

UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Joseph Building Annex Conference Room
Regular Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 21, 2024

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

Administrative Officer Burgess requested to add the discussion of the Ambulance Subcommittee Recommendation under Elected Official, Department Head and Employee Comments and postpone the Detox & Stabilization Center.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Scarfo closed the public comment period.

ELECTED OFFICIAL, DEPARTMENT HEAD & EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

Ambulance Service Area Transfer

Nick Vora, Emergency Manager, addressed the Commissioners with the recommendation of the Ambulance Sub-Committee for their consideration.

Emergency Manager Vora presented the results of the Ambulance Service Area advisory committee meeting. Several meetings ago, the County Commission appointed 5 residents of Union County to serve on the Ambulance Service Area Committee to make a recommendation on the requested transfer of ambulance service from the City of Union to the Union Rural Fire District. Due to the recent fires in our area, including the advisory committee being involved to some degree of fire service, they were not able to schedule a meeting in July.

The committee held a meeting on August 20 and reviewed the letter from the City of Union, which was a letter of intent to transfer their ambulance service to the Union Rural Fire District along with the transfer of fire service. The committee made a unanimous recommendation that the county transfer ambulance service from the City of Union to the Union Rural Fire District.

The request is for the Board of Commissioners to draft a letter to Union Rural Fire District authorizing operation of an ambulance service in Union County.

Commissioner Beverage appreciates Emergency Manager Vora especially being so busy with the current fire situation in our region.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the transfer of ambulance services from the City of Union to the Union Rural Fire District along with a letter of authorization. Commissioner Anderes seconded.

Commissioner Anderes is glad that both parties are interested in working together.

Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of the consent agenda which included August 7, 8 & 14, 2024 claims journals and meeting minutes of July 17 & 22, 2024 as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Resolution 2024-04: In the Matter Establishing an Opioid Abatement Advisory Committee

Please note the numerical error in the resolution number. The resolution number should read as 2024-11.

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented Resolution 2024-04 to the Commissioners for their consideration.

This resolution would establish an Opioid Abatement Advisory Committee with thirteen (13) members, including two (2) lay members. Discussions were had by an informal committee about the use of the opioid settlement funds that Union County has been receiving and it was time to establish a formal committee.

Administrative Officer Burgess read out loud Resolution 2024-04 for the record.

The committee membership would include the following:

1. Union County Sheriff or designee
2. Union County District Attorney or designee
3. Union County Jail Lieutenant or designee
4. Union County Commissioner
5. Union County Treatment Court Representative
6. Union County Behavioral Court Representative
7. Union County Parole and Probation Director or designee
8. Union County Juvenile Department Director or designee
9. Center for Human Development or designee
10. Grande Ronde Hospital representative
11. City of La Grande representative

In addition to the above members who shall serve at the direction of the agency they represent; the committee shall include two (2) lay members to be appointed to serve four-year terms.

The Commissioner member will serve as Chair of the committee with staff support provided by the Commissioners office.

Commissioner Anderes appreciates all of those that put in the time to put this committee together.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-04; In the Matter of a Resolution Establishing an Opioid Abatement Advisory Committee. Commissioner Beverage seconded.

Commissioner Beverage feels this is a great group of people for the advisory committee.

Commissioner Scarfo agrees and is ready to get started.

Motion carried unanimously.

Wildfire Hazard Map Commissioner Comments

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Wildfire Hazard Map Commissioner Comments Letter to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The letter is to provide comments to the Oregon Department of Forestry regarding the Draft Wildfire Hazard Map. The Commissioners discussed the comment letter during a work session the week prior.

Commissioner Anderes referred to the questions that Union County still has that have not yet been answered. He received one-word answers on every one of the questions and found it insulting and could not support the map.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve the Wildfire Hazard Map Commissioner Comment Letter as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

City of Union Dog Control Services Agreement

On behalf of Sheriff Bowen, Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Dog Control Services Agreement to the Commissioners for their consideration.

This agreement is between City of Union and the Union County Sheriff's office to provide Animal Control services within the city. The current law enforcement services agreement does not include animal control enforcement.

The agreement is effective for two years beginning August 8, 2024.

Commissioner Beverage was under the impression that the Sheriff would come out to Union for dogs on the loose. Administrative Officer Burgess clarified that animal control will respond, but if they want specific services they would need an agreement in place.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the City of Union Dog Control Services Agreement as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

MOU – Detox & Stabilization Consultant

Postponed to a future Commission meeting.

Second Reading: Ordinance 2024-03 ADU Zone Amendment

Staff Report

Scott Hartell, Planning Director, provided a brief staff report and read out loud Ordinance 2024-03 for the record.

Director Hartell reported that the Planning Department is requesting the opportunity for an Additional Dwelling Unit in all of the county rural residential zone as a conditional use opportunity. The subject properties are located within the county's R-1, Rural Center Zone, R-2, Rural Residential Zone, R-3 Farm Residential Zone and R-4 Forest Residential Zone.

Union County Planning Commission received a zone amendment application on January 22, 2024 to amend the Union County Zoning Partition and Subdivision Ordinance. On May 8, 2023 Senate Bill 644 was signed into Oregon Law allowing counties to amend their land use regulations to establish Additional Dwelling Units in rural residential zones.

The Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development was provided 35-day prior notice to the first evidentiary hearing for the zone amendment application. The Union County Planning Commission provided notice and conducted public hearings on January 22, 2024, February 26, 2024.

On April 22, 2024, the Union County Planning Commission made a unanimous decision to recommend approval of the application to the Board of Commissioners.

The Board of Commissioners advertised and held a public hearing on July 17, 2024. Following the public hearing, a motion was passed approving the first reading of Ordinance 2024-03.

Discussion/Action

Commissioner Anderes asked if the ADU's can be used as a short-term rental for workforce. Director Hartell indicated that Commissioner Anderes is correct, they would be available for short term rentals but not vacation type rentals.

Commissioner Beverage asked if the county has an avenue for this and what the difference is between the avenue we have now to get approval for something like this if it passes. Director Hartell indicated there is not an opportunity for an additional dwelling unit on a rural residential property. Each zone in the rural residential group of zoning in Union County, allows one single family dwelling unit per unit of land. There is also an opportunity for hardship dwellings if a primary house exists and a hardship occurs within the family, through a conditional use review. Once the hardship passes, the dwelling must be removed or converted.

Commissioner Anderes asked if there would be a line forming out the door once approved. Director Hartell indicated that he has had approximately eight (8) inquiries as of today and believes at least two (2) will apply if the ordinance is adopted.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-03; In the Matter of Amending the Union County Zoning Partition Subdivision Ordinance Allowing for Establishing of Additional Dwelling Units in the County's R-1 Rural Center Zone, R-2 Rural Residential Zone, R-3 Farm Residential Zone and R-4 Forest Residential Zone as a Conditional Use Review. Commissioner Beverage seconded.

Commissioner Beverage is torn on this one because of all those who provided public comment and are opposed to the ADU and the new opportunities being provided by cities. She referred back to the water and road issues and is concerned for areas such as Medical Springs.

Director Hartell indicated that the ADU will not be applicable to the Medical Springs area because of the type of zoning already in place in the area.

Commissioner Scarfo appreciates that each individual ADU will go through the Planning Department. If a neighbor has an issue, they will be able to go to a Planning Commission meeting and provide their comments.

Roll Call Vote: Commissioner Beverage, no. Commissioner Anderes, yes. Commissioner Scarfo yes.

Motion passes.

Second Reading: Ordinance 2024-04 Amendments to City of La Grande Development Code

Staff Report

Scott Hartell, Planning Director, provided a brief staff report to the Commissioners for their information.

Director Hartell reported that the City of La Grande has submitted an application to Union County Planning Commission requesting co-adoption of the City of La Grande Development Code Ordinance No. 3269 Series 2024; reviewing and replacing Goal 9 Economic Development Chapter of the La Grande Comprehensive Plan Ordinance No. 3255 Series 2022.

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

The Board of Commissioners held a hearing on Ordinance 2024-04 on August 7, 2024 at which time the first reading was approved.

Discussion/Action

All three Commissioners thanked the City of La Grande and Union County Planning Department for their working relationship on this ordinance.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2024-04; In the Matter of Amending the Union County Zoning, Partition and Subdivision Ordinance to include Amendments to the City of La Grande's Development Code. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Beverage is continuing to work on the place-based water planning.

Commissioner Anderes attended the Imbler Track Groundbreaking ceremony last evening and is impressed with the work they've done in a short time.

Commissioner Scarfo announced the country music concert being held at the Union County Fairgrounds this coming weekend. He also reported that he will be attending the OTEC Summit at the White Barn Estate next week.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at 9 AM.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Scarfo adjourned the meeting at 9:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore
Senior Department Specialist