

UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Joseph Building Annex Conference Room
Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Present: Commissioner Paul Anderes, Chair
Commissioner Donna Beverage
Commissioner R. Matthew Scarfo – via teleconference

Commissioner Anderes opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

AGENDA REVIEW

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, requested to add Sheriff Cody Bowen under Elected Official, Department Head and Employee Comments to present the School Resource Officer contract for County School District.

There were no further additions made to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim & Fuji Kreider, 60366 Morgan Lake Road, La Grande, addressed the Commissioners regarding Resolution 2023-14; Establishing Coordination. The Kreider's referred to questions submitted via email asking about how the county intended using the resolution.

Commissioner Beverage responded to Mr. Kreider's question referring to an "American Standards" (www.americanstandards.us) statement regarding coordination between federal and county governments. The Commissioners do not know what the future holds, and are just enforcing a law that is already in place.

Commissioner Anderes indicated that he plans to potentially use the resolution with regard to the Forest Plan Revision.

Mr. Kreider's questions regarding the resolution stem from the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line (B2H) & Coordination on that project. He was a part of a state group last legislative session where they developed a draft plan of right citing (?) which then went to the legislature and was passed. Mr. Kreider would like to know how the resolution could play into the county's role of deciding "what are proper renewable energy resources" in Union County, especially when it comes to primary farm use lands and what is anticipated in the way of coordination with state agencies.

Commissioner Anderes clarified that state agencies are mentioned in the Resolution only with regard to their part of federal plans.

Fuji Kreider, 60366 Morgan Lake Road, La Grande, addressed the Commissioners with her public comment regarding Resolution 2023-14; Establishing Coordination. Mrs. Kreider asked the Commissioners if there was any potential in coordination regarding the B2H Movement. She feels the intent is confusing and would want specifics and clarity.

Irene Gilbert, 2310 Adams Avenue, La Grande, addressed the Commissioner with her concerns in the adoption of Resolution 2023-14; Establishing Coordination. She doesn't believe that the Commissioners have been at the table for much of anything in the county, and is surprised to see such a resolution on the agenda for approval. She is very concerned about the B2H site certificate approved and its potential 100-year life.

There were no further public comments.

ELECTED OFFICIAL, DEPARTMENT HEAD & EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

Amalgamated Sugar Lease Agreement

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, addressed the Commissioners with the Amalgamated Sugar Lease Agreement for their consideration.

This agreement is between Amalgamated Sugar Company and Union County. The agreement shall be for a five-year period effective the date the agreement is signed by both parties. The rent will be \$2,000 per year, paid annually.

Commissioner Anderes asked how long Amalgamated Sugar has been in business in La Grande. Director Wright is unaware of the length of time, but knows that they were in business before he began working for Union County.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the Amalgamated Sugar Lease Agreement. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Woodruff Bridge Agreement Termination

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, provided background information pertaining to the Woodruff Bridge Agreement Termination to the Commissioners for their information.

The State of Oregon Department of Transportation and Union County entered into an agreement on May 16, 2022. The agreement was to secure funding to design and construct a replacement bridge structure. It has been determined that the agreement should be terminated and considered void. The bridge was originally to be funded with state funds which would have allowed for in-kind match. It has since been changed to federal funding increasing the cost and requiring cash match. This would be a significant impact to the Public Works budget and a more cost-effective access solution has been identified.

There are many other bridges throughout Union County that need repair.

Commissioner Beverage thanked Director Wright for looking at the situation and seeing the use compared to the cost.

Commissioner Anderes had a lengthy conversation on the bridge with one of the family members and common-sense dictates that we do not put a bridge in.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the termination of the Woodruff Bridge Agreement as presented. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Wallowa County Jail Use Agreement

Nick Huelter, Lieutenant, addressed the Commissioners with the Wallowa County Jail Use Agreement for their consideration.

Lt. Huelter indicated that the Wallowa County Jail Use Agreement was discussed several months ago, and has been signed and adopted by Wallowa County. The agreement shall be in effect on July 1, 2023 and expire on June 30, 2028 for a minimum of six (6) spaces for Wallowa prisoners. However, Union County will accept and house up to eight (8) prisoners at a time if needed.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the Wallowa County Jail Use Agreement. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Medical Services Provider Agreement

Nick Huelter, Lieutenant, addressed the Commissioners with the Medical Services Provider Agreement for their consideration.

This contract is between the Union County Sheriff's Office and Western Skies Medical Center and shall become effective on August 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$4,000 per month.

Commissioner Scarfo made a motion to approve the Medical Services Provider Agreement with Western Skies Medical Center as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

County Schools Resource Officer Contract

Cody Bowen, Sheriff, addressed the Commissioners with the Resource Officer Agreement with County Schools for their consideration.

The agreement is made between the Union County Sheriff's Office, Cove, La Grande, North Powder, Union and Intermountain School Districts. The agreement will take effect immediately and expire on June 30, 2025.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the County Schools Contract as presented. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of the consent agenda which included the July 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 25, 26, 31 and August 1 & 2, 2023 claims journals and June 28 and July 5 & 19, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Scarfo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Child Support Services Cooperative Agreement

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Child Support Services Cooperative Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration.

This Cooperative Agreement (No. 23507) between the Oregon Department of Justice, Union County and the Union County District Attorney for Child Support Services. The agreement will run for a period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2027.

The agreement has been reviewed and signed by District Attorney McDaniel and is seeking approval.

Commissioner Scarfo made a motion to approve the Child Support Services Cooperative Agreement No. 23507 as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2023-14 – Establishing Coordination

For the record, Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, read out loud Resolution 2023-14; In the Matter of Establishing Coordination between Union County and Federal Agencies and State Agencies Involved with Federal Agencies.

Legal Counsel has reviewed the resolution and does not see any reason the County cannot adopt said resolution.

Commissioner Anderes indicated that the reason he brought this forward was for coordination with the Forest Service on the forest plan.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-14; Establishing Coordination. Commissioner Scarfo seconded.

Commissioner Anderes also indicated that Union County is not the only county considering this resolution.

Motion carried unanimously.

Paid Leave Oregon Policy

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Paid Leave Oregon Policy to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The state has established what is called “Paid Leave Oregon” (PLO), which is funded by an employment tax that was implemented January 1, 2023. The tax is paid 60 percent by the employee and 40 percent employer. The program will be administered through the Oregon Employment Division and qualified employees will have the ability to apply for paid leave through the Oregon Employment Division if they are off for medical reasons. Family leave, Medical leave and Safe leave are the three categories available.

Each employer is required to have a policy that addresses certain things such as notifications from employees who are intending to use PLO. We are also required to hold those positions while the employee is on PLO. For many of the employees, PLO would cover their gross salary level, however, there are some that it will not due to different formulas for each employee.

The employee will be required to provide verification of their paid leave amount so the payroll department can calculate that appropriately.

Commissioner Scarfo made a motion to approve the Paid Leave Oregon Policy as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session – ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions

The Chair called an executive session at 9:45 AM. The meeting reconvened at 9:55 AM.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Beverage thanked the Eastern Oregon Women’s Coalition for bringing the Economic Summit to Union County a couple of weeks ago. She enjoyed the tours, and visiting with those in attendance.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 9 AM.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Anderes adjourned the meeting at 9:56 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore
Senior Department Specialist