

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

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**April 20, 2022 - Regular Meeting of the County Court**

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.

9:03 am -- Call to Order. Present were Judge Scott W. Myers, Commissioner Sam Palmer, Administrative Assistant Laurie Stinnett, Hannah Latzo, Alex Rice, Kristen Walz, Kayse Dean, Javan Bailey, Stefan Kelly, Louis Provencher, Nicole Lexson, Jim Spell, John Rowell, Genevieve Perdue, Amanda Martino, John Morris and Hannah Hinman. Commissioner Jim Hamsher attended by phone. A Pledge of Allegiance was given to the United States Flag. The invocation was given by Justin Deming.

**CLAIMS.** The court had approved claims & extension warrants #123-125.

**HAND CHECKS.** The Court approved outside of normal claims day, check # 63841. Claims from March 16, 2022 not previously recorded include # 63513-63516, 63524.

**AGENDA. MSP: Myers/Palmer--** to accept the agenda as presented.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Judge Myers attended the “Stop the Bleed” training given by Blue Mountain Hospital on April 13<sup>th</sup>. He noted that it was well-attended by county staff. He then took part in the Budget Committee meeting at 9 a.m. On April 14<sup>th</sup> he and other county staff met with Bisnett Insurance to review county-insured vehicles, buildings and property. Myers attended the Community Connections of Northeast Oregon (CCNO) board training in La Grande from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on April 19<sup>th</sup>. He has a 4 p.m. wedding ceremony scheduled on Friday, and will be attending the Eastern Oregon Counties Association (EOCA) meeting at the airport at 10 a.m. on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Palmer attended the Budget Committee Meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup>. He took part in the Eastern Oregon Caucus call with Senator Findley, Representative Owens and other commissioners. Palmer attended the Blues Intergovernmental Council meeting in which Eastern Oregon University’s (EOU) economics team reported on changes within the timber industry, its impact on Eastern Oregon, and how we’ll move forward. He has a Local Community Advisory Council (LCAC) meeting at the airport today and a 2 p.m. Department Head meeting this afternoon.

Commissioner Hamsher took part in the Eastern Oregon Caucus call, several National Association of Counties (NACo) Land Steering Committee meetings and the County Budget

Meeting. He will be attending the upcoming Eastern Oregon Counties (EOC) meeting.

**MINUTES. MSP: Myers/Palmer --** to approve the minutes of April 6<sup>th</sup> to reflect the “no” vote of Commissioner Palmer on Page 5, under “Committee Volunteers”.

9:15 a.m. Move to General Orders due to technical issues for slideshow presentations

**JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY.** June 19<sup>th</sup> has been designated a state holiday commemorating the end of slavery. The county typically follows the state in designating paid holidays.

**MSP: Palmer/Myers – to adopt Juneteenth as a paid holiday for county employees.**

**RESOLUTION 22-12.** To create a Capital Outlay category within the Relief Help Fund used to track American Rescue Plan funds.

**MSP: Myers/Palmer – to approve and circulate Resolution 22-12 for signatures as presented.**

**RESOLUTION 22-13.** To continue the established reserve funds: Fair Reserve, Equipment Reserve, Road Reserve, Airport Reserve, Courthouse Reserve and Unemployment Reserve.

**MSP: Myers/Palmer - To approve and circulate Resolution 22-13 for signatures as presented.**

**FAIRGROUNDS.** Fairgrounds Manager Mindy Winegar submitted an entertainment contract for Kristi Kinsey and band to perform on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**MSP: Myers/Palmer – To approve and sign the contract with Kristi Kinsey and band as presented.**

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.** According to Emergency Management Coordinator Eric Bush, the State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds final rule was implemented on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The rule simplifies the process for calculating reimbursement for revenue losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The rule states that recipients, like Grant County, who receive less than 10 million dollars under the American Recovery Program Act (ARPA) are not required to calculate the specific loss. The only requirement for the recipient is to select the standard allowance versus the option to calculate the loss.

**MSP: Palmer/Myers – To move that Grant County accept the standard allowance for revenue loss reimbursement as outlined on page 9 of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Overview.**

9:30 a.m. Adjourn for five minute break  
Shaun Robertson entered

**NORTH FORK JOHN DAY WATERSHED COUNCIL (NFJDWC).** Executive Director Kristin Walz identified the mission of the NFJDWC, which is to restore and protect the natural resources that make up the North and Middle Fork John Day Watersheds. The Council encourages collaboration with people who live, work and play here. Their goal is to plan and implement restoration projects that are based on the best available science, promote native plant and

wildlife species, respect culturally significant resources, and support the local rural communities. These efforts include Landowner Services, Monitoring & Research, and Restoration Projects. The slideshow presentation documented funding and expenditures, completed projects including spring development, juniper removal, conifer thinning, aspen stand protection, riparian planting and fencing, fish passage and salmonid and other habitat improvement and installation. She shared details of private and federal restoration projects, monitoring and research projects and upcoming projects. Commissioner Palmer asked about long-term change in water temperature. Retired fish biologist John Morris asked if the NFJDWC shared water monitoring data with other organizations; Shaun Robertson shared concerns that information is difficult for landowners and private citizens to obtain. Walz closed by sharing that Project Bids and Contracting information is now accessible on the NFJDWC website.

**BLUE MOUNTAIN LAND TRUST (BMLT).** Conservation Director Amanda “Marty” Martino shared that BMLT is a non-profit land trust organization whose mission is to collaborate with communities and landowners to conserve and protect privately owned scenic, natural and working land that characterize the Blue Mountain region, extending from southeastern Washington through central Oregon. The Trust is involved in education, volunteer and advocacy/succession programs. The predominant tool used by BMLT is a conservation easement, which is defined as a voluntary agreement between a private landowner and a qualified entity that creates permanent limits on the use of the land. The Trust’s current project list consists of 18 conservation easements and one purchased property, protecting over 22,500 acres of land and over 32 miles of streams and rivers. Their portfolio includes wheat farms and cattle ranches. Recent projects include a conservation easement on the 9,000 acre working cattle ranch, the Bennett Ranch, in Unity, Oregon. Phipps Meadows, three miles east of Austin Junction, was purchased by the Trust in June 2021. The land is comprised of 278 acres surrounded by national forest. It houses the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the John Day River, as well as Copper Creek, Little Phipps Creek and Phipps Creek. Commissioner Hamsher questioned whether the purchase by the Trust would affect the water rights easement held by the neighboring property owner. The Court asked that they be notified, in future, before the purchase of properties within the county. Shaun Robertson expressed concerns about the application process and the lack of land use controls within the county’s current infrastructure. He stressed that the time to deal with land-use issues is during a permit process, noting that little recourse is available after the fact.

10:51 a.m.     Adjourn for ten minute break

**COMPENSATION BOARD.** The Court discussed the formation of a County Compensation Board as required by ORS 204.116. Judge Myers noted that it should include 3-5 members from all walks of life who have knowledge of personnel and compensation management. Myers asked that the Court look at the structure of the board and advertise for letters of interest.

**MSP: Myers/Palmer – to move forward with the creation of a compensation board as discussed.**

11:28 a.m. 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](mailto:GCCourtAdmin@grantcounty-or.gov) \*\*\***