

**IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF GRANT**

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March 2, 2022

Pursuant to notice made to the newspaper of general circulation throughout Grant County, the radio station, county website, and e-mail distribution list, a regular meeting of the County Court was held at the County Courthouse in Canyon City, OR.

9:02 am -- Call to Order. Present were Judge Scott W. Myers, Commissioners Jim Hamsher and Sam Palmer, Administrative Assistant Laurie Stinnett, Reporter Steven Mitchell, Judy Kerr and John Rowell. Invocation was given by Gary Cockrell. A Pledge of Allegiance was given to the United States Flag.

9:03 am – Katy Nelson and Charlene Morris entered.

9:04 am – Juvenile Director Cindy Tirico entered.

HAND CHECK. The court approved outside of normal claims day, checks # 63326, 63279, 63280, 63281, 63282, 63298, 63299.

AGENDA. MSP: Myers/Hamsher -- to accept the agenda as amended, striking General Order Resolution 22-07 from the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS. Judge Myers noted that the last court date was on Wednesday, February 16th and that Monday, February 21st was the Presidents Day holiday for courthouse employees. He met on the 22nd with library staff to talk about their new hours and library operations and will attend the March 4th event in honor of retiring 911 Director Valerie Maynard. Myers has a Heritage Foundation meeting scheduled at the Snaffle Bit Restaurant on March 8th. On March 10th he will attend the Library Advisory Board meeting. He will take part in the COVID update call on Friday, March 11th with Public Health Administrator Kimberly Lindsay and will listen in on the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Natural Resources Steering Committee call that afternoon. On March 14th he will sit in on the AOC Legislative Committee meeting. The next County Court date is Wednesday, March 16th.

Commissioner Palmer continues to work on policing policy arrangements with the City of John Day. He attended an Eastern Oregon Caucus call with senators, representatives and commissioners and met with the Parole and Probation Department to discuss the on-going office relocation plan. Palmer met with representatives from Oregon Telephone regarding broadband and potential funding. He met with Fair Manager Mindy Winegar to discuss the City's plan regarding food carts. He sat in on Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) Convener's

Meeting this morning and noted that the next full meeting will be held on Monday, March 28th at 10 a.m. Grant County will be hosting the meeting.

Commissioner Hamsher sat in on the Eastern Oregon Caucus call with Oregon senators and representatives. He took part in an Eastern Oregon Commissioners call with Regional Solutions, a League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Board of Directors meeting, and a Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) Conveners meeting. He joined other local leaders in meeting with Senator Merkley, and listened in on the town hall with the Senator. Hamsher took part in a second Eastern Oregon Caucus call. He talked with Jessica at Senator Merkley's office about Senate Bill 37-06. He took part in a National Association of Counties Public Lands Steering Committee meeting. Hamsher spoke with Eric Bush from Emergency Management, met with Economic Development Director Tory Stinnett and spoke with Zach from Oregon Rain, Senator Finley about funding requests and Representative Owens about awards. Fairgrounds Manager Mindy Winegar and Hamsher discussed future proposals for the Fairgrounds. He spoke with the District Attorney's assistant, Tax Assessor David Thunell, and appeared on KJDY radio's Coffee Time program.

9:07 am – Reporter Logan Baggett entered

MINUTES. MSP: Myers/Hamsher -- to approve the minutes of February 16, 2022 as presented.

RESOLUTION 22-06. This resolution is presented for approval to appropriate the unanticipated donation of \$10,000 to the Sheriff's Office for training purposes. The Court thanked the anonymous citizen for the generous donation.

MSP: Hamsher/Myers – To accept the donation by an anonymous citizen of \$10,000 to be used for Sheriff's Department training.

PUBLIC COMMENT. Charlene Morris asked if telephone attendees could be identified. Judge Myers felt that they were not obligated to identify themselves, but if any wished to do so, he gave them the option at that time. He noted that if telephone attendees ask to speak, they are also asked to identify themselves.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE. Sheriff Todd McKinley presented the Community Corrections 2021-2023 Biennial Plan. These are budget documents submitted to the state for their share in funding. He explained that they have two separate budgets for the same department; both the Department of Corrections budget and the County budget.

MSP: Palmer/Myers – To approve the Community Corrections 2021-2023 Biennial Plan as presented and to elect Sheriff Todd McKinley as Chair of the Community Corrections Board. McKinley noted that there were 1216 calls and 417 cases to date as of this week.

JOHN DAY-SNAKE RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT (SNAKE-RAC). Katy Nelson shared her response from the recent meeting of the council. She questioned whether the wolf policy

was equitable to all and stated that by encouraging the proliferation of wolves, we are destroying a food source (deer, elk) and compromising the culture of Indigenous People, with whom hunting and religion are intertwined. Nelson called the wolf policies “elitist” and damaging to independent and less monied rural people, whose hunt for wild game is also a valued sport and way of life. Nelson asked the Court to use their influence to bring this matter to the attention of those they talk to. In further discussion, Commissioner Palmer commented on the discrepancies in wolf management, with Judge Myers concurring. He noted the irony of the U.S. Highway 395 boundary that lists wolves as protected at the courthouse, but not across the highway at his residence.

9:39 am- Roadmaster Alan Hickerson, Mechanic Joe Bennett and Safety and Risk Manager Ryan Palmer entered

9:41 am- Juvenile Counselor Mike McManus entered

9:42 am- Legal Assistant Jamie McKay and Victim Assistant Director Kimberly Neault entered

ROAD DEPARTMENT. Roadmaster Alan Hickerson presented a request for the purchase of a used 972 Cat loader. This would replace the department’s 980 Cat loader that is approximately 40 years old. It will be purchased from Western States for \$257,500 and will come out of the Road Department’s capital outlay account. After further discussion, it was decided to offer the 980 Cat as surplus, rather than use it as a trade on the new purchase.

MSP: Hamsher/Myers – To approve the purchase of the 972 Cat loader from Western States for the price of \$257,500 out of the Road Department capital outlay account as presented.

9:45 am- Human Resources Manager Laurie Cates, Planning Director Shannon Springer and Sheriff Todd McKinley entered.

OFFICE SPACE. Commissioner Sam Palmer met with the Juvenile Division Department to discuss relocating to its office space apart from the Adult Parole & Probation Division. Court discussion ensued, with question as to which accommodations would best serve the Juvenile Department. Suggestions included scheduling a separate day for juveniles, making the courtroom available for use, or transitioning other departments to create the necessary space. Sheriff McKinley noted that it was an issue that has been discussed for a long time, with no resolution. Palmer stressed that it needed to be a timely move and not one that would require remodeling two or three different buildings. He expressed concerns about juvenile and adult offenders operating out of the same space. McKinley does not feel that the L Building location would work well for juveniles and that it is important to keep them close to the necessary interactions at the courthouse. Myers observed that although the issue is on the table, it did not look like it could be settled today. He emphasized that the point is not to displace currently housed employees, but to determine the best way to house the services we provide. In closing, Myers suggested that a committee, consisting of representatives from each potentially impacted department, be formed to recommend the best possible options.

POLICING UPDATE. A proposal regarding policing issues was reviewed by legal counsel and sent

to the John Day City Council. Palmer stated that it is now back in the city's hands. He planned to bring an update from last night's John Day City Council meeting, but that meeting is scheduled for March 8th. He will update the Court with further information after the City Council meets.

REQUEST FOR COMPENSATION. District Attorney Jim Carpenter requested financial compensation for Legal Assistant Jamie McKay. She exceeded 60 hours of compensation time as a result of a staff absence/resignation and an unusually heavy work load during a two week trial in which she was the legal assistant for both trial attorneys. According to the request, during that time, McKay arrived early, stayed late and worked weekends while also handling her regular assignments. The compensation is available in the DA's budget from funds not incurred because of the staff resignation.

MSP: Myers/Palmer, Hamsher – To approve the request for payment of 60 hours compensation time for Legal Assistant Jamie McKay.

Judge Myers clarified that this approval is a waiver, not a violation, of the current policy. Future requests will be decided on a case by case basis. McKay was thanked by the Court for covering for her department during this time. Commissioner Hamsher noted that this is one of those jobs "you can't walk away from" when dealing with required tasks.

COVID MANDATE. The Court agreed that the County will follow the statewide actions in lifting COVID mandates beginning with the indoor masked mandate on March 12th.

MSP: Hamsher/Palmer – To lift the indoor masking policy within the County in concurrence with the State's decision to lift the mandate beginning on March 12, 2022.

Discussion ensued as to how future COVID-related funding and payments may be made. Judge Myers cautioned employees to be aware of deadlines related to funding as restrictions are lifted.

AUDIT CONTRACT. The Court reviewed the contract to provide auditing services for the County from Solutions CPA.

MSP: Myers/Palmer – To approve the contract with Solutions CPA to conduct the audit for the accounts and fiscal affairs of the County for the period beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) REIMBURSEMENT. Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush presented the following requests for ARPA fund reimbursements: 1) to the Fairgrounds for two vaccine clinics held at the pavilion on November 1-5, 2021 and November 11, 2021 for the amount of \$5,835.23; 2) to the County for rekeyed locks at the Grant County Regional Airport (GCRA) for the Emergency Operations Center in April 2021 at the cost of \$1553.00; 3) to the Grant County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) for lost revenue of \$29,898.00 during the Fiscal Year 2020-21 as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MSP: Myers/Hamsher – To approve reimbursement for all three requests as listed above from ARPA funds: \$5835.23 to the Fairgrounds for two vaccine clinics held in November 2021; \$1553.00 to the County for the installation of locks at the GCRA for the Emergency Operations Center; \$29,898.00 to GCSO for lost revenue during the 2020-21 fiscal year as a direct result of

COVID-19.

10:33 – Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Stinnett
Administrative Assistant

**** Please note the court minutes are a summary of the court proceedings. An audio recording of each court session is available, after approval of the minutes, by contacting the County Court at 541-575-0059 or GCCourtAdmin@grantcounty-or.gov ****