

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON

IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF GRANT

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April 28th, 2021

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.

9:00 am -- Call to Order. Present were Judge Scott W. Myers, Commissioners Jim Hamsher and Sam Palmer, Administrative Assistant Kim Puckett, Deputy Clerk Brooke Griffith, Irene Jerome, Frances Preston, John Morris, Aaron Roth, Kyle Sullivan, Reporter Logan Bagett, Reporter Steven Mitchell, and Pastor Justin Deming. A Pledge of Allegiance was given to the United States Flag. The invocation was given by Pastor Deming.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS. Judge Myers attended Budget Committee meetings on the 15th and 28th. On the 20th he attended the Northeast Oregon Housing Authority meeting via phone. He participated in the Community Connections quarterly meeting live in LaGrande. He said it was nice to be able to travel. He performed a wedding on May 4th on the Canyon City Bridge. The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) hold a live meeting in The Dalles unless they go to the extreme level in that County.

Commissioner Palmer attended the Local Community Advisory Council (LCAC) meeting. He participated in weekly calls with State Leadership and other Counties and with Kimberly Lindsay regarding Covid-19 updates. He chaired a Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC) meeting on forest health and traveled to Harney County on the 30th to attend a full BIC meeting. Senator Findley and Representative Owens called to see what they could do to help us during the outbreak.

Commissioner Hamsher participated in several meetings including: Bi-weekly calls with the Governor's office, Budget Committee meeting on the 14th, NACO Public Lands Steering Committee meeting, Oregon Health Authority Covid-19 weekly Commissioner meeting, Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) Town Hall meeting, Eastern Oregon Leadership update calls, Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC), and a Conveners BIC meeting. He met with Emergency Management to discuss grants that are currently being worked on.

MINUTES. MSP: Myers/Palmer--to approve the April 14th minutes as presented.

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS. Irene Jerome, Kyle Sullivan from the Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD), and Aaron Roth, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) discussed the final Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). Her mission today is to get the Commissioners to sign the updated Wildfire Plan. A brief presentation was given by Sullivan and Roth to the court regarding a potential application for a joint chief fuel reduction grant. **MSP: Myers/Palmer**

--to approve and sign the agreement.

EXTENSION OFFICE. Carol Waggoner, OSU Office Manager, and associated staff gave the Court a presentation and annual update for Grant County Extension Services and Programs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Tory Stinnett Economic Development Director discussed with the Court Enterprise Zone Renewal with the court. Oregon's enterprise zones offer a unique resource to Oregon communities, and an excellent opportunity for businesses growing or locating in Oregon. Enterprise zones exempt businesses from local property taxes on new investments for a specified amount of time, which varies among different zone programs. Sponsored by city, port, county, or tribal governments, an enterprise zone typically serves as a focal point for local development efforts. There are currently 74 enterprise zones creating better opportunities for business investment across Oregon: 57 rural and 17 urban. Local governments are responsible for creating, amending managing, and renewing most of these zones, until June 30, 2025. **MSP: Palmer/Myers—to approve moving forward.**

Kathy Stinnett & Simon Gee entered at 10:10 am

JUSTICE COURT. Judge Stinnett gave the court an update. Stinnett explained from the bench the role of a local court is to provide access to judicial services, to protect citizen's state and federal constitutional rights, and to enforce the rule of law for the protection of society. As Grant County's Justice of the Peace, it is her duty to ensure each individual's rights to be heard, to uphold and apply the law fairly and impartially, and without bias or prejudice. In doing so, she promised to honor the legacy of this historic court, and to uphold the institution of local court systems. Access to judicial services: Protect citizen's state and federal constitutional rights. Enforce the rule of law for the protection of society. Oregon Constitution Article 1, Sec. 15. Laws for the punishment of crime shall be founded on these principles: protection of society, personal responsibility, accountability for one's actions and reformation.

Protection of society:

- Crimes: Disturbances, Assaults, Thefts, Trespassing, Animal Issues
- Civil Matters: Evictions, Disputes
- Traffic Crimes: Speeding, Driving Uninsured, Careless, Fail to Maintain Lane or Stop

Personal responsibility, Accountability for one's actions:

- Do we care about personal responsibility
- Do we even want to continue to require that individuals in our society are held accountable for their own actions

And reformation:

- If so, what can we do to change individual behavior
- We can offer help and assistance
- We can impose punishment

The imposition of fines is just one form of punishment used in our judicial system, and in a majority of traffic cases, is the only penalty allowed.

"Revenue is a by-product of the court system."

Fines and fees imposed in Justice Court produce revenue for the State of Oregon, the Cities in Grant County, Grant County Jail, and the General Fund. \$191,912 = \$99,075 There is no other revenue source.

- It takes a facility, supplies and staff to fulfill our obligations
- In order to maintain the public's confidence in the judicial system, judges and staff are expected

to maintain very high standards in everything we do. There have been times throughout the past years when we were unable to meet the expected standards. It requires attention to detail, constant training, and time to perform the endless list of functions needed.

In summary the new collections revenue is covering the cost of the half time employee.

JUSTICE COURT. Judge Stinnett requested approval from the Court to purchase two new computers through the Educational Service District (ESD). Each computer would cost \$1,139. She thinks it would be beneficial to purchase the same model as the first one. Late last summer, they were having constant problems with the current computers being slow and freezing. ESD advised that none of the 3 computers could handle the new softwares and auxiliary equipment now in use, and need to be replaced. Judge Myers asked if we could get by until next budget cycle, so ESD put some additional memory in two of them. Last month, one of those two failed, and had to be replaced on an emergency basis. When budget time came, she was asked not to budget any capital outlay. Stinnett said she needs the two computers, and has funds left in Materials and Services. **MSP: Myers/Palmer--to approve the purchase of two computers out of budget line 411-5-40-0001 and repurpose any screens if possible.**

Bill Newman, Posella Pogue, Gabriel Pogue, and Rex Blackstone entered 10:45 am.

CONCERNED CITIZEN. Bill Newman discussed his concerns regarding the Covid-19 mandates.

Beth Simonsen entered 11:45 am

TITLE III. Beth Simonsen, Administrator, talked with the court to initiate Title III Funds received for 2021. **MSP: Myers/Hamsher--to approve the allocation with a 45 day comment period published.** A separate request from Simonsen was for approval to spend up to \$70,000 for the Emergency Management Communication System. **MSP: Myers/Hamsher--to approve the purchase of equipment for the Emergency Management Communication System.** Simonsen requested to extend her contract as Administrator for Title III for next fiscal year. **MSP: Myers/Hamsher--to approve and extend the contract.**

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT. The court reviewed an Intergovernmental Agreement between the State of Oregon and AKA Enterprise Information Services. This is for a State wide alert and mass notification services in support of its OR-ALERT. **MSP: Hamsher/Palmer--to approve and sign the agreement.**

Stephanie LeQuieu entered 11:55 am

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. The Court reviewed the contract with Painted Sky Center for Arts. The County agrees to provide marketing, grant writing, and technical assistance for strategic planning, corporate document updates, such as by-laws, etc., and research by the Grant County Economic Development Office. Painted Sky agrees to use Grant County for administrative service support and by doing so any administrative funds (10% of gross amount of grant funds) brought in through the grant writing process would come to Grant County Economic Development up to the amount of \$30,000 in any given year. **MSP: Palmer/Hamsher--to approve and sign the contract.**

PUBLIC COMMENT. The court accepted public comment.

12:06 pm-- Adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Puckett
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 Kim Puckett at 541-575-0059 or puckettk@grantcounty-or.gov ******