

**CROOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
OF DECEMBER 20, 2024, SPECIAL MEETING
Open Portion**

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of Commissioners met in a Special Session on December 20, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the County meeting room located at 203 NE Court Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

Board Members Present: Commissioner Susan Hermreck and Commissioner Brian Barney

Absentees: Commissioner Crawford

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: Legal Counsel Eric Blaine; Executive Administrative Assistant Sarah Puerner; Executive Assistant Breyanna Cupp; County Manager Will Van Vactor; Undersheriff Bill Elliott; Operations Manager Stephanie Wilson; Sheriff Gautney; Legal Assistant Alex Solterbeck; and Justin Alderman.

SPECIAL SESSION

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

Public Comment: None

Discussion item #1: Consideration of Appointing a New or Additional Attorney(s) for Labor Negotiations and Labor Relations issues:

Requester: Will Van Vactor

Details: County Manager Will Van Vactor attended the Special Session to discuss with the Board of Commissioners the appointment of a new counsel for labor negotiations. After consultations, it was determined that hiring outside counsel would benefit the county. Steven Schuback, proposed as the new labor attorney, offers a fresh perspective for negotiations with both the deputies and sergeants associations. His hourly rate of \$335 represents a slight increase from the current rate of \$295/hour. Sheriff Gautney highlighted the need for a new direction in these negotiations, particularly due to the long tenure of their current attorney, Bruce, who has slowed down in his practice. Commissioners Barney and Hermreck support this transition, acknowledging the importance of fresh eyes and a new outlook for the future of the organization.

MOTION to appoint Steven Schuback with PRHLaborLaw.com to the negotiations for the Sheriff's Department and to authorize County Manager Will Van Vactor to sign an engagement letter for services. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Hermreck votes Aye and Commissioner Barney votes Aye. Motion carried 2-0.

Discussion item #2: Order 2024-57 In the Matter of an Emergency Procurement of Septage Hauling Services:

Requester: John Eisler

Details: County Counsel Eric Blaine attended the Special Session to discuss Order 2024-57, which pertains to the emergency procurement of septage hauling services due

to the imminent termination of the County's contract with 2 Springs Ranch on December 24th. The County needs to transport septage from the Landfill, the only collection site in Crook County, to the City's wastewater treatment facility. Given the lack of time to complete a competitive procurement process for a permitted septage transporter by the deadline, the County is permitted under ORS 249B.080 and Crook County Code 3.12.100 to execute contracts without a competitive process in emergency situations. Mr. Blaine provided an overview of the emergency procurement contract with MUCK to provide these services at 6 cents per gallon, noting the lack of interest and the need for qualified services made a competitive process impractical. The contract, expiring on 6/30/25, will handle approximately 340,000 gallons a month, with the next best alternative being La Pine. This arrangement is an essential interim solution, and there is gratitude expressed towards the City of Prineville for their support during this period. Commissioner Barney, who had a previous conflict of interest, confirmed his non-involvement and resolved conflict.

MOTION to approve Order 2024-57 in the matter of an emergency procurement of septage transportation services. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Hermreck votes Aye and Commissioner Barney votes Aye. Motion carried 2-0.

MOTION to approve the services contract with Muck Septic Services LLC. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Hermreck votes Aye and Commissioner Barney votes Aye. Motion carried 2-0.

Manager Report: None

Commissioner Updates: None

There being no further business before the Board of Commissioners, the meeting was **adjourned at 9:13 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Puerner / Breyanna Cupp