

UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Joseph Building Annex Conference Room
Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Present: Commissioner Donna Beverage
Commissioner Paul Anderes

Absent: Commissioner Scarfo

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

AGENDA REVIEW

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, asked to add an Airport Office Space Lease Agreement under Administrative Matters.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Anderes closed the public comment period.

Business Retention Expansion Program Presentation

Brian McDowell, 375 N. Dewey Street, Union, Business Oregon Regional Development Officer, presented a brief staff report to the Commissioners for their information.

Mr. McDowell went over plan objectives and examples of creating a Business Retention Expansion (BRE) program in Union County. He also discussed the criteria of the program and indicated this could be done at the city level.

Commissioner Beverage indicated that she felt the BRE program is very important and noted that she informally meets with Timothy Bishop and five others monthly. They share business needs, and resources for businesses to get started. She invited Mr. McDowell to the next Economic Development group meeting.

Commissioner Anderes thanked Mr. McDowell for the presentation and is looking forward to hearing about its success.

PUBLIC HEARING: Ordinance 2024-04: Amending the Union County Zoning, Partition & Subdivision Ordinance to Include Amendments to the City of La Grande's Development Code

Staff Report

Scott Hartell, Planning Director, provided a brief staff report and read Ordinance 2024-04 to the Commissioners for their information.

The City of La Grande advertised, held public hearings and adopted City of La Grande Ordinance No. 3269, Series 2024, repealing and replacing Goal 9 Economic Development Chapter of the La

Grande Comprehensive Plan, Ordinance 3255, Series 2022 with an updated economic opportunities analysis and commercial/industrial buildable lands inventory, affecting all properties outside of La Grande city limits that are also within the city's Urban Growth Boundary.

The La Grande and Union County Management agreement delegates the county's zoning and planning authority to the City of La Grande for that area between the City Limits and the Urban Growth Boundary and requires the county to adopt land use regulations administered by the City of La Grande.

The Union County Planning Commission reviewed the City of La Grande's application at an advertised public hearing on June 24, 2024 and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the City of La Grande's application to the Union County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Anderes thanked Director Hartell for the staff report. He appreciates the partnership between the City of La Grande and Union County Planning Department.

Commissioner Beverage appreciates looking to the future and understands this is a long process. She also appreciates the partnership between the City of La Grande and Union County Planning Department.

Mike Boquist, reported that it is difficult to find good property for commercial and industrial. It is about a 4-year process to complete the initial needs analysis which makes it even more difficult for local businesses who would like to expand.

Public Comment

Boyd Bristol, 2712 N. Pine Street, La Grande, provided comments to the Commissioners in opposition to the annexation and inquired about higher property taxes and homeowners cleaning the curbsides should a new road be put in.

Ashley Anderson, 2708 N. Maple, La Grande, addressed the Commissioners regarding the current annexations into the city of La Grande. She is opposed to the idea and does not want it to move forward.

Charlie St. Claire, 2708 N. Maple, La Grande, addressed the Commissioners regarding the current annexations into the City of La Grande. He is opposed to the idea and does not want it to move forward. He feels like he is being forced and is very intimidated.

Tabitha McClure, 1608 Russell, La Grande, addressed the Commissioners regarding the current annexations into the City of La Grande. She is happy to stay outside of city limits.

Commissioner Anderes closed the public comment period.

Discussion/Action

Commissioner Anderes asked if Ordinance 2024-04 is an annexation. Director Hartell clarified that this is not an annexation only adoption of an updated opportunities analysis and commercial/industrial building lands inventory.

Commissioner Beverage asked if the public comments provided are for a separate issue. Director Hartell clarified that this is not an annexation, the county does not handle annexations, the city is responsible for that.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2024-04; Amending the Union County Zoning Partition Subdivision Ordinance to include amendments to the City of La Grandes Development Code. Commissioner Anderes seconded.

Commissioner Anderes referred back to Mike Boquist's comment related to commercial and industrial grounds and having a willing seller.

Motion carried.

The second reading of Ordinance 2024-04 has been scheduled for August 21, 2024 at 9:30 am.

Mike Boquist noted that those who provided public comment this morning should attend the La Grande City Council meeting this evening at 6 pm located at City Hall. The La Grande City Council is the governing body that would consider annexations.

ELECTED OFFICIAL, DEPARTMENT HEAD & EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

There were no comments at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of the consent agenda which included the July 17, 24, 30 & 31, 2024 claims journals and meeting minutes of June 26, 2024 as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

USDA Forest Service MOU

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Memorandum of Understanding between Union County and the USDA Forest Service Washington Office.

This MOU has been reviewed by legal counsel who had no concerns about the approval. It does not expand or enlarge any preexisting duties of the parties.

Commissioner Anderes reported that on December 20, 2023, President Biden signed an order to protect and enhance old growth trees in national forests and on BLM ground. The Forest Service took the executive order and ran with it. NACo has been working to get counties a seat at the table and this helps with that. He indicated if we do not get a seat at the table, we will invoke coordination.

Commissioner Beverage asked for clarification about having a seat at the table. Commissioner Anderes indicated that we are a part of the group through NACo, however, this carries us a little further.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the USDA Forest Service MOU as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried.

Airport Lease Agreement

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Airport Lease Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The lease agreement is between the Union County Airport and Hiller Aviation Consulting for the small office space located in the green hangar located at the airport. Public Works Director has recommended approval of the lease agreement effective August 1, 2024 through February 26, 2026.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the Airport Lease Agreement with Hiller Aviation Consulting as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded.

Commissioner Anderes is happy to have the space for them to rent.

Motion carried.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Beverage attended a staff BBQ at the Buffalo Peak Golf Course and is happy to see that the course is doing so well. She is focusing on legislative items right now.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 21, 2024 at 9 AM

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Anderes adjourned the meeting at 9:48 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore
Senior Department Specialist