

**UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
*Joseph Building Annex Conference Room*  
Regular Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, May 1, 2024

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

Commissioner Scarfo opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was given with all three Commissioners present.

**AGENDA REVIEW**

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, requested to postpone Items V & IX d. until the next regular scheduled Commission meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments at this time.

Commissioner Scarfo closed the public comment period.

**Union Clean-up Day**

Celeste Tate, Union City Manager, 310 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Elgin, presented the Union Clean-Up Day funding request to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The City of Union will be hosting their clean-up day on May 11<sup>th</sup> to assist the community with sprucing up their properties. The city is requesting financial support of \$2,000 to assist with the costs associated with the event.

Commissioner Beverage thanked Ms. Tate for her hard work on this event and hitting the ground running in her new position.

**Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the Union Clean Up Day Funding Request up to \$2,000 in matching funds from the Solid Waste District Budget as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded.**

Commissioner Anderes indicated that ACE Hardware will take old paint. However, he encourages that you call first. He also gave to kudos to Imbler FFA for the highway clean up on Earth Day.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**2025 Union County Chamber Work Plan**

Caitlin Harrold, Union County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, presented the FY 2024-2025 Work Plan to the Commissioners for their consideration.

Caitlin Harrold is wrapping up her 5<sup>th</sup> month in her new position, and is blown away by the beauty and vibrancy of Union County. She extended a special thank you to the Commissioners for

working hard everyday to make Union County a great place to live. She is looking forward to the year ahead and a successful partnership.

Ms. Harrold provided an overview of the program of work which included updates on Sparkloft Media for website maintenance, advertising Union County, membership status, and the budget.

Commissioner Beverage asked if Website Maintenance will be handled in house. Ms. Harrold indicated that is correct, as well as through the platform provider. She also indicated they hire a new Media Outreach Coordinator, and that will be one of her tasks in the upcoming fiscal year.

Commissioner Beverage is thankful to have Ms. Harrold as the new Chamber Director, and looks forward to their partnership.

**Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the 2025 Work Plan as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded.**

Commissioner Anderes indicated that the membership dues for the Chamber are quite reasonable considering other memberships the county pays to other organizations.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**ELECTED OFFICIAL, DEPARTMENT HEAD & EMPLOYEE COMMENTS**

MERA Fire Prevention Agreement

Josh Ford, Parks Coordinator, presented the MERA Fire Prevention Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The MERA Advisory Committee has reviewed and updated the master plan, which was last reviewed in 2014. Upon completion, it was brought to their attention that the Fire Prevention Agreement is also outdated and should compare to Oregon Department of Forestry's current guidelines. The updated agreement follows ODF's Low, Moderate, High and Extreme fire danger framework.

Commissioner Beverage appreciated the highlighted changes in the agreement.

Commissioner Anderes appreciates the relationship between our Parks Department and ODF locally. He is struggling with the landowner contribution that the State Board of Forestry non-elected board passed, which is a tax increase for local citizens.

**Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the MERA Fire Prevention Agreement as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded.**

Commissioner Beverage thanked Mr. Ford for his work on the agreement.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Re-Designation of ARPA Funds Request

Josh Ford, Parks Coordinator, presented the Re-designation of ARPA Funds request to the Commissioners for their consideration.

Union County Parks is requested to re-designate \$60,000 of ARPA funds previously approved for Water Development on Fox Hill to purchase a Mini Excavator for MERA. The non-motorized section of MERA lacks a large enough excavator to clean up after the Red Apple Forest Improvement Project, while maintaining the infrastructure.

The purchase of the excavator will also be used for piling slash, fixing roads, building and repairing trails.

Commissioner Beverage asked if the funds previously approved for water development were for grazing. Mr. Ford indicated when the funds were approved, he was unclear. However, he doesn't believe water would help the conditions at this time.

**Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the of Re-Designation of ARPA Funds in the amount of \$60,000 for the purchase of a Mini Cat Excavator as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded.**

Commissioner Scarfo asked if Administrative Officer Burgess would need to redo paperwork. She indicated that she would not need to.

Commissioner Anderes is happy to continue to invest in MERA.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA

**Commissioner Anderes moved approval of the consent agenda which included the April 17 & 24, 2024 claims journals and meeting minutes of April 17, 2024 as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Court Order 2024-09: In the Matter of Appointment to the Union County Vector Control District Budget Committee

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented Court Order 2024-09 to the Commissioners for their consideration.

There is an open position available on the Union County Vector Control District Budget Committee and an application has been received from Randy McKinnis expressing an interest in serving.

His term will expire on December 31, 2027.

**Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve Court Order 2024-09; In the Matter of Appointment of Randy McKinnis to the Union County Vector Control District Budget Committee as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Court Order 2024-10: In the Matter of Appointment to the Union County Planning Commission  
Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented Court Order 2024-10 to the Commissioners for their consideration.

There is an open position available for an At-Large representative on the Planning Commission. Stacy Warren has submitted an application expressing interest in serving and does meet the qualifications.

Her term will expire on December 31, 2026.

**Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve Court Order 2024-10; In the Matter of Appointment of Stacy Warren to the Union County Planning Commission as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded.**

All three Commissioners thanked Mrs. Warren for volunteering her expertise to this committee.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

ODA Wolf Compensation Grant Agreement

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the ODA Wolf Compensation Grant Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration.

Union County has received notification from the Oregon Department of Agriculture of the award of the 2024 Wolf Depredation grant in the amount of \$101,832. The grant funds for Death and Injury in the amount of \$14,850; Missing in the amount of \$26,892 and \$60,000 for Non-Lethal Deterrent and Prevention Techniques.

This is the largest grant amount that Union County has received.

Commissioner Anderes noted that 100 percent of the money is non-lethal, and understands there are issues with Missing. The records that livestock producers keep tend to be very accurate. The other thing is, the recent release of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's known wolf activity, Union County has the "honor" of having 35 percent of the total population of known wolves in the state of Oregon. That number takes into consideration the bulk of the wolves sent to Colorado are from Union County, and we still have more than 1/3 of wolves in our county.

Commissioner Beverage echoed Commissioner Anderes and is happy to see that Missing is included in the grant funding this year.

**Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the ODA Wolf Compensation Grant Agreement as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded.**

Commissioner Scarfo indicated that this is great and the most money we have seen from the state. Since the re-introduction of wolves to the state of Oregon, it costs the taxpayers hundreds of millions. This is a topic that everyone should be paying attention to, because this is coming from our taxes, e.g. to fund these kinds of grants. He would be interested in knowing those exact dollars paid by taxpayers – as a result of the reintroduction of wolves.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Commissioner Beverage attended Friends of the Children last evening. She went on a tour at Buffalo Peak Golf Course last week, and is seeing higher numbers than last year around this time.

Commissioner Anderes indicated that along with the REV Center at EOU, a grant through NACO has been applied for to work on rural economic development.

Commissioner Scarfo indicated that the Oregon State Emergency Manager will be in La Grande tomorrow, and will be touring the Fairgrounds.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 at 9 AM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Scarfo adjourned the meeting at 9:43 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore  
Senior Department Specialist