



UNION COUNTY B2H Advisory Committee

Scott Hartell, Planning Director

1001 4th Street, Suite C

La Grande, OR 97850

PHONE (541)963-1014

FAX (541)963-1039

TTY 1-800-735-1232

Union County B2H Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes- June 30th, 2016

ATTENDANCE: Ted Taylor-Chair, Brad Allen, Irene Gilbert, Joel Goldstein, Ray Randall, Scott Hartell & Darcy Carreiro

Members Absent: Norm Paullus, Terry Edvalson, George Mead, Anna Baum

I. **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman, Ted Taylor opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

II. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

The Agenda was approved as submitted by the Committee with the deletion of item number 7.

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES- May 12th meeting**

Ray Randall made a motion to approve the minutes from May 12th 2016 as submitted. Irene Gilbert seconded the motion and the May Minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. **STAFF REPORT/COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATE:**

Scott shared his staff report with the Committee. He reflected on comments and questions from previous meeting. He came up with a total of 8 dwellings affected by the ½ mile proposed buffer of the proposed route. He also found resources to locate the proposed access & construction routes. The City of LaGrande has jurisdiction of Model Air & Hawthorn Lane while it is within the city limits. Once these roads are outside the city limits, the roads become private.

Scott shared that Sue Oliver answered the question at the previous meeting of 4000 feet being the buffer of the transmission line/route when it is placed.

Scott shared that there is a potential release date of September 2016 for the BLM final EIS, but that date is not set. The BLM is still working through letters and comments and will keep cooperating agencies up to date.

Scott stated that he, under direction of the Board of Commissioners, proposes we postpone setting future meetings until we receive public comments that would require the Advisory Committee to meet. If and when we receive comments, Scott would get a hold of Ted to review the comments with him. If it is a worthy comment to be reviewed by the Committee, we would schedule a meeting at that time. If the comment is determined that the Committee is not needed to meet to review it, then Scott and Ted will answer the comment. He explained the purpose of this Committee as determined by the Commissioners. Joel asked how many people are needed to provide information so that we can hold a meeting. Scott replied that one submitted

comment/question would be enough. Joel stated that Jim & Fuji Kreider are providing us with a lot of information that he thinks we should meet to discuss. Scott pointed out that all of the comments and questions that Jim & Fuji are providing as follow up to this Committee have already been answered by the entities that they have queried themselves (BLM, Idaho Power or Congressmen etc.) Therefore, there is no further evaluation that the Advisory Committee would need to give. He differentiated that their "citizen committee to stop Idaho Power" is not the purpose of the Advisory Committee. Joel thinks the information that they have is pertinent to the B2H line. Scott stated that this Committee was established to be a forum for the citizens to state concerns to this Committee so that we can find answers for them or direct them to the BLM or Oregon Department of Energy. Scott asked Joel why inquiries of Jim & Fuji's "stop Idaho Power coalition" was the responsibility of the Advisory Committee. Irene stated that she resents Scott and that he has been meeting with the County Commissioners outside of this Committee. She stated that Scott is only staff to this Committee; he is not the boss of this Committee. She stated that if he wants to talk to the Commissioners he has to include the members of this Committee. She stated once again that he does not have that power, he is only staff. She says that we are receiving plenty of comments. Scott asked if we really are receiving comments. Joel said yes, verbal comments at these meetings.

Ray stated that in the beginning we started behind the 8 ball and we were in a hurry and had to learn the processes. He resents the fact that he thinks Scott is trying to narrow the role of this Committee.

Ted tried to explain to everyone that Scott is just trying to do what the Commissioners have asked him to do as County Planning Director. The Commissioners are the ones telling Scott until there are comments there is no reason to meet. Irene said that she needs to be meeting with the Commissioners also and that she is pissed and that Scott does not need to be screening the comments.

Ray Randall says that he feels like if the Commissioners are trying to narrow the role of this Committee, then comments could just be passed on by Darcy to the Commissioners. But he doesn't think that was the purpose of this Committee's establishment.

Joel Goldstein thinks that the Commissioners need to hear the Committee's side of the story. He also thinks that since our meeting minutes are full of public comments, we should have plenty of citizen input to discuss. He reminded everyone that we have approved that oral comments are acceptable. He also thinks that there is a lot going on. Ted says that all comments are to be submitted to Scott. He doesn't think that there are any comments for review, per criteria, at this time that need to be addressed that need to go to the Commissioners. Ted suggested a couple meetings ago that we establish a sub-committee to screen the comments but no one wanted to do help him do so.

Joel thinks that we currently have 3 members in this room who spend a great deal of time researching and meeting with people regarding B2H and he thinks that we need to hear that information at these meetings. Joel feels like eliminating meetings is squelching the voice of the public. Joel is concerned that if limited information is being shared with the Commissioners, Committee members may feel excluded. He

thinks that members of this Committee need to meet with the Commissioners to encourage them to maintain regular meetings.

Irene stated that she personally does not like Scott speaking on behalf of the Committee. She stated that he had information shared with her from a member of the public that Scott told them that the “no option” is not an option, which Irene states is not true. She feels circumvented and she thinks he is speaking on behalf of this Committee in public.

Brad stated that Scott is a person and is entitled to his opinion. Brad states that our hands are really tied and that we need to keep moving forward. He states that we do not have the power to stop B2H, we are an Advisory Committee. He encouraged everyone to stay civil and try to stay focused on the task at hand. He feels like we need to focus on the Purpose of this Committee.

Ted stated once again that Scott is to report to the County Commissioners as directed by them. Ted said that the Commissioners receive our meeting minutes and do have opportunity to ask questions of this Committee as they need. Joel said reading minutes is different than having a conversation about the need of having meetings.

Ray Randall & Joel Goldstein did not have a report to the Committee.

Irene reported on her attendance of the Oregon Energy Facilities Siting Council & Oregon Department of Energy meetings. At the last meeting they stated they will be updating the Fish & Wildlife rules. They are receiving many letters of concern regarding wildlife impacts by establishing B2H line. These are the EFSC rules regarding wildlife not ODFW. The senate and house Oversight Committee on the Department of Energy had a meeting on Monday which Irene testified at. Irene said that they are having problems with the tax credits. Irene stated the Mr. & Mrs. White presented a nice letter to legislature.

Brad Allen shared that he had nothing to report, but appreciates every ones hard work.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lois Barry, 60688 Morgan Lake Road LaGrande, OR 97850, Lois thanked the Committee for their hard work. She also shared that she was not aware that a comment needed to be placed on the comment form, but will use it moving forward. Lois gave the Committee documents to add to the public comment she gave. She gave quotes of the Idaho Power & Energy Trusts fiscal update news release.

She asked the B2H Advisory Committee to ask Idaho Power to provide parallel comparable numbers to compare to the Energy Trust reported savings fiscal reports. She thought this may help comparing conservation vs needs.

Lois attends almost all Board of Commissioners to stay informed and keep herself in the loop. She also attended the meeting when Senator Merkely was in LaGrande recently. She and others in the community gave Senator Merkely documents for his review and knowledge.

Irene asked if Lois would like this Committee to submit a letter to Idaho Power asking for the comparison. She also asked Lois to submit a draft letter for the Committee to review and submit to address this request of/with Idaho Power. Lois agreed that she would do this for us. Lois stated that she was happy to get to make public comment prior to 10 o'clock in the evening.

Fuji Kreider 60366 Marvin Road LaGrande, OR 97850, Fuji gave the Committee a list of questions that were presented to Senator Merkeley and asked if this Committee could review these same questions and reply to as many as they could to her. She stated that she & Jim provide comments all of the time, and that they submit them to the Planning Department.

She would like to see meetings continue to meet to prepare for the final EIS & process. She thinks that this Committee had a lesson to learn when it was first established, that its feet were put to the fire. She thinks that this Committee should get caught up and be prepared for the EIS. That way this Committee is ready when the EIS is released. This would also lead into the State energy application process. She thinks that they can predict when these topics are coming up and they are happy to keep sharing all of this with this Committee so that the Committee is prepared and up to speed.

She said that she was surprised to find out about the “West Wide Corridor” during the meeting last weekend and doing further research. The West Wide Corridor would potentially be the prime corridor for wind energy as well as electrical power. 395 was established a scenic by-way, it is not going to go that way now. Our valley would directly be affected by it. Fuji stated that the Committee should focus on being prepared and continue to meet

Ted asked who mandated this corridor. Is it federal, state..? Fuji stated that Jim could answer more technical questions. She stated that she will share data with this Committee as they receive it. Joel asked if Fuji would like the Committee to ask if B2H comes through, are we opening the door to more energy development routes to enter this valley.

Charlie Gillis 601 N Avenue, LaGrande, OR 97850, he stated that he attended the meeting in Elgin last weekend and asked Senator Merkley, what protection private citizens have. Senator Merkley replied that there are elements of protection within FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). Charlie asked that this Committee pass these protection avenues onto the County Commissioners. He thinks that this Committee should help provide the County Commissioners with these Federal protections for land owners. He also asked if there could be public comment forms provided on the table at the next meeting. Ted said that Darcy will make sure forms are available. Irene asked if Charlie thinks that this Committee should write a letter asking for further explanation of FERC resources. Charlie stated that he will contact FERC directly; as well as with our local Senator and Representative offices to help him provide feedback to the Committee.

Nathan Smutz. 59074 Foothill Road LaGrande, OR 97850, asked for clarification regarding the “grid stabilization”. He asked how they would make up the difference. He asked if they had to be responsible for the diesel. He thought that there would be a line coming in to create what they need going out. Irene stated that they are going to adjust rates for rate payers to facilitate their needs/expenses. Nathan stated that if this goes to the point, is there anyone studying the value of the timber (per board foot) that will be sacrificed with this line being placed? He thinks that land owners and this Committee need ammunition to fight the potential economic impacts. Brad Allen said

that Idaho Power and the land owner are supposed to settle this figure on their own, if that is not agreeable, and then it would go to a local County Court. Nathan thinks that extra data would at least give you a baseline. Irene stated that this should go to the Legislative Oversight Committee and that she has submitted letters regarding this.

Irwin Smutz, 59074 Foothill Road LaGrande, OR 97850, Irwin stated that he found the meeting notice in the classified ads in The Observer, he thinks this is a bad spot for it. He would like to see the Counties work together to fight this line. He would like to see all Counties affected by the line to work together. He would like our representatives to step up and represent us. When the OFW said that they were bringing in a wildlife refuge area, they sent a letter to the land owners stating that they would condemn their land. He stated that the farmers all banded together and came up with fighting numbers to submit to legislatures and got the refuge stopped. As far as compensation, Irwin was paid a one-time payment and was left with a lifetime of dealing with the land damage that was left. Irwin stated that he is not interested in the money he just wants to line off his land. He is frustrated with himself for not being involved earlier, he thought that the line was planned to go up through the woods, so he wasn't concerned. Now that it's potentially going to go through his land he is not happy.

He was frustrated that the meeting Notice was in the classified ads and asked if we could place it somewhere else and add it to the meeting. He is very appreciative of this Committee trying to serve this community.

Ray stated that there is strength in numbers. He reported that Umatilla & Baker County have indicated they are not convinced that this line be placed. Ray would like this Committee to reach out to the neighboring Counties and try to work together with them. He thinks that this Committee should ask out Commissioners to do so. Irwin agreed that our County Commissioners should meet with these other Commissioners. Brad stated that Irwin suggesting to do this, is a great idea.

Irene recommended that we put the meeting announcements on the radio and the "Briefly" in the Observer. She also thought that Irwin could get farmers/ranchers in Umatilla County together with Union county farmers to band together if he wanted. He thinks that the wildlife should not take president over the humans. Brad shared that he has all of the same easements on his property in North Powder that he has and shared that he thinks that there is 2 ways to look at it. Should you have one route through your land or should there be multiple routes. Irwin thinks that there is no reason to run the route through the valley.

Jim Kreider, 60366 Marvin Road LaGrande, OR 97850, stated that if we didn't have these Advisory Committee meetings, the Committee would not hear his input or the reports on what he researches and comments they have to share. Jim did state that he has formed a "Stop the B2H line coalition" and that they are actively working with 6 other groups and currently have a dialogue. He stated that he has knowledge of a representative from the City of LaGrande has concerns with the line going in. The City of LaGrande shared with Jim that are establishing reservoir, construction of water ponds and mini hydro pumps that they are planning to build from Morgan Lake down to the City. They are also concerned with obstructions of the view shed also.

The “Stop the Line Coalition” has divided work into 4 major groups and is currently working on specific topics. Jim also thinks that this Advisory Committee should become involved with these groups if they would like to educate themselves on what is going on.

Jim shared that Don Gonzalez from the BLM stated that the Supplemental statement is not pertinent. Jim thought that Scott had asked for supplemental budget for a mailing to effected land owners. He wasn't sure that this had been done, if so, he would suggest that letters be sent out to affected land owners within a 1 mile radiance.

Jim & Fuji submitted lists of questions to BLM & Idaho Power and has received comments/answers back from both of them. He shared these with the Planning Department and the Planning Department sent them to the B2H Advisory Committee. Jim stated that he thought that Don Gonzalez and Jeff Maffuccio gave him excellent complete insight back from his requests. He supports creating a meeting with neighboring County Committees and has asked Jack Howard to help him get on the agenda when the Oregon County Commissioners meet again this fall. Ted asked that Scott ask our Commissioners how they would like to meet with other County Commissioners regarding B2H. Brad asked if we could officially make that recommendation to the Commissioners by the B2H Advisory Committee. Ted did not think we could. Jim stated that BLM & Idaho Power still have 2 separate routes listed. He did state that Jeff at Idaho Power said that they would go with the route BLM chose. He stated that Idaho Power is not necessarily doing an EIS they are doing more of a survey of land and stability of tower sites. Ted said that BLM usually they won't release a supplemental document unless there is a change, like a new route that they did not study. He said it's either that or they have to admit they made a big error.

Jim would like to make sure we are ready to comment during a comment period on a supplemental EIS when they release another one prior to the final being released.

The Committee agreed that they will table this topic and work on this motion for request at the next meeting.

IV. COMMITTEE & ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

A. Ted proposed a Motion and will send this to the Planning Department Staff & the Advisory Committee via email. Ray gave suggestions to this motion and the Committee agreed. This motion was tabled until the next meeting. Irene stated that the Committee can comment back on the email Ted sends out so that all that information is readily available.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no additional public comment.

IX. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

The next regular Committee meeting will be Thursday, July 28th, 2016 at 6:30 pm in the Earl C. Misener Conference Room.

The Following items will be on the Agenda, under Committee Business for the next meeting.

1. Follow up on the possible motion for supplemental information regarding the BLM's EIS to the Commissioners.
2. Ted will email a list of future agenda items out to the Advisory Committee this weekend for review/comments.

X. ADJOURN

Ted adjourned the Union County B2H Advisory Committee meeting of June 30th, 2016 at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Darcy Johnson Carreiro
Senior Department Specialist II