

**CROOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
OF APRIL 10, 2024, WORK SESSION
Open Portion**

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of Commissioners met in a regularly scheduled Work Session on April 10, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the County meeting room located at 320 NE Court Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

Board Members Present: Commissioner Seth Crawford, Commissioner Susan Hermreck, and Commissioner Brian Barney

Absentees: None

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: Legal Counsels Eric Blaine and John Eisler; Administrative Executive Assistant Sarah Puerner; Road Superintendent Brad Haynes; Fairgrounds Manager Casey Daly; Christina Hannigan; Amy Albert; Contract County Administrator Andy Parks, Assessor Jon Soliz; Library Director Sarah Beeler; Finance Director Christina Haron; Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis; District Attorney Kari Hathorn; Community Development Director Will Van Vactor; Health and Human Services Director Katie Plumb; Sheriff Gautney; Ag Extension Manager Kim Herber; Natural Resources Policy Coordinator Tim Deboodt; Office Manager Alex Solterbeck; Administrative Assistant Mona Glade; Chief Administrative Deputy Stephanie Wilson; Assessment Technician Stephanie West; Appraiser Jason Elliott; Assessment Technician Linda Pepper; Chief Information Officer Stephen Chellis; Administrative Assistant Breyanna Cupp; Systems Administrator Chelsea Watson; Road Master Assistant Wanda Smith; Senior Planner Katie McDonald; Commander Andrew Rasmussen; Treasurer Galan Carter; Associate Planner Hannah Elliott; Airport Manager Kelly Coffelt; Library Operations Manager Cindy York; Assistant Chief Deputy District Attorney Carolyn Powell; Onsite Supervisor Julie Lancaster; Operations Manager Katrina Weitman; Fleet Supervisor Robert George; Program Assistant Shawna Holland; Senior Appraiser Shannon Alleman; Assistant Building Official Terry Weitman; Clerk Cheryl Seely; Building Inspector Sam Peterson; Margaret Olney; Undersheriff Bill Elliott; Aaron Landau; Budget Analyst Jamie Berger; Kim Molnar; Building Inspector Shawn Powlison; Mike Ervin; Carole Whitside; Monty Kurtz; Dan Schutte; Dock Kerbow; Mark Wehrmeister; Katie Slattery; Keith Leitz; Christina Tsutsui-Tharp; Dale McCallister; Kristy Kurtz; Jack Rabenberg; Wendy Woodley; Chris Beard; and members of the public.

WORK SESSION

The meeting was **called to order at 9:00 a.m.**

Public Comment:

Mike Ervin: Would like to request that the Commissioners allow for public comments following each agenda item. Since he is not familiar with some of the topics on the agenda, having the opportunity to comment after the presentations would be beneficial. The Commissioners have indicated that they are open to public comments on these topics during the work session.

Discussion item #1: Consider Appointments to the Budget Committee:

Requester: Andy Parks

Details: Christina Haron, Finance Director, attended the Work Session to seek consideration for appointments to the Budget Committee. Following the Commissioners' request, the finance staff has conducted interviews with four candidates, with a fifth interview scheduled. The team has evaluated the candidates, offering scoring and recommendations for each, along with a draft Order detailing the proposed committee appointments. This item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 17th.

Discussion item #2: Human Resources Roadmap:

Requester: Andy Parks

Details: Andy Parks, Contract County Administrator, attended the Work Session to discuss the Human Resources Roadmap and introduced Mark Wehrmeister and Carol Whitside from VIE Consultants. Mr. Wehrmeister and Ms. Whitside presented an overview of the roadmap report which assesses the current status of the county-wide Human Resources operations and outlines a strategic plan to achieve the desired improvements. The county has expanded its HR team with a third staff member and engaged external HR project management support. While the total cost to implement all recommendations is not yet determined, the county has allocated funds for maintaining a minimum of three HR personnel and for the start-up of the HR information system (HRIS) suggested in the roadmap. This agenda item is scheduled for movement to the consent agenda for final approval on April 17th.

Discussion item #3: Discuss roles and responsibilities of Court (all Commissioners) and Board Chair:

Requester: Andy Parks

Details: Andy Parks, Contract County Administrator, attended the Work Session to address the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Commissioners. The County Court explored the roles of the Commissioners during its goal-setting meeting on March 1, 2024, revised its governance structure on March 8, 2024, and further discussed the Commissioners' roles and responsibilities on March 13, 2024. However, the specific roles and responsibilities of the Board Chair have not been fully addressed, including the distribution of certain duties among all Commissioners. The Commissioners decided to allocate more time to this agenda item and have agreed to revisit it for further consideration at the next meeting on the 17th.

Discussion item #4: Purchase of New Pickup:

Requester: Brad Haynes

Details: Brad Haynes, Road Superintendent, attended the Work Session to discuss the purchase of a new truck and presented bids to the Board of Commissioners. He received three bids from dealers in Central Oregon, with Kendall Ford offering the lowest price. The objective is to replace a 2001 work pickup that has logged 174,000 miles and 357,000 hours, and which holds no trade-in value. Kendall Ford has agreed to comply with Crook County's purchasing policies. The cost of the new truck is \$52,949.65. This item will be placed on the consent agenda for April 17th for final approval.

Discussion item #5: Landfill Water Truck Purchase:

Requester: Jacquie Davis

Details: Jacquie Davis, Landfill Manager, attended the Work Session to discuss acquiring a new landfill water truck and presented the associated bids to the Board of Commissioners. The FY25 budget allocates funds for this purchase, which will allow the department to transfer the current 1979 water truck to a backup role. The budget for the 2025 fiscal year is set at \$270,000. The proposed expenditures include \$136,508.69 for an International Chassis under the Oregon Purchase Agreement, and \$110,000 for an OMCO water tank, bringing the total cost to \$246,508.69, which is under the budgeted amount. Ms. Davis would like to place the order for Chassis and OMCO water tank now and disperse funds in 2025. This item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 17th.

Discussion item #6: Livestock Pen Purchase Approval:

Requester: Casey Daly

Details: Casey Daly, Fairgrounds Manager, attended the Work Session to propose the acquisition of 40 additional livestock pens, presenting bids to the Board of Commissioners. The bids received were from Titan Livestock Equipment, WW Livestock Systems, and Wilco, with Wilco offering the lowest price, thus recommended for purchase. These new pens are intended to replace equipment that has reached the end of its usable life. The request specifies purchasing the same model of pens that the FFA acquired in 2023, ensuring compatibility and ease of setup. The purchase would be funded through the \$2M grant money. This item will move to the consent agenda for final approval on April 17th.

Discussion item #7: Oregon Dept. of Forestry IGA for leasing ramp space at Airport for Fire season:

Requester: Kelly Coffelt

Details: Kelly Coffelt, Airport Manager, attended the Work Session to seek approval for renewing the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the Oregon Department of Forestry for leasing ramp space at the airport during the fire season. This agreement, consistent with those of the past six years, facilitates the seasonal stationing of single-engine air tankers used for fire protection. The arrangement typically spans five to six months, during which the airport earns \$1,400.00 per month, totaling approximately \$8,400.00 for the season. The contract has been reviewed by legal counsel. This agreement not only generates significant revenue but also supports community safety and the surrounding areas. This item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval for April 17th.

Discussion item #8: Natural Resources Committee letter to BLM regarding input to the Programmatic Solar EIS:

Requester: Tim Deboodt

Details: Tim Deboodt, Natural Resources Policy Coordinator, attended the Work Session to present a draft letter from the Natural Resources Committee to the Bureau of Land Management concerning the Programmatic Solar Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The BLM has initiated a national-level process to expand their programmatic plan for large-scale commercial development on public lands. The County

previously submitted scoping comments on this issue last summer. With an upcoming deadline for further comments on April 18th, the Natural Resources Committee has prepared a draft letter for the County to review and potentially approve at the regular meeting scheduled for April 17th. The letter critiques the EIS for its lack of discussion on the impacts to local wildlife, farms, and the public lands utilized by Crook County citizens. This item will be placed on the consent agenda for final approval on April 17th.

Discussion item #9: Text Amendment Updates:

Requester: Will Van Vactor

Details: Will Van Vactor, Community Development Director, and Katie McDonald, Senior Planner, attended the Work Session to give a presentation on proposed text amendments and recommended code updates. The Planning Department has outlined several key updates, including clarifications in language, regulations for farm breweries, criteria for forest template dwellings, provisions for accessory dwelling units, lighting standards, revisions to the Juniper Acres purpose statement, and the approval process for transmission towers. These proposed amendments, pending approval, will be incorporated into the County's Code. Today's discussion aimed to provide a concise overview of these amendments and explain the procedure for the forthcoming public hearings.

Discussion item #10: Consider amendment of existing agreement with PERS enrolling police officers in PERS to add Deputy District Attorneys employed by the County on and after 1/1/2024 to the existing Police/Fire PERS agreement pursuant to the legislative intent of HB 2054:

Requester: Kari Hathorn

Details: Kari Hathorn, District Attorney, attended the Work Session to request that the Board of Commissioners consider enrolling Deputy District Attorneys (DDAs) into the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). House Bill 2054 has classified deputy district attorneys as police officers for the purposes of PERS eligibility. Crook County has participated in PERS for its law enforcement personnel since July 1, 1973. According to ORS 238A.070, incorporating DDAs into the existing PERS agreement will not necessitate the enrollment of all county employees. This was confirmed in an email from PERS dated March 12, 2024. Attorney Margaret Olney also addressed the meeting, clarifying the implications of the current statute on other county employees with regard to PERS. Contract County Administrator Andy Parks provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the competitive landscape and implications of enrolling Deputy District Attorneys (DDAs) into PERS.

MOTION to enroll the DDA's into the PERS Program as per discussion today. Motion seconded. Further discussion took place, during which Commissioner Barney expressed concerns about the magnitude of the decision to enroll Deputy District Attorneys in PERS and its potential long-term effects on the County. Commissioner Barney felt that the decision-making process was rushed and expressed disappointment with how it was handled. Commissioner Hermreck acknowledged her preference for a 401k plan but recognized the urgent need presented by the District Attorney's office for enrolling Deputy District Attorneys into PERS. The Commissioners proceeded to vote. Motion carried 2-1.

Discussion item #11: To consider the status of Andy Parks' contract:

Requester: Susan Hermreck

Details: This item was removed from the agenda for additional evaluation and will be postponed for 30 days. It was not a good opportunity to discuss this agenda item at this time.

Administrator Report:

Andy Parks - Provided the information to Kari Hathorn (DA) to use in the recruiting process and the pay levels that are pending approval will be presented at next week's meeting. Vance Jacobson will be available to speak with the Board members individually if needed. Mr. Parks also attended the City Council meeting last night and the City approved the Airport IGA.

Commissioner Updates:

Susan Hermreck – Attended the COIC Executive Meeting for the Budget Committee. The next meeting is scheduled for April 25th, and there will be three meetings held next year. Commissioner Hermreck requested to keep a position open for Crook County. She discussed this with Steve Forester, who will be recommending a potential candidate for appointment to the committee.

Brian Barney – Progress is being made at the Justice Center with the carpet, tile, paint, and flooring soon to be completed on the 3rd floor. Once finished, it will be an impressive facility that will significantly benefit the criminal justice system.

Seth Crawford - Ongoing concerns regarding Andy being with the County and his contract. Have lost numerous Department Heads and anticipate further departures unless this issue is resolved.

Brian Barney – Is concerned about how these conversations about Andy are coming out and the possible liability on the County regarding these matters. Recommends speaking with Andy and not about Andy in meetings.

Public Comment:

Mike Ervin – The discussions in these meetings have been extremely unprofessional and unnecessary. The County is constantly fighting, and the community is noticing it.

Susan Hermreck - The Executive Session last week had no motions made and three citizens called and they knew exactly what happened in the Executive Session. If we are going to have an Executive Session, it needs to be an Executive Session. If not, then that discussion needs to happen in open session.

There being no further business before the Board of Commissioners, the meeting was **adjourned at 12:06 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Puerner