

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

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, requested to postpone item VI. D Resolution 2024-14; In the Matter of a Resolution Adjusting Fees for the Union County Public Health Authority Environmental Licensing until the next Commissioners meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments at this time.

ELECTED OFFICIAL, DEPARTMENT HEAD & EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

Mt. Emily Recreation Area (MERA) Parking Lot Project

Josh Ford, Parks Coordinator, presented a brief staff report to the Commissioners regarding the MERA Parking Lot Project.

A MERA Sub-Committee was formed in November 2022 to evaluate a parking permit fee for non-motorized parking areas of MERA. The parking fees have the potential of providing funding for the operation enhancement and maintenance of the non-motorized trail system.

The Parking Permit Program will designate fee parking for MERA non-motorized trailheads. Individuals wishing to park in the designated fee areas, will be lawfully required to obtain a parking pass prior to parking. Parking passes will be transferable between vehicles, but only valid for one vehicle at a time.

Three permit rates are proposed as follows; Day Use Parking Permit \$5, Annual Parking Permit \$30, Annual Parking Permit for Military, Veterans, EMS, Law Enforcement and low-income families \$20 Parking permits will be available for purchase online.

The proposed start date is January 1, 2025; with no citations to be issued in the first twelve months.

Commissioner Beverage asked if there would be signage in the parking lot to make visitors aware of the parking fee. Mr. Ford indicated that there will be signage at each entry. There will be new kiosks to accommodate each sign.

Commissioner Anderes asked if an ordinance would be required to set the parking fee in place. Administrative Officer Burgess confirmed that an ordinance would be needed, and had asked Josh to come and explain the committee's findings before the ordinance is drafted for consideration.

Commissioner Anderes asked if the Sheriff's Department was on board. Sheriff Bowen indicated that this was the first he has heard of the parking permit fee. However, he believes that those who utilize the trails shouldn't have a problem paying the fee. The Sheriff requested that the Parks Department handle the enforcement of the fee. He indicated the Sheriff's Office would be available if assistance is needed.

Commissioner Beverage thinks it is a good idea and appreciates the advisory committee putting their efforts into the program.

Commissioner Anderes appreciated Mr. Ford looking into the longevity of MERA as the parking permit fees will help upkeep the trails.

Commissioner Scarfo asked if the MERA Advisory Committee is on board. Josh indicated that they have discussed it and they are in favor.

Commissioner Scarfo is worried about the people who are passing through to experience MERA and asked if the permit is in a sticker form if needed last minute. Mr. Ford indicated he snowballed off of Hood River County and what they have done with their parking permit program. You can either purchase the pass online ahead of time, or at the trailhead with a QR code. This information will also be on the MERA website before it is launched.

Next steps will be to draft an ordinance and reach out to legal counsel for review. A couple of items will need to be defined such as determining who is eligible for the discounted rate. Public hearings on the ordinance will be scheduled when it is prepared.

ORMAP Grant Application

Cody Vavra, Assessor/Tax Collector, presented the ORMAP Grant Application to the Commissioners for their consideration.

An opportunity has come available for the Assessor's Office to apply for grant funding through the state to convert all of the ArcMap data to the new ORMAP ArcPro/Fabric environment. The process will involve conversion of data, review, and editing of data, and customization of the ORMAP ArcPro/Fabric tools.

The project will be 100 percent grant funded in the amount of \$17,000 through the Department of Revenue ORMAP Program. The Assessor has teamed up with Polk County and Harney County, who will be completing the conversion.

The deadline to submit the grant application is Friday, October 18.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the ORMAP Grant Application as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of the consent agenda which included October 2, 2024 claims journals and the September 18 meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: Second Reading of Ordinance 2024-01: In the Matter of an Ordinance Implementing Measures to Reduce Incidents of Truancy from Union County Public Schools and Declaring an Emergency

Staff Report

Kelsie McDaniel, Union County District Attorney, provided a brief overview of the ordinance for consideration.

In 2021, legislative session SB817 gutted the truancy enforcement provision of Oregon Revised Statutes. Up until then, this had been a law in effect and unsure when it was implemented. This took away the enforcement mechanism for the schools and law enforcement to intervene when kids are not regularly attending school. Instances such as extreme cases of absenteeism. It assists the family dynamic in figuring out who is the reason the child is not making it to school.

Key points for this request are having resolutions from all of the cities giving consent for this ordinance to be implemented and enforced.

The ordinance was discussed for over a year with each of the School District Superintendents and does not apply to homeschool, private and online students. It also gives flexibility for each school district to implement in their schools. This ordinance is not intended for students who have chronic illness, family vacation, medical and/or family issues. It is intended for the family who is required by law to enroll the child in school, and is not showing up.

Commissioner Anderes likes that attendance is percentage based, and not day based. District Attorney McDaniel indicated they used what is considered as chronically absent from the OAR's from the Educational portions of the statutes. It is prescribed in statute, and not something that was made up in terms of number of days. What really hinges on what each school district considers to be an unexcused absence, and is between the parent and the school district. For example, if a child goes to elk camp every year, that could be considered an unexcused absence in different school districts.

Commissioner Beverage thanked District Attorney McDaniel for the explanation, and appreciates all the hard work put into the ordinance over the last year.

Administrative Officer Burgess mentioned for the record that the first reading was held on October 2nd and approved the first reading at that time. The second reading scheduled for October 16th, allows for the adoption of the ordinance which becomes effective 30 days after the date of the adoption.

Discussion/Action

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2024-01; In the Matter of Implementing Measures to Reduce Incidents of Truancy in Union County Public Schools and Declaring an Emergency. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Scarfo asked what other counties are utilizing the ordinance. DA McDaniel indicated that Commissioner Anderes received an inquiry from Lake County how Union County was going to proceed. Commissioner Anderes sent Lake County a copy of Malheur County's truancy ordinance that he had and would send a copy of the Union County's ordinance as an example

DA McDaniel indicated that Crook County spearheaded the ordinance because they have a truancy court, and when the law changed they had no idea the provision had been taken out. This ordinance is really important to a lot of the superintendents, particularly in Elgin and La Grande.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Court Order 2024-17: In the Matter of Appointment to the 2024 Property Value Appeals Board
Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented Court Order 2024-17 to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The Union County Property Value Appeals Board, formerly known as Union County Board of Property Appeals Board, hearings on appeals filed regarding assessment and taxation.

Commissioner R. Matthew Scarfo, Steve Oliver and Kent Coppinger have been active members interested in continuing to serve.

Commissioner Beverage made a motion to approve Court Order 2024-17; In the Matter of Appointment to the 2024 Property Value Appeals Board of Commissioner Scarfo, Steve Oliver and Kent Coppinger. Commissioner Anderes seconded.

Commissioner Beverage thanked those that have stepped up to serve on this committee.

Commissioner Scarfo thanked the Assessor's office for keeping the appeals number low. Last year we did not have any appeals, and the year before we had one.

Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2024-12: In the Matter of Appropriating Unanticipated Funds

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented Resolution 2024-12 to the Commissioners for their consideration.

Lt. Nick Huelter has secured a \$25,000 grant from the Oregon State Police CJIS Division to replace existing outdated Livescan Equipment. Because the grant was awarded after the adoption of the FY 2024-25 budget, it is necessary to appropriate the funds through the adoption of a resolution.

Resolution 2024-12 has been prepared to include the appropriation within the budget to allow the acceptance of the funds and purchase the equipment.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-12; In the Matter of Appropriating Unanticipated Funds as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2024-13: In the Matter of Supporting Operation Green Light

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented Resolution 2024-13 to the Commissioners for their consideration.

The National Association of Counties spearheads recognition of Veteran's in November each year through Operation Green Light for Veteran's. They have provided the county with tools to recognize Veteran's in our own community.

Administrative Officer Burgess read the resolution out loud for the record.

In observance of Operation Green Light, Union County encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of residence or business from November 4-11, 2024.

If the resolution is passed, the county will place green lights in county buildings. Administrative Officer Burgess will distribute the resolution to the Chamber of Commerce and the media to get the word out.

Commissioner Beverage said it is very important and the resolution will help folks understand what it is all about.

Commissioner Scarfo requested that the county purchase a supply of green lights for citizens to pick up if they need one. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated we do not have a supply but they are pretty easy to find. Commissioner Anderes could not find any in town, and ended up ordering from Amazon. Administrative Officer Burges will have Annette look into purchasing lights for citizens to pick up.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-13; In the Matter of Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Anderes will be in Venango County, Pennsylvania next week for the Rural Leaders for Economic Mobility (RLEM) Peer Exchange. He also has a meeting on Friday with the Governor in Salem.

Commissioner Scarfo recognized Emergency Manager Vora who received the Emergency Manager of the Year Award for the State of Oregon.

All three Commissioners took the time to thank Emergency Manager Vora for all his hard work and dedication, not only to Union County but across the state of Oregon.

Sheriff Bowen indicated Emergency Manager Vora was also nominated by four other Sheriff's across the state of Oregon. Willie Crippen was also nominated as SAR Volunteer of the Year.

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

The Chair called an Executive Session at 9:40 am.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Scarfo adjourned the meeting at 9:48 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore
Senior Department Specialist