

## **Harney County Court Meeting**

January 19, 2011

The Harney County Court convened on Wednesday, January 19, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in Judge Steven E. Grasty's office. Members attending were Judge Steve Grasty, Commissioner Dan Nichols and Commissioner Pete Runnels. Also attending were Road Supervisor Eric Drushella, and County Court Secretary Sharon Johnson. Public attending were Dennis Townsend, Herb Vloedman, Chamber Director Jen Hoke, Barbara Cannady and Debbie Raney of the Burns Times Herald.

Judge Grasty led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Runnels made a motion to approve the January 5, 2011 minutes as mailed, Commissioner Nichols seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Statistical and Financial reports were reviewed and vouchers approved by Court's signature.

Judge Grasty provided an update on the Sage Grouse Plan effort. He noted that seven eastern Oregon counties are scheduled to meet with ODFW on February 3 in Burns to discuss the strategy.

Judge Grasty informed the Court that Tony West, of Lakeview, has been appointed as the County Building Official and Inspector. A commercial electrical inspector from Deschutes County will handle all electrical inspections. These appointments are on an interim basis. Judge Grasty explained that a committee of contractors has been called to review Letters of Interest received to choose permanent inspectors. He then explained how things had been progressing in forming the County Building Inspection program. Issues related to the building program were discussed. Commissioner Nichols commented that the Planning Department and Judge Grasty had done a great job in keeping the program running after receiving short notice from the previous contractor, Inspections, Inc., that they would no longer provide service to Harney County after January 19, 2011. Judge Grasty mentioned that State Building Codes staff had been very helpful in the process, as well.

The next item of business was the selection of two County Budget Board members for the 2011 year. There were three applications received and reviewed. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to reappoint Jean Cain and to also appoint Herb Vloedman, Commissioner Runnels seconded. Discussion followed. Motion carried unanimously.

The Court reviewed a report from the National Association of Counties itemizing by County how the Prescription Drug Discount Card Program is working. Harney

County joined the program in November of 2010 and had six people from the community use the program with a combined savings of \$251.89 during the month of November; that's a 29.67% savings on prescriptions. Commissioner Nichols suggested getting the press releases out in the media again.

Howard Palmer, County Road Historian, was present to explain his project and some history of road development in the county. He said that a database is being created which will list all county roads and pertinent information. He also said he is creating a Commissioner's Journal database as he researches road history. Judge Grasty said that the Road Record Books will be the final authority on any road issue, that the database will just make it much easier to research and find a specific issue or road. A lengthy discussion followed. Judge Grasty mentioned that the County is applying for a grant to be used for the keeping of historical records.

Judge Grasty briefly explained the Public Transportation Plan that is administered through the Senior Center. Judge Grasty opened the public hearing in the matter at 10:55 a.m. Angie Iturbide, Senior Center Director, explained that the program is funded by two federal grants and two state grants. She said that the "project" is the overall running of the Dial-A-Ride program. She said that the Burns Paiute Tribe runs a fixed route bus from 4:30 to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday and that Dial-A-Ride is available from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. She said that Veterans Services has a van that is housed in the Senior Center Bus Barn but the Senior Center is not involved any further with that van. Commissioner Runnels explained that the bus service between Portland and Ontario has changed; Porter no longer provides the service – a new company called The Shuttle won the bid with the State. Commissioner Runnels said that the last he heard was that there should only be minimal changes in that service. Further discussion followed. Commissioner Nichols made a motion to approve the Public Transportation Plan for the 2011-2013 biennium and give Judge Grasty the authority to sign the document. Judge Grasty asked for public comment – there was none. Motion carried unanimously. The Hearing was closed at 11:20 a.m.

The Court then reviewed a recent 10<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court decision on roads. Judge Grasty explained the ruling. Discussion followed.

Judge Grasty noted that there is a new Forest Service District Ranger and that he would invite him to the next County Court meeting to introduce himself.

Judge Grasty said that the County does not have an Emergency Management Official – that he and the Sheriff share that responsibility. He noted that the City of Burns had done a great job in flood prevention this past few days. Judge Grasty said that the County has 3500 sand bags and a stockpile of sand in the event of a flood emergency. For preventative measures Big R and Parr Lumber have filled sand bags for sale.

Road Supervisor Eric Drushella updated the court on flooding issues that the Road Department has been involved in. Judge Grasty asked Mr. Drushella to set up a date for the Court to travel and review County roads. Discussion followed.

The meeting was recessed for lunch at 11:55 a.m. and reconvened at 1:10 p.m.; the Court then went into executive session as authorized by ORS 192-660(h) to consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed; they came back into regular session at 2:30 p.m. No action was taken.

Court member schedules were reviewed and discussed.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Johnson  
Harney County Court Administrative Assistant