregon Crop Protection District. In May 2023, ODA held a public meeting in Prineville about the district, which controls the production of Brassica crops. Crook County had requested removal from the district, citing no benefit to local farmers. A follow-up meeting was held in Madras on March 19th, where ODA provided an update and sought further input from the Central Oregon agricultural community. Mr. Deboodt will draft a letter of support for Crook County's removal from the district, to be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 3rd.

Discussion item #13: Consider appointment to the Ag Extension Service District Advisory Board:

Requester: Kim Herber

Details: Kim Herber, Extension Manager, attended the Work Session to discuss a potential appointment to the Ag Extension Service District Advisory Board. There is currently an open position on the board, and the existing members have unanimously recommended Hunter Neuharth for the appointment. An official Order will be created, and this item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 3rd.

Discussion item #14: Consider appointments to the Budget Committee and the Compensation Committee:

Requester: Andy Parks

Details: Andy Parks, Contract County Administrator, attended the Work Session to discuss appointments to the Budget Committee and Compensation Committee. For the Compensation Committee, the applicants were Jo McCabe, Ronda Sneva, and William Anderson, all of whom were interviewed by Finance Director Christina Haron and meet the committee's requirements. For the Budget Committee, the applicants were Gary Bellah, Kristy Kurtz, Scott Tibbs, Steve Brown, and William Anderson. Finance Director Christina Haron and Budget Analyst Jamie Berger interviewed three of these applicants, with the remaining two interviews scheduled for next week. There are open positions on both committees that need to be filled. Additional information will be provided at the Work Session on April 10th.

Discussion item #15: Consider appointment of community member to the local public safety coordinating council (LPSCC):

Requester: Kari Hathorn

Details: Kari Hathorn, District Attorney, attended the Work Session to discuss an appointment to the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC). ORS 423.560 requires the Board of County Commissioners to appoint at least one citizen to the LPSCC board. Two citizens have submitted applications: Debra Patterson, a former Juvenile Director, and Laurie Medina, who has extensive experience in the criminal justice field. The Commissioners have the option to appoint both candidates, as the current LPSCC board supports their appointments. Ms. Hathorn will draft the Order, and this item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 3rd.

ADDITIONS:

Commissioner Barney requested authorization to sign a supplemental service budget with the architects. This pertains to the lot that the County purchased next to the Justice Center. The house will be vacant soon and made into a parking lot.

MOTION to approve the Pinnacle Architecture Inc. Project 2036.cj for the amount of \$66,650.00 and for Commissioner Barney to sign out of Court. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 2-0.

Administrator Report:

Andy Parks asked Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis to provide an update on Todd Hedges' behavior. Mr. Hedges has been disrespectful and confrontational, particularly

towards female employees, making them feel harassed and unsafe. Recently, he made inappropriate comments to Jacquie Davis and criticized the landfill's discount policy for county residents. Due to these ongoing issues, the landfill crew often allows him to bypass the scale to avoid conflicts. Jacquie Davis requests that Mr. Hedges be banned from the facility. County Counsel will prepare a letter, and the Sheriff's Office will assist in serving it to ensure he does not return to the landfill.

Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Hermreck noted that on March 22nd, she had a Zoom meeting with nine others, including members from the Governor's Office, Dogami, OHA, and DEQ regarding the water contamination issue. The initial proposal was to hold a town hall meeting to discuss the issue openly. However, some community members are reluctant to speak about their experiences in a public forum, so the decision was made to proceed with a listening session instead. This session will be held at either the Library or COCC from 4 pm to 7 pm on an upcoming date. More information will be provided as details are finalized.

Commissioner Hermreck and Andy Parks will meet with Steve Forrester to discuss a potential agreement on funding for events held at the Fairgrounds. Currently, the County Fairgrounds host events but do not receive most of the revenue generated, which is needed to help maintain the facilities. Commissioner Hermreck aims to mediate this issue and establish an agreement to allocate funds for the upkeep of the fairgrounds.

At 11:17 a.m. the Court read into Executive Session under the following statute(s): ORS 192.660(2)(h) Consulting with Counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the County Court convened back into Open Session, inviting members of the public into the meeting room.

MOTION to direct staff to proceed as discussed in the Executive Session. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 2-0.

There being no further business before the Court, the meeting was **adjourned at 11:54 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Puerner