
WORK SESSION MINUTES

4:15p.m., Hybrid: in person (601 State St., Hood River, OR) and via Zoom

Chair Euwer started the work session at 4:15pm. Present: Commissioner Weathers, Commissioner Babitz, Commissioner Moretti, Commissioner Perkins, Administrator Williams, and Counsel Davies.

Committee Interviews and Appointments 4:15pm

Budget Committee:

Kristen Dillon – lives in HR. Interested in serving and engaging more. Feels experience will make valuable members of the committee. Served on the College budget committee. Have served on several non- and for-profit organizations. Understands importance of a public budget, it should reflect the organizations priorities.

Question about time commitment.

Tina McNerthney – works in commercial development – building Adams Co Creek housing. In investor relations – manage many urban projects and looking at budgets managing cash short falls. Lives in Hood River and would like to become more involved in the community. Volunteered for 8 years on a food pantry board in Portland. Experience working in the public private realm.

Asked about time commitment and experience with governmental budgets. Has reviewed the county budget and it seems like what she has briefly worked with before.

Forest Recreation Trails Committee:

Vicki Reed – equestrian representative: lives in Hood River County. Interested in serving to represent the equestrian trails user. Has served on the Hood River Saddle Club Board – has many contacts in the equestrian community members.

Will Ennis , hiker/runner representative– lives in Hood River County and works for Metro in Portland as a Planner. Serves on the City Landmark Board, Museum Board and others. Uses the trails in Hood River and hopes to get more involvement with development and maintenance of the hiking walking trails. As well as the development of the new equestrian trails that will also be used by hikers/runners/walkers.

Andrew Spaeth – Mt biker representative. Lives in Hood River County. Is a planner and serves as a member of the collab. Serves as HRATS Vice Presidents. HRATS works extensively with Hood River County on trail development. Interested in working more with the forestry/recreation trail staff. He is interested in serving as the mt biker rep and feels a good job has been done working with the moto groups and would look forward to doing the same with the equestrian, hiker runner groups. Has worked with staff on grants in the past and would hope to encourage more of those opportunities by serving on the committee.

Winter Storm Update - Emergency Management 4:40pm

Charles Young, County Emergency Manager and Audry DeWittie with ODEM attending virtually.

Charles went through the highpoints of the January storm. Three big takeaways: 1) The power into the CBAB needs to be looked at to ensure solid power into the building. 2) we should look at replacing or upgrading the emergency services power into the building and 3) the COOP plan, internally, needs to be

reviewed and updated with a particular look at the IT level of work that will need to happen during an emergency since most of that would be done remotely, our systems need.

Estimated damage throughout the county is \$539k. This is over the limit of where we can start to look at getting federal assistance.

Believes the Governor is looking at a Statewide declaration of emergency and asked Audrey to speak to that if she could.

Audrey with ODEM stated the recap given by Charles was very good. On a State level Charles is correct that the State is looking at a statewide declaration of emergency and all counties that qualify could then apply for federal grants. If this occurs, guessing it will proceed forward and we will be successful – the timeframe varies and can often be lengthy. Other funding opportunities are being looked at as well for small businesses and others.

Commissioner Perkins noted that the city and port of cascade locks is looking at a large-scale generator a grant is being investigated which he believes has a match requirement and there may be an ask coming to the Commission for financial assistance.

[Old Dalles Drive Right of Way 5:00pm](#)

Chris Harrell, Engineering Manager, and Brad Cross, contracted County Surveyor will speak on this issue.

Brad Cross stated HRC is being asked to submit a letter to Wasco County with the county's recommendation on whether the road should be vacated. Wasco County does not have a date to hear the request. We are adjacent landowners in addition to being the adjacent county. Brad is not sure the petitioner was aware the road ran into the adjacent county. Believes the petitioner would be willing to withdraw their petition if the county were to agree to close the road to vehicle traffic.

Cross believes Wasco County will order the road to be closed on their side to motorized traffic. Chris Harrell stated one of the biggest hurdles the petitioner must prove is that this is in the best interest of the public to close the road to vehicle traffic.

Chair Euwer stated that she feels a reason to not close the road to vehicle traffic is because it could be a route in case of an emergency. If the road were closed, could it be used in case of emergency? Brad stated yes, any existing rights for utilities etc., and emergency vehicles could pass the road.

Commissioner Babitz stated he asked that we do this because we have adjacent forest land in the area and many neighbors on the Hood River County side has expressed interest in this being vacated due to it being used for biking and hiking.

Harrell stated he feels it would be very difficult to find a closure/vacation in the best interested in the public.

Babitz is not in favor of vacating the road. Harrell pointed to ORS 162.270 as guiding language regarding the closure that he believes Wasco County is using to recommend the road be closed to vehicle traffic.

Babitz suggested we use Harrell's memo from January but remove the statement regarding vandalism since it cannot necessarily be sustained. Also, we need to make it clear that we have the timber property, and we have an interest in making the property accessible. Babitz would like to have the county testify as a "neighbor" to that aspect of the action Wasco County may consider via a public hearing.

Babitz stated he looked at maps and the route that is there now is the same that has been in existence since 1860. Requests the overlay of the 1860 and modern map be made by GIS to go along with the letter to Wasco to help develop the understanding that this route has been in place since the 1800's.

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

6:00pm Hybrid: in person (601 State St., Hood River, OR) and via Zoom

Chair Euwer called the business meeting to order at 5:15pm. Present: Commissioner Weathers, Commissioner Babitz, Commissioner Moretti, Commissioner Perkins, Administrator Williams, and Counsel Davies.

CALL TO ORDER

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

None.

CONFLICT OR POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

REPORTS (Administrator & Commissioners)

[Department Quarterly Reports](#)

Commissioner Perkins – announced that he has been nominated to the Public Utility Commission as a Commissioner. He has his Senate confirmation hearing tomorrow, February 6, 2024, in Salem OR. If he is confirmed he will have to resign his County Commissioner seat.

CONSENT

[A. 2024 Commissioner Appointment to Board of Property Tax Appeals](#)

RECOMMENDATION: Confirm Commissioner Weathers as the local governing body representative on the Board of Property Tax Appeals for 2024.

[B. Email Poll Confirmation](#)

RECOMMENDATION: Confirm the email poll approval from 1/15/2024 that approved the consent items, with the exception of item # 6E, from Commissioners regular meeting from 1/16/2024 that had been cancelled due to weather conditions.

[C. Grant Application Approval - District Attorney Office](#)

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize submittal of a grant application to ODOT that would fund a temporary deputy district attorney position to focus on DUII prosecution for the term of the grant.

Commissioner Perkins made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Babitz seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

Commissioner Weathers – yes

Commissioner Babitz – yes

Commissioner Moretti -yes
Commissioner Perkins -yes
Chair Euwer – yes

Motion carried.

WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

Committee Interviews and Appointments

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct interviews and make appointments.

Budget Committee Dist 2 seat:

Commissioner Babitz moved to appoint Kristen Dillon to the District 2 seat on the County Budget Committee. Commissioner Moretti seconded the motion. to the seat. Commissioner Moretti seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

Commissioner Perkins -yes
Commissioner Moretti – yes
Commissioner Babitz – yes
Commissioner Weathers -yes
Chair Euwer – yes

Motion carried.

Forest Recreation Trails Committee: Equestrian, Hiker/Runner and Mt Biker Representatives:

Commissioner Babitz made a motion to appoint Vicki Reed as the equestrian rep, Andrew Spaeth as the mt biker rep and Will Ennis as the hiker/runner rep to the County Forest Recreation Trails Committee. Commissioner Weathers seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

Commissioner Weather -yes
Commissioner Babitz -yes
Commissioner Moretti -yes
Commissioner Perkins -yes
Chair Euwer – yes

Motion carried.

Commissioner Babitz would like to talk about appointing someone outside of District 4 to the open seat on the Budget Committee.

Commissioner Perkins would like to see that appointment be held off until February 20th meeting to allow someone from District 4 to apply before considering someone from outside of District 4 to be appointed.

Old Dalles Drive Right of Way

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize a letter to the Wasco County Commission with Hood River County's position regarding Old Dalles Drive.

Commissioner Babitz moved to write a letter to Wasco County using Chris Harrell's letter as a base but remove the mention of vandalism in the area and that we also write a separate letter as an interested neighboring property owner to ensure the rights are protected. Commissioner Perkins seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

Commissioner Perkins -yes
Commissioner Moretti – yes
Commissioner Babitz – yes
Commissioner Weather – yes
Chair Euwer -yes

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Position Authorizations

RECOMMENDATION: Approve funding two new positions in FY 23.24, a Grant Manager and Computer Network Support Specialist in FY 23.24.

Allison Williams, County Administrator – we are requesting two new positions be funded in FY 23/24. Both positions have been previous discussed and requested in the past budget processes: A grant Manager and an IT Support Specialist.

Cheryl Berger, HR Director noted an error on the Grant manager position information and handed out the correct information. Noted the salary grade and step was presented incorrectly.

Commissioner Babitz – stated during the last budget cycle he asked for an IT audit be done as was done previously and that resulted in a second IT position being requested. He favors this addition but wants to do another IT audit to ensure that the audit will inform the budget request(s) moving forward. He will make a formal audit request at the February 20, 2024, commission meeting.

Commissioner Perkins made a motion to approve funding FY 23/24 for Grant manager for IT support specialist. Commissioner Babitz seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion:

Commissioner Perkins – yes
Commissioner Moretti – yea
Commissioner Babitz – yes
Commissioner Weathers – yes
Chair Euwer – yes

Motion carried.

Election of 2024 Commission Vice Chair

RECOMMENDATION: Elect Commissioner Weathers to serve as Vice Chair for 2024.

Commissioner Perkins made a motion to elect Commissioner Weathers to serve as the vice chair for the 2024 year. Commissioner Babitz seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion was as follows:

Commissioner Weathers – yes

Commissioner Babitz – yes

Commissioner Moretti – yes

Commissioner Perkins – yes

Chair Euwer – yes

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Euwer adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.