



WASCO COUNTY COURT  
SPECIAL SESSION  
NOVEMBER 3, 2009

PRESENT: Dan Ericksen, County Judge  
Sherry Holliday, County Commissioner  
Bill Lennox, County Commissioner  
Kathy McBride, Executive Assistant

At 10:44 a.m. Commissioner Holliday called the meeting to order since Judge Ericksen was still in a meeting with a restaurant owner.

**DISCUSSION with Mike Hernandez, U.S. Forest Service Barlow District Ranger, regarding the Off Highway Vehicle Proposal.**

Mike Hernandez, U.S. Forest Service Barlow District Ranger, updated the Court on the Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Proposal. The Forest Service was mandated by the United States Congress to undertake the designation of routes for Off Highway Vehicles. He noted that in the Barlow District there are two areas; McGubbins Gulch and around Rock Creek Reservoir.

Hernandez gave a brief history on the planning process undertaken by the Forest Service. He noted that Alternative #2 was the first to be developed after public meetings were held. Other alternatives were developed based on the initial feedback received. There will be no other places to drive an OHV other than the designated routes.

Hernandez stated that the Forest Service currently has 2,400 miles of gravel roads and 50 miles of motorized trails that people can ride on today. The variety of the alternatives routes reduce the amount of systems that the Forest Service will have. Alternative #2 has 40 miles of trails; Alternative #3 has a little over 60 miles; while Alternative #4 has 37 to 38 miles of trail systems.

Hernandez stated that Alternative #2 is the baseline, which is based on the historical use. Alternative #3 was based upon feedback from the County. Alternative #4 is the alternative that totally eliminates anything by Sportsman Park and eliminates the day use. Alternative #3 was bought off on by landowners in the vicinity and Sportsman Park. Dan Van Vactor is asking that the no shooting area be extended.

Hernandez noted that he will probably end up selecting one of the alternatives with some modifications.

Commissioner Holliday showed the Court and Hernandez a map of the area that Van Vactor would like to be included in the no overnight camping and shooting area.

Judge Ericksen arrived at 11:07 a.m.

Commissioner Holliday also noted that Van Vactor would like the Forest Service to limit the width of the trails.

Discussion occurred.

Items discussed included maintenance and control of the trails; the phasing in of OHV routes; and the possible development of overnight camping services.

Tyler Stone, Wasco County Employee & Administrative Services Director, informed the Court of the OHV Park that is managed in Morrow County. He noted the positive things about the Park and the money making opportunity for Morrow County.

Hernandez noted that he is looking for the County's input and support of one of the alternatives.

Stone suggested that a trail be established to the Tygh Valley Fairgrounds where overnight camping services could be provided at the Hunt RV Park.

Commissioner Holliday stated that Alternative #3 would be her recommendation to the Court with some minor changes.

Commissioner Lennox stated that he could agree on Alternative #3 with a phase in plan.

**{{{Commissioner Holliday moved that the County Court endorse Alternative #3 with a phase in implementation plan and some minor adjustments to the proposal. Commissioner Lennox seconded the motion; it was then passed unanimously.}}}**

The Court will send a letter to the U.S. Forest Service regarding their endorsement.

**DISCUSSION on the reorganization of Administrative Offices.**

At 11:33 a.m. the Court returned to discussing the reorganization of Administrative Offices.

Monica Morris, Staff Accountant, Karen LeBreton Coats, County Clerk, Fred Davis, Facilities Manager, Tyler Stone, Employee & Administrative Services Director, and Eric Nisley, District Attorney, were present.

Judge Ericksen stated that he had some time to think about the issues and where we might want to go. As we are looking at these various options we were most closely looking at Option #2. He noted that we have a Human Resources person in Option #2 as well as Option #3.

Tyler Stone stated that Option #3 was only moving the Accounts Payable Deputy over to the Finance Office and increasing the FTE of the Records Clerk in the County Clerk's Office.

Stone stated that he spoke to Celeste Morgan, Employee & Administrative Services Administrative Assistant. She is willing to fill the Human Resources Position if it came about; if the money is equivalent she would consider staying.

Judge Ericksen stated we would need to look fairly quickly on what we would want in that position to see if it would be in the ball park.

Fred Davis stated that we do risk quite a bit if we look at our restrictions; personnel and finances. Having gone through the Ford Foundation training we have an opportunity to build or lay out what would be envisioned as ideal, versus what we can do with what we have. It would be a great opportunity to look at what would be the very best and then bring in the reality.

Judge Ericksen stated that is a good point; what do we want to do in the long term. Trying to avoid any decision based on short term resources. He likes the layout of Option #2.

Judge Ericksen noted that he spoke with Stone this morning. He sees the Administrator taking over things like the two Special Districts. Dropping all the budget and detail types of things down to the Administrator, this would leave the obligation to the Court of providing such things as notices of meetings, meeting minutes, etc. He sees the Administrator being the person managing all of these employees listed under the Administrator in Option #2. This puts the Administrator under the Court. This somewhat coordinates it more; it has been through a review before it gets to the County Court. How it relates to the elected departments is still to be determined.

Judge Ericksen stated it would be ideal to coordinator with the Administrator. The Administrator could present or the elected officials could present items to the Court.

Karen LeBreton Coats stated that nothing would preclude the Department Heads from talking to the County Court; going through the Administrator like they do with talking to the County Judge.

Judge Ericksen stated he sees this position as being an internal Administrator.

Eric Nisley asked if the County Judge was talking about supervisory authority or administrative authority.

Judge Ericksen replied supervisory authority of the appointed Directors and Administrative Services.

Nisley asked if the Administrator would have the power to hire and fire.

Judge Ericksen stated that he has not got there yet.

A lengthy discussion occurred.

Commissioner Holliday stated that she does not want to see the County be like the City of The Dalles. She does not want to see the Administrator making all the decision and the County Court approving what the Administrator wants to do. Commissioner Holliday stated that she likes her job because of the interaction with the Department Heads.

Stone stated that he does not think the Administrator can realistically take on the day to day running of those Departments. When we started putting these options together he was limited to a legal paper. He noted don't let the level get in the way.

Commissioner Lennox stated as to the separation of the administrative duties with the elected officials; the idea is that the Administrator would supervisor the other departments and oversees the entire County. The Administrator could come up with some good ideas that could be conveyed to the Department Heads as an idea which then could be embraced. The County Court would still be very much involved. The County Court would have control over what the Administrator is doing; they have the power to hire and fire the Administrator.

Commissioner Lennox sees the Administrator taking a big weight off of the County Judge. That is the Administrator's whole purpose; he can free up the County Commissioners. He feels the piece that we need to work on is how these boxes need to be arranged. Commissioner Lennox feels that the Court has agreed that an Administrator is needed.

Commissioner Lennox stated if Stone is going to be the Administrator we would need to fill his current responsibility and then deal with how we are going to deal with Finance. The County has a huge hole in the Finance Department right now.

Davis asked what would be taken off of the County Judge's work load.

Commissioner Lennox stated that he sees the interaction with other Departments being taken off of the Judge's work load. The Administrator would assist County Departments which would relieve a lot of the back log.

Judge Ericksen stated that the County has long term employees. A culture change may be hard. There is sort of a curve that should be allowed to happen; more trust will grow into that position.

Further discussion occurred.

Commissioner Holliday asked about a potential situation where a Department brings something to the Administrator and the Administrator does not support it. What do you do with that?

Judge Ericksen responded by stating that he sees both coming to the County Court to express the pros and cons. The Court will stay involved; there should not be any surprises.

Commissioner Lennox stated that he would hope that the Administrator would talk through the whole process, figure it out and maybe discuss the issue with the County Court.

Stone stated that he would like to see the Commissioners doing a work session before they start their meetings to talk about the operation of the County.

Nisley wondered what types of responsibilities would be assigned to the Administrator.

Further discussion occurred as to the responsibility of an Administrator.

Judge Ericksen stated that the face of the County would still be the County Court.

The Court recessed briefly for lunch at approximately 12:20 p.m.

The Court reconvened at 12:40 p.m.

The Court returned to discussing what types of responsibilities would be assigned to the Administrator.

Items listed during the discussion were: personnel, budget, projects, process questions, grant management and union negotiations.

Nisley suggested that the Court send out an email to Department Heads asking them what types of things they would want to go to a County Administrator about.

Stone stated that he feels you will have to have that input when you are writing the job description. He needs to know what will be coming from the County Court's Office.

Commissioner Lennox suggested that the Court call another Special Session and have someone from another County tell us what they are doing with their Administrator.

Nisley suggested a field trip to another County since you would have a better sense on how things are working in that County.

Commissioner Lennox suggested that the Court speak with the Administrator and the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners.

Davis stated that he feels we should ask what people want.

Commissioner Holliday will send out an email to the Senior Management Team for their input.

Some discussion occurred on the need to have someone overseeing the Human Resource Office.

Stone stated that he feels that a lot of the Human Resource duties will still end up on the Administrator's desk.

Commissioner Lennox feels if we move forward with the Administrator Position we will have a hole in the human resource area.

Morris stated that she took the available budgeted funds of the unfilled positions and redistributed them using the Option #2 scenario. It left approximately \$36,000 to use in the County Court's decision making with the Administrator Position without touching the County Judge's salary. The Secretary I Position would be changed to the Executive Assistant, the Staff Accountant Position was changed to Finance Manager, and the Administrative Assistant Position was changed to Human Resource Manager. It did not however allow for a new position in Facilities.

Judge Ericksen stated that he does not believe that the County can match the hospital and create a new position for the current Administrative Assistant. What we need to have would not match the hospital's pay. Further discussion occurred.

Commissioner Lennox stated that the Court needs to think about what we are trying to do for the County and not think about the specific individual.

Judge Ericksen had to leave for a meeting at 1:31 p.m. He suggested that the Court come back and discuss this matter further.

Coats stated that she is not sure how she will get through an election when the Accounts Payable Deputy is relocated to the Finance Office.

Judge Ericksen returned at 1:40 p.m. to get Stone for their meeting with Representatives from the Wasco County Public Works Department.

**CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL of the Special Session Consent Calendar of November 3, 2009, (Attached as Exhibit A).**


**{{{Commissioner Lennox moved to approve the Special Session Consent Calendar of November 3, 2009 as presented. Commissioner Holliday seconded the motion; it was then passed unanimously.}}}**

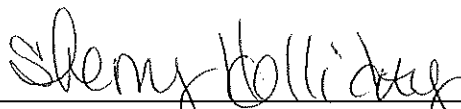
The Court signed:

- Grant Agreement between the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development and the Wasco County Planning and Development Office.

The Court adjourned at 1:41 p.m.

WASCO COUNTY COURT

  
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Dan Ericksen, County Judge

  
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Sherry Holliday, County Commissioner

  
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Bill Lennox, County Commissioner

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**CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. Grant Agreement between the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development and the Wasco County Planning and Development Office.