

MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES
May 22, 2024

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Court was called to order by Judge Dan Joyce at 9:00 a.m. in the County Court Office with Commissioner Ron Jacobs and Commissioner Jim Mendiola present. Members of the media, public and staff had the opportunity to join the meeting electronically or in-person. Staff present in the meeting room was Economic and Community Development Director Taylor Rembowski. Also present was OSU (Oregon State University) Extension Agent Sergio Arispe. Notice of the meeting was posted on the County website, Courthouse bulletin board and emailed to the Argus Observer, Malheur Enterprise and those persons who have requested notice. The meeting was audio recorded. The agenda is recorded as instrument # 2024-1504

DEPARTMENT OF LAND CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (DLCD)

DLCD Director Brenda Bateman met with the Court. Also present were DLCD staff Aurora Dziadul and Alexis Hammer; and public member Bruce Corn. Ms. Bateman introduced herself to the Court and gave a brief department update. Ms. Bateman has been the DLCD Director for two years, and previously worked in the State Economic Development Department and Water Resources Department. DLCD is currently digitizing and archiving paper records (such as city and county comprehensive plans). A future project is compiling data to provide information on things such as wetlands, habitat, and more. Over the next year, DLCD is working on rulemaking to clarify and define – not to change or make policy. Housing limitations were discussed. DLCD has created a housing division with a focus on housing production; the division was created under the governor’s housing production package.

The Court thanked Ms. Bateman for the in-person visit with them and to Malheur county.

POWER REDUCTION OPPORTUNITY

Mr. Rembowski met with the Court and explained an opportunity to participate in the Verde Light community solar benefits program. Mr. Rembowski requested authorization to submit the County’s power bills for review to determine eligibility for the Community Solar Program; sites that meet eligibility may receive an approximate 10% discount on power. Consensus of the Court was to submit the power bills and application.

COURT MINUTES

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Court Minutes of May 15, 2024. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Special Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2024. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

EXTENSION SERVICE BUDGET DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jacobs explained that the Budget Committee met in April and at that time the proposed budget was to fund the County office manager position at the Extension Service Office through December 2024. There were discussions during the Budget Committee meetings about funding the position past 2024 and Budget Committee members Lee Newman and Bob Skinner expressed support for funding the position past 2024. Commissioner Jacobs expressed support for continuing to fund the staff position past 2024. It was discussed if the position should be a County position or an OSU position. Judge Joyce expressed support for the position to be an OSU position. Mr. Arispe explained that the office manager is a critical position and is more efficient as an OSU employee in terms of what that individual can access. Mr. Arispe expressed support for the County continuing to fund the office manager position, either as a County employee or an OSU employee; and using the tax service district funding for dedicated Extension/Experiment station programs. Commissioner Jacobs noted that the County provides the building used by the Extension Service – Extension does not pay any rent for the building. Commissioner Jacobs explained that Malheur county is an agriculture county and the County Court needs to support agriculture and continue to fund the office manager position at the Extension Service through the 2024/2025 fiscal year. Consensus of the Court was to fund the office manager position as an OSU employee through June 2025. Funding for the position will be discussed and determined annually at County budget meetings. Commissioner Jacobs will visit with the County Budget Officer to update the County 2024/2025 budget document prior to budget adoption in June.

IGA #6541 – AMENDMENT

Commissioner Mendiola moved to approve Amendment #1 to Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) #6541 between the State of Oregon and Malheur County. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously. HB (House Bill) 5204 Grant In Aid funds are added. See instrument # 2024-1596

IGA FOR DISPATCH SERVICES – VALE AND ONTARIO

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Intergovernmental Agreement for 9-1-1 and Dispatch Services and Related Records Management between Malheur County and City of Ontario; and Intergovernmental Agreement for 9-1-1 and Dispatch Services and Related Records Management between Malheur County and City of Vale. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The IGA's are effective for five fiscal years through June 2029. See instrument # 2024-1505 and 2024-1506

STATEMENT TO COUNTY EMPLOYEES

County Counsel Stephanie Williams and IS (Information Services) Director Joshua Kreger met with the Court. Ms. Williams explained that the County's network system has been down and provided a statement for the Court's consideration to share with County employees.

On or about May 19, 2024, we became aware of an incident involving unauthorized access to a portion of the County IT environment by a third party. Upon discovery, we immediately initiated a response plan and shut our entire IT system down – in a matter of less than 20 minutes. We

engaged an industry-leading digital forensic specialist to help us contain and investigate the matter. We are actively monitoring any threat detection across our network, as well as implementing additional security measures to protect our system and data. We will be completing a detailed forensic investigation as part of our response and we are committed to taking all appropriate responses to the findings. At this time, there is no evidence that any data or confidential information has been misused in any way. Because of the rapid response by our IT department, we remain uncertain if data was taken. Please know the security and protection of our data is our highest priority, and we are expeditiously working with outside industry experts to address this matter in accordance with industry best practices. We appreciate your patience and understanding in this situation. We have limited information. We know this is frustrating, but we do not wish to jeopardize our system or accuracy of information for the sake of speed. Nonetheless, we are working as quickly as possible to provide updates and to get our network restored and operational. That said, the investigation remains ongoing, and we will notify individuals should the findings of the investigation indicate that any personal data or information was exposed. All critical services are running and working. This did NOT affect the election.

The Court expressed appreciation to the IS Department staff; and authorized distribution of the statement to County employees.

COURT ADJOURNMENT

Judge Joyce adjourned the meeting.