

Board of Commissioners Meeting
July 19, 2017

Present: Commissioner Steve McClure
 Commissioner Jack Howard
 Commissioner Donna Beverage

Commissioner McClure opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and the pledge of allegiance was given with all three commissioners present.

Public Comments

Union County Fair Maids

Union County Fair Maids were unable to attend the meeting.

Partition Plat

Rick Robinson requested signatures for a partition plat with a street dedication in Island City; it had been through the required process for other approvals and signatures. This would affect I Avenue and Keltz Lane; the purpose is to provide a turnaround for emergency vehicles.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Partition Plat for Island City as presented. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Fair & Shrine Transportation Proposal

Angie Peters, Public Transit Manager, presented a proposal for Public Transit during the County Fair/Shrine Football Game week. The route will change this year to accommodate more areas but it will not affect timing. The route will also extend to 10:00 p.m. for the Shrine activities and 10:30 p.m. for the County Fair. Total cost for both programs would be \$2,900.

Commissioner McClure stated that the County has sponsored these programs for years. It's nice for the Shrine players to have transportation to go downtown and support local businesses.

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of the Fair & Shrine Transportation Proposal. Commissioner Howard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

UCEDC Public Comment

John Lackey, 701 Penn Avenue, La Grande, stated that he had been on the UCEDC Board for three years. He felt that there was an opportunity to improve UCEDC and it is time to look at its funding. UCEDC Board members are not getting all the information from the Executive Committee and it seems to be lacking some leadership. There are systems that have been in place; some work well and some could be improved. He would like to see the Commissioners extend funding to UCEDC for 90 days and form a committee to review the organization's direction, effectiveness, return on investment, and consider restructuring membership. The organization hasn't changed since the original mission statement and it is time to step back and let the active members have an opportunity to improve it and present a new proposal to the Commission.

UCEDC Public Comment

Bob Kavanaugh, Union County Chamber of Commerce Director, 1210 Adams, La Grande, stated that he also serves on the UCEDC Board. He proposed having the Chamber field calls for UCEDC in the interim while UCEDC is regrouping, as those phone calls are vital. That information could then be sent to other parties, such as cities or the County. The Chamber is willing to be a connecting point if the County allows UCEDC 90 days to regroup.

B2H Public Comment

Irene Gilbert, 2310 Adams, La Grande, reminded the Commissioners when Antelope Ridge was looking at putting in high voltage lines in the area, it seemed like a war and the community was under siege then. One house was shot at, concrete steps in front of a home were sledge-hammered, and tires were slashed. The Commissioners need to think about the loss of local control when they make decisions with long term consequence for the community.

Elected Official, Department Head & Employee Comments

Stepping Up Initiative, Resolution 2017-14

Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen and Dwight Dill, Mental Health Director for CHD, made a presentation about a national initiative that is intended to help reduce the number of inmates in correctional facilities that have mental illnesses. Steps have been taken locally to incorporate programs to do this, such as the Diversion Program and Mentoring Program.

Mr. Dill stated that the initiative is supported by multiple organizations nationwide and statewide. It ties in well with CHD programs as they have therapists working in the jail, with Parole and Probation, and the District Attorney's office. The model is designed to intervene with people who have a mental illness that get involved with the criminal justice system.

Sheriff Rasmussen stated that the Sheriff's Office has an outstanding relationship with CHD and is seeing those benefits.

Commissioner Beverage asked if the Sheriff's Office and CHD were working together; Mr. Dill stated that they are. She stated that she supports the initiative.

Commissioner Beverage noted that the initiative documents state that it will expand and enhance existing programs; she asked about financial support expectations and if they had been budgeted. Sheriff Rasmussen stated that it will be discussed later; the idea is to continue using grant funds for the Mentor Program and also utilize funds from Probation and Parole and the Sheriff's Office.

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, stated that the current budget includes the continuation of the Mentor Program with remaining grant funds. If the program grows or continues past the next year, then additional funding will be looked at. Adopting the initiative would show support from the County so that additional grant funding could be accessed.

Commissioner Howard stated that one of the key indicators of success for people in poverty with mental health issues is keeping them out of the criminal justice system. There are

programs that are targeting successful initiatives based upon this model; this will open the County to grant opportunities. It may not be easy to calculate savings of keeping people out of the criminal justice system. Another benefit of this program is data about the local mental health population in the jail system. He thanked the Sheriff, the County, and CHD for investing resources, time, and staff for these programs. There are positive results from keeping people out of jail, which has immediate benefits to families and our community.

Commissioner McClure stated that he appreciates the programs. He recalled times when holding cells were used to segregate people with mental illnesses from others in the jail. The best solution is not always to throw them in jail, but to find out what kind of help they need. He asked if this would be supported by Oregon Health Plan (OHP). Mr. Dill stated that OHP pays for a lot of the services that are provided, but not while they are in jail because they lose eligibility while incarcerated.

Commissioner McClure stated that he was glad to see cooperative work between the Sheriff's Office and CHD.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Resolution 2017-14. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent agenda

Commissioner Howard moved approval of the consent agenda, which included Commission Meeting minutes from May 17 and Claims Journals from June 23, 28, 29, July 3 and 6. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Matters

Appointment to the Natural Resource Plan Advisory Committee, Court Order 2017-28

Mrs. Burgess stated that the Private Forester position on this committee had not yet been filled and John Herbst applied to serve; this term would be effective immediately.

Commissioner Beverage moved approval Court Order 2017-28. Commissioner Howard seconded for purposes of discussion.

Commissioner Howard stated he commented at a previous meeting regarding this committee.

Commissioner McClure stated that he had known Mr. Herbst for many years; he is very capable and a great addition to the committee.

Roll Call on Court Order 2017-28: Commissioner Beverage, yes. Commissioner Howard, abstained. Commissioner McClure, yes. Motion carried.

Cancellation of Uncollectable Personal Property Tax, Court Order 2017-19

Mrs. Burgess stated the court order is the result of an annual review of outstanding personal property tax by the County Assessor/Tax Collectors Office, which is then reviewed by the District Attorney. The amount for cancellation is \$2,259.39; four listings were for businesses

that went out of business and no longer have the equipment that was taxable and also three listings for manufactured homes that were destroyed. Approval would cancel those taxes and remove them from the records.

Commissioner McClure asked if Vista Specialty Care was still operating in Oregon or if there was any recourse to get the tax owed by them. Mrs. Burgess stated that the tax would have been for equipment they used in the business here, but since the business is no longer operational they are no longer using the equipment. Mrs. Burgess stated that if the business does not file and tell the County that they are no longer in business, then they are taxed based on the previous year's history.

Commissioner Beverage moved approval of Court Order 2017-29. Commissioner Howard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment to the Vector Control Board, Court Order 2017-30

Mrs. Burgess stated that there was a vacancy on the Vector Control Board due to board member Marlene Perkins moving out of the area. An application was submitted by Jake Hatley; his term would begin immediately and expire December 31, 2020.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Court 2017-30. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area MOU

Mrs. Burgess stated that new proposed language in the MOU would change representation on the Board to include a member, not specifically the Chairman, as well as changing the Executive Committee to three officers of the governing board and one County Commissioner from each participating county.

Commissioner McClure stated that the purpose of the changes is to allow the County Commissioners to be more involved in the decisions for the organization.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of the Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area MOU. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B2H Application Schedule Update

Mrs. Burgess stated that the B2H project official application for site certification would be delivered today to the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) and community viewing locations. The Union County Planning Department and the City of La Grande Public Library are viewing rooms. On June 28, Union County received an electronic version of the application and a memorandum from ODOE. At the request of Commission Chairman McClure, staff scheduled a joint public work session to take place at the Blue Mountain Conference Center with the La Grande City Council on August 1 at 6:00 p.m.; notice will be published today and July 24. Staff will have a GIS presentation and maps available. The intent of this schedule was to give interested parties as much notice as possible to review the documents.

Commissioner McClure stated that the County's comments are due by September 1. The public hearing will take place and if more are needed then they will be scheduled. The County now knows where Idaho Power (IP) intends to install the transmission line, which is by the existing power line on the 230 route. The Bureau of Land Management's preferred route is on the west side. He stated that the County wants everyone to know what is being proposed and have the opportunity to comment. He would like to see more ads run to better inform the public of the work session. Commissioner Beverage agreed that it should be on the radio and in the newspaper. Commissioner McClure stated that it would help for one of the commissioners to meet with members of the press and explain the status of the process. He added that the County would generate its comments based on what is heard from the public.

B2H Public Comment

Fuji Kreider, 60366 Marvin Road, La Grande, thanked the Commissioners for scheduling a work session; getting the City involved is fantastic and it has been needed for a long time. Notifying the public by mail would be beneficial because regular media may not be enough. She lives outside the legal boundary for notification by mail, but would still be affected by the power line because she would have to look at it. If people were notified in the past, they don't realize that there were two new routes in the proposal. Ms. Kreider suggested notifying everyone within one mile of the proposed route by direct mail. She asked if the groups would be allowed to make a presentation at the joint work session. She also asked if September 1 deadline was for the completeness review application or if it was the public process for the proposed order of ODOE.

Commissioner McClure stated that the County usually lets people have the time they need to make a comment within reason, but there is no intention to limit comments to three minutes. He would like people to have time to express their opinion.

Commissioner Beverage asked if IP sent notices to the public. Ms. Kreider stated that IP only sends notices to property owners who have property that would house the towers or provide a staging area for construction. Commissioner McClure stated that notification is required for those within 500 feet. Ms. Kreider agreed and added that 500 feet by land does not take into account the view when the land is sloped.

Commissioner McClure stated that all comments would be accepted at the work session; if it is believed that the application is not complete, then that should be said. Comments about general opposition or support of the location of the route should also be said.

Ms. Kreider hoped that another public hearing would be held during the next phase of the process also. Commissioner McClure stated that this is the opportunity to make a comment and the public will have an opportunity to comment after the proposed order.

B2H Public Comment

Irene Gilbert stated that she appreciated that the County was opening the opportunity for the public to make comments. She suggested that the County include the City of Union and Island City at the joint work session because they are participating agencies with the same opportunity to submit comments. If notification is limited to the newspaper and radio, then

there are a lot of people who would not be notified. Very few people are being notified by Idaho Power and it is necessary to send notification in a broader form. If the County is not going to notify everyone, then the Stop B2H group would like to have the land owner's information so they can do it. She hopes that she will be allowed to distribute handouts at the joint work session. She suggested that the Commissioners allow a few extra weeks for the public to submit their comments after the joint work session. Commissioner McClure stated that public comments would be accepted after August 1.

B2H Public Comment

Ryan Browne, 10207 Leonard Lane, Island City, stated that he is a representative of the Webster property that is directly impacted by the proposed B2H route. He agreed that more notification should be provided to the public. The proposed route runs through the Webster property and they are having difficulty keeping up with notifications and changes. He stated that in their interactions with IP, it feels like this part of the process is just a formality. He thanked the Commissioners for scheduling a public meeting for the opportunity to make comments and encouraged them to be objective when hearing public comments. There are dozens of stories from a variety of people that have property involved or have a vested interest; the property really means something to our county. He asked that the Commissioners represent those comments.

B2H Public Comment

Lois Barry, 60688 Morgan Lake Road, La Grande, thanked the Commissioners for scheduling the public meeting on August 1. She would like to see that a wider group of people are notified because IP has decided that they have no obligation to do so since the property owners are not their clients. She stated that she understood that the County's attorney suggested that it may be a dangerous precedence to notify property owners within one mile of the transmission line. She believes that the County already realizes that it is the service of government to serve the people and if a private corporation is deciding to do something without notifying those that would be immediately involved, then the people need to be able to rely on their government to protect them. Union County residents would have no recourse or representation if the county takes no responsibility for helping them.

Commissioner McClure stated that the County had not contacted an attorney regarding notification of land owners, but it may need to happen to make sure the County does it the right way.

B2H Public Comment

Karrine Brogoitti, 1513 X Avenue, La Grande, Advertising Director for The Observer, stated that the local radio stations and newspaper would be the best way to get notification out to the public. Between subscribers and direct mail options, which is offered by The Observer, every home in Union County would receive the notification for a fraction of the price of local mail service.

B2H Public Comment

Jim Kreider, 60366 Marvin Road, La Grande, thanked the commission for involving the public in this process. He stated that he distributed information in a newsletter indicating

that the County had contacted legal counsel regarding notification of residents; he apologized for misstating that.

Mr. Kreider stated that one of his neighbors has three proposed towers in front of their property and did not receive notification; the distance from their property is 1,880 feet, 1,460 feet, and 1,515 feet. Another neighbor has proposed towers nearby with a distance of 2,748 feet, 2,908 feet, and 3,329 feet from their property. These property owners will be significantly impacted and have not been notified. He stated that his property would be impacted by the new construction of a road on someone else's land. Proposed towers would be 2,800 feet, 2,500 feet and 1,850 feet away from his property and he received no notification. He stated that this was a plea for the County to inform residents because this is a significant event to the county that will be in the view shed. It will take three to five years to build and will be here for 50 years. It would be in best interest of everyone to do the broadest possible notification. He asked for contact information of land owners that his group could use for a mailing if the County finds that they cannot produce a broad notification. He thought that it would be better coming from the County because it would not be as biased as his group's mailing might be. This is not about whether or not to build the transmission line; it is about the appropriateness of the Mill Creek route or the 230 route. He also shared concerns about the size of the room for the public meeting. Commissioner Beverage thought the room could hold 150 people. Mr. Kreider stated that he did not want to interfere with the County's communication and would not go on morning radio talk shows if the County would be doing it. He does not want to send mixed messages.

Commissioner Howard stated that a local business could record and stream the meeting live.

Mr. Kreider suggested having call-in information for people who may be unable to attend the meeting. Commissioner McClure stated that the meeting was scheduled during the evening to provide the best opportunity for people to attend and make comments.

Commissioner Howard stated that one issue about notifying people is choosing the boundary of notification and asked if Mr. Kreider was suggesting that people that are 5,000 feet away should not be notified. Mr. Kreider stated that he plucked the distance of one mile out of the air. Commissioner Howard stated that plucking a number out of the air worried him considering it could be setting a precedent. Mr. Kreider stated that someone plucked 500 feet out of the air when they made a rule. Commissioner Howard stated that the distance of 500 feet is a rule. Mr. Kreider stated that it is the legal minimum of notifying people who will be impacted. Commissioner Howard stated that if there was some justification in science then it would be a better argument than plucking something out of the air. He wondered if Mr. Kreider was advocating for getting as many notifications across the County as it can get.

Commissioner Howard stated that there are problems with direct mail through The Observer; it does not mean that everyone will read it. Mass mailing rates decline even higher. Numbers can be estimated, but the real result is the return on investment, especially given the amount of time remaining.

Mr. Kreider stated that he would need to verify this information, but his recollection of the National Historic Trails Act and the Oregon Trail's standard is five miles of view shed. Commissioner Howard stated that that would be a better source than plucking a number out of the air.

Mr. Kreider stated that his plea was for the County to make its best effort to notify residents.

Commissioner McClure stated that the Commissioners appreciate that and added that this project has been on the burner for ten years. Until the preferred route was released, there wasn't a lot the County could do; it is trying to engage as many people as possible and as quickly as possible.

B2H Public Comment

Irwin Smutz, 59074 Foothill Road, La Grande, stated that he was just handed a document from the Department of Geology and Mineral Industry. It reminded him that when the first oil line came through, a gas line was installed on his property. After the second line came in, his dad went to check cows on his property; it caused a disturbance to the steep slope of the hill and the oil line had come out of the ground about six feet in the air and went back down without breaking. The proposed power line is also on a real steep hill on his property. The shifting of the steep slope is cited in the document and a 100 foot tower could cause the ground to shift again. He wished that the county could say that no one wants it coming through here, but he knows that there are laws that have to be followed.

Commissioner McClure stated that the County has the right to comment on the application and is listening to the community and their thoughts about the project. He stated that Mr. Smutz should bring his document to the meeting and have it read into the record.

B2H Public Comment

John Williams, P. O. Box 1384, La Grande, stated that there is about two miles of the transmission crossing his property and he was not notified. The guidelines for visual impact include direct effects, cumulative effects and indirect effects; cumulative effects would be two miles to the nearest visual horizon.

Commissioner McClure stated that information showing that IP's application is not in compliance with Federal regulation would be relevant to the completeness of the application and asked that Mr. Williams bring that to the public meeting on August 1.

Commissioner Howard stated that the County has been boxed in by the inconsistency of the process and the GIS mapping system could have been an option if the County had been better informed about how the preferred route would unfold. He thought that the notice should have followed potential routes as well; that is causing some lack of public notice. He added that it is inexcusable that Mr. Williams was not notified.

Commissioner McClure suggested that Mr. Williams bring up the lack of notification at the meeting.

B2H Public Comment

Irene Gilbert stated that the preferred route has been released, but they can change their minds once the Site Certificate is issued; they can use any of the four routes that are included in the application and a lot of people could be affected. Commissioner McClure stated that was part of the problem because it is difficult to comment on the project without knowing where the route will be constructed.

Commissioner McClure stated that the joint work session would take place on August 1 at 6:00 p.m. The La Grande City Council has been invited and there will be no decisions made that evening. From the input received, the County and the City will make their comments on the application separately. He added that he was not sure about the other cities.

Commissioner Howard thought it may be too late to invite the other cities' councils, but the mayors could be invited.

Commissioner McClure stated that notice could be given to them for the opportunity to participate. He added that the impact would be in South La Grande. He would like to have decent graphics showing what the towers would look like on the hill and noted that he asked IP to do that for this meeting.

Commissioner Howard stated that he would be comfortable letting Commissioner McClure and Mrs. Burgess arrange notification and advertising. Given the time, cost, and reach he was not sure that a mailing would do any good. The GIS would have been the best option, but the County is hamstrung from doing that at this point. The County needs to look at the terrain when notifying residents; 8,000 feet is not unreasonable from the perspective of Federal standards for notice on view sheds. He doesn't see the County being able to do that and it creates a potential liability for failure of notice from the County.

Commissioner McClure stated that he would not make a decision about notifications without consulting the County's attorney to make sure it is not compounding a problem. He did not see a problem with putting an insert in The Observer.

Commissioner Beverage thought that it would be good to mail notifications to all Union County residents as well as the radio and the County website. When IP has a limited notification requirement, the local government needs to stand up for its people.

Commissioner Howard stated that his concern is that the County could open a flood gate with people new to the process with an opinion that hasn't been informed, which could then bury informed opinions.

Commissioner McClure stated that he and Mrs. Burgess would look into notification options. He has talked with the County Planning Director who has the ability to send notices with information available through the GIS system.

Mrs. Burgess stated that the County's Land Use ordinance says that the County will notify land owners based on location and proximity; the challenge is determining the basis for notification.

Commissioner McClure stated that the County's attorney would need to be consulted. He would like to get the most information out in the fastest way possible. Everyone, including the County, has been caught with short notice and the County is trying to do the best it can to get the public's input.

Commissioner Howard thought that research about notification might result in expectations after the August 1 meeting, such as another work session.

UCEDC Funding Decision Process

Mrs. Burgess stated that the Commissioners did not finalize an allocation or release of funds to UCEDC during the budget process. The determination for that funding was not discussed and she was seeking direction from the commissioners for that process.

Commissioner McClure stated that all three Commissioners showed discomfort with UCEDC's last proposal. He thought there should be a discussion between the City of La Grande, Union County, and UCEDC. UCEDC has been criticized, but it is tough to operate with their level of funding. He is bothered to see Union County struggle with economic development when other small counties are attracting businesses and adding value to those communities. Union County doesn't have enough power to attract those businesses. Oregon now has counties that are either the haves or the have nots and it becomes an issue beyond jobs. Union County has actively engaged in the resource issues on the Federal level but after 13 years, the Forest Plan still isn't final. This area also lacks good jobs with disposable income like those in Bend.

Commissioner Howard stated that he was excited to talk about new partnerships. Attracting people to the area that would use Buffalo Peak Golf Course (BPGC) and Anthony Lakes would improve highway construction connectivity and the airport. He has asked if the County was in a position to improve fiber optics. UCEDC and partnerships formed through it can study that. An Airport District or Port Authority would be another way to do that. He is convinced that underfunding the cooperation that UCEDC represents is part of the problem; too much is expected from UCEDC because partnerships have not been invested in and it should be expanded to include the mayors of Union County. In assessing how economic development is done for the whole county, he wondered if there were resources dedicated in one area that should be diverted elsewhere. Advertising revenue at BPGC should be up for study as part of a broader economic development approach. He would like to see discussions about whether or not the County is fully invested in a partnership that includes the mayors. He is completely convinced that the County is on the right path, but also certain that this is mile marker one in the process.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she would like to hear from UCEDC members. She stated that she is a UCEDC Board member and is not happy because UCEDC is not doing anything they agreed to do in its contract with the County. She also added that as a Board member she has not received financials from UCEDC in the six months that she has served. She does not want to give money to UCEDC until those financials are available for review. There is a need for clarity and openness because Board members don't know what is going on.

UCEDC Public Comment

Mark Davidson, P.O. Box 1208, La Grande, UCEDC President, stated that they have received mixed signals and varying levels of commitment from partners. UCEDC's efforts have been woefully underfunded for more than a decade. It has been operating on a flat or declining budget with increasing expectations for many years. An agency in charge of economic development for the entire county needs to be funded and staffed adequately with a short list of realistic expectations that can be achieved. The first step to that is having a joint meeting to see where interests overlap and how to move forward. He is not sure that UCEDC's model still works; it was challenging from the outset. There are too many masters with divergent opinions and interests. The partnership agency is the last in the long line for funding and receives very little funding as a result. A port district has been looked at in the past and it deserves a look again. An independent agency that has a very focused purpose with a dedicated funding stream is probably the only way this county can hope to compete in the future with neighboring counties that have many advantages. Having an inland port would provide access to funds that other communities do not have and should be strongly considered. He was not sure if UCEDC as an independent agency would want to take that on, but it certainly could provide staff support for a county-led effort. The political campaign to establish a port district would have to have an independent committee. He would like to meet with all the partners so that UCEDC has some direction and a cohesive agreement from the Commission and a short list of tasks that it would like to see accomplished. Efforts towards those tasks could then be funded accordingly. Money is budgeted with the City of La Grande and the Urban Renewal District (URD); they have a relationship between the corporation and the URD regarding the partnership in the La Grande Business Park and the administration of it.

Commissioner McClure stated that the URD changed economic development opportunities and the dynamic between Union County and the City of La Grande. It is an unspoken thing that no one wants to talk about, but it is a conflict that was built into the system with the passage of Measure 50. The City and the County are in competition for revenue because of the tax system.

Commissioner Davidson stated that he was on the La Grande City Council that commissioned the study that produced the URD and he also served on the URD steering committee. The URD was established prior to Measures 47 and 50 and the projections and expected impacts from the district didn't take into account those measures; they completely changed the tax system, which were unexpected consequences. La Grande and the URD have made some adjustments from time to time by underlevying because it has a severe impact on the City's general fund. There are other decisions that were made in the past and cannot be undone that affect the County's budget, such as purchasing Buffalo Peak Golf Course (BPGC). BPGC is an asset, but it does not generate enough revenue to pay the mortgage so economic development money is transferred to BPGC to pay those expenses. That is another place where money is being diverted that could be going to economic development. He stated that he would like to have a meeting with the UCEDC Board and its partners to decide on a direction and realistic expectations. There is a role for UCEDC whether or not the City and County continue to fund it; they have assets that are liquid and physical and they would continue to manage them for the benefit of the community. UCEDC is interested in continuing partnerships. They have identified that there is a lack of industrial

lands and buildings for commercial industrial space; they would like to pursue those opportunities where they make sense and perhaps invest their assets along with publicly held assets to encourage development of those opportunities to meet the shortcomings.

Commissioner McClure stated that he had some preliminary discussions with the City of La Grande Manager, Robert Strobe, and proposed that the County be a convener for a half day or all day public session with the City, County and UCEDC.

UCEDC Public Comment

John Lackey, 701 Penn Avenue, La Grande, stated that one of the biggest constraints of progressing with UCEDC is funding. For the greater good there should be a separate governing body and president for the Urban Renewal District. Being the same organization, there is a conflict of interest with the City Council and the URD and if they were split then there would be better representation of a greater area for the better good.

Commissioner Howard agreed that was a fascinating point that deserves some legal study.

Commissioner Howard liked the direction and suggested having a representative from Oregon Solutions to serve as a moderator. Commissioner McClure and Commissioner Beverage concurred.

Commissioner Howard stated that he likes the idea of having the city mayors involved.

Commissioner McClure stated that he would work with Mrs. Burgess to create a more concrete proposal and would also talk to the mayors and Mr. Strobe. It needs to be a community discussion of how to do this and ask if there is a better way to do it. Economic development has not been real successful but some of it may be a result of other factors beyond our control.

Commissioner Howard felt that having a discussion about the URD would not be appropriate at the proposed meeting, but it should be addressed at another time.

Commissioner Beverage stated that she would like to involve other cities in the discussion and hear their input regarding service and what they would like to see.

Commissioner McClure acknowledged that schedules are busy this time of year but this needs to be expedited. He agreed that this discussion should not include the URD, but everyone needs to know about the issues.

Commissioner Howard stated that UCEDC is indispensable in developing commercial property. He was encouraged by comments made by UCEDC representatives that they would work with its partners to create measurable expectations. This area has resources that no one else has in the state. This is a crossroads and these conversations need to start now. He complimented Commissioner McClure's leadership and added that he appreciated the efforts of John Lackey. He was encouraged by changes at the Chamber of Commerce that are starting to reflect the entire county. He is still more concerned, frustrated, and worried about the next ten years; the county is in danger.

Commissioner McClure agreed and added that discussions need to include advantages and disadvantages for this area.

Mrs. Burgess asked the Commissioners if funding for UCEDC was on hold pending the outcome of more meetings or if they were considering interim funding.

Commissioner Howard stated that there was a suggestion to extend funding for 90 days. This would give them some assurance of a targeted plan and specifics that would be a result of the 90 day period; it would be nice to see that happening on day two since this is day one.

Commissioner Beverage stated that day two would be when the whole board has UCEDC financials available for review.

Commissioner McClure stated that the question was if the County releases a quarterly payment to UCEDC because the quarter has begun or should it wait to fund UCEDC until the process is completed.

Commissioner Howard felt that the process would be in a holding pattern for 90 days so payments would continue.

Commissioner Beverage stated that her position was not to release funding until financials are available.

Commissioner Howard agreed that it is legitimate to ask for financials.

Commissioner McClure stated that payments could continue when the commissioners have the financials, which should be not difficult for UCEDC.

Public Comment

John Lackey stated that in order for UCEDC to assess its situation, they would need information from the UCEDC staff. It is very important that they get funding in order to move ahead.

Commissioner McClure stated that when the commissioners have the financials, then funding would be released.

Commissioner Howard stated that if the County freezes funding then it cannot expect to get anything back. His point of view is that the warning bells are out and the commission should give UCEDC 90 days to reassess, but they deserve to get paid while they are working.

Commissioner McClure asked Dan Stark, UCEDC Director, how long it would take to get their financials. Mr. Stark stated that they could send financials to the County today.

Commissioner McClure requested that Mr. Stark send financials to all three commissioners and then the County would release funding for one quarter. This discussion will continue prior to the next quarter to determine funding.

Cove Rural Fire Protection District Public Hearing, Court Order 2017-24

Stacey Warren, Associate Planner, stated that an application was received from Mike Herbes to annex property into the Cove Rural Fire Protection District. Approval would increase property taxes for the applicant and they will be covered by the Rural Fire District.

Commissioner McClure opened the public hearing for annexation to the Cove Rural Fire Protection District.

Public Comment

Janet Herbes stated that she and her husband met with the fire chief and asked if anything else was needed for their annexation. Commissioner McClure stated that their documentation had been received and nothing else was needed.

Commissioner McClure closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Howard asked if the submitted court orders were properly consolidated by the same number. Ms. Warren stated that they should have had separate court orders and the scrivener's error would be corrected to reflect that annexation to the Cove Fire District is Court Order 2017-24 and annexation to the La Grande Fire District is Court Order 2017-25.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Court Order 2017-24. Commissioner Beverage seconded.

Roll Call on Court Order 2017-24: Commissioner Beverage, yes. Commissioner Howard, yes. Commissioner McClure, yes. Motion carried unanimously.

La Grande Rural Fire Protection District Public Hearing, Court Order 2017-25

Stacey Warren, Associate Planner, stated that applications were received from Dallas & Rosina Armon and Teri & Jesse Walker to annex property into the La Grande Rural Fire Protection District. Approval would increase property taxes for the applicant and they will be covered by the La Grande Rural Fire District.

Commissioner McClure opened the public hearing.

Public Comment

Teri Walker, 52752 I84 Perry Exit, La Grande, stated that she lives by the Perry swimming hole and there is a need for fire protection, especially with concerns about fireworks used in the area and the number of people living in Perry. She added that it is really important to be annexed into the district.

Commissioner McClure closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Court Order 2017-25. Commissioner Beverage seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McClure recessed the meeting until 11:30 a.m.

Second Reading of Ordinance 2017-02, Zone Text Amendment (Wedding & Related Events Venues)

Commissioner McClure stated that the public hearing was closed at the last meeting and entertained a motion to approve.

Commissioner Howard moved approval of Ordinance 2017-02. Commissioner Beverage seconded.

Commissioner McClure read Ordinance 2017-02 by title only.

Roll Call on Ordinance 2017-02: Commissioner Howard, yes. Commissioner Beverage, yes. Commissioner McClure, yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McClure thanked everyone for the frank discussion and an excellent meeting.

Next Meeting and Location

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at the Joseph Annex Building.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorcinda Johnston
Sr. Dept. Specialist II