

WEEKLY BUSINESS SESSION – November 27, 2019

9:00 a.m. – Anne G. Basker Auditorium
600 N.W. Sixth Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526

Present: Lily N. Morgan, Chair; Darin J. Fowler, Vice-Chair; and Daniel E. DeYoung, Commissioner; Trish Paredes, Recorder

These are meeting minutes only. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words.

Pursuant to notice through the media and in conformance with the Public Meeting Law, Lily N. Morgan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Items discussed were as follows:

1. PUBLIC HEARING for Order No. 2019-060; In the Matter of Uniform Procedure for Setting Fees Charged by County: Animal Shelter – Various Fees; Board of Commissioners – Various Fees; Board of Property Tax Appeals (BoPTA) – Various Fees; Parks Department – Various Fees; Public Health – Various Fees; Public Works – Various Fees; Sheriff's Office – Various Fees; Surveyor – Various Fees; Adopting Fee Schedules (One original Order filed with the County Clerk)

Commissioner Morgan opened the Public Hearing at 9:02 a.m.

Arthur O'Hare, Finance Director, explained that the County requires that most departments be self-sufficient and charge fees for their services, these fees need to be reviewed and set each year. The purpose of this hearing is to receive public comment regarding the proposed set fees, and the Board can either approve these fees, amend and approve, or make the decision to not approve this Order. Mr. O'Hare went through each department that is setting fees, explained the fees that will be changed and why they are proposing to increase or decrease of fees. This public hearing has been advertised through the Courier and has been posted to the public in regards to what the law requires.

REQUESTS/COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: (Each person will be given three (3) minutes to speak)

Sandi Cassanelli, Merlin, submitted **Weekly Business Session-November 27, 2019 (Exhibit 2)** and spoke in opposition to increasing County service fees.

Judy Ahrens, Josephine County, spoke in opposition to increasing County service fees.

Mark Seligman, Selma, spoke in opposition to increasing County service fees.

Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve Order No. 2019-060; In the Matter of Uniform Procedure for Setting Fees Charged by County: Animal Shelter – Various Fees; Board of Commissioners – Various Fees; Board of Property Tax Appeals (BoPTA) – Various Fees; with an amendment to refund the \$30 fee if an appeal is approved by BoPTA; Parks Department – Various Fees; Public Health – Various Fees; Public Works – Various Fees; Sheriff's Office – Various Fees; Surveyor – Various Fees; Adopting Fee Schedules, seconded by Commissioner Fowler. Upon roll call vote, motion passed 3-0; Commissioner DeYoung – yes, Commissioner Fowler – yes and Commissioner Morgan – yes.

Commissioner Morgan closed the Public Hearing at 9:38 a.m.

2. PUBLIC HEARING for Order No. 2019-061; In the Matter of Uniform Procedure for Setting Fees Charged by County: Community Development (Planning) – Various Fees; Adopting Fee Schedule (One original Order filed with the County Clerk)

Commissioner Morgan opened the Public Hearing at 9:38 a.m.

Arthur O'Hare, Finance Director, explained that Community Development (Planning) must review and set fees each year for the services they provide to the County. Planning receives support from property tax dollars in the county but this does not cover the complete costs of the services, setting the fees helps provide that balance between property taxes and user fees for the cost of the services. Mr. O'Hare expounded upon the fees that will be changing.

REQUESTS/COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: (Each person will be given three (3) minutes to speak)

Sandi Cassanelli, Merlin, spoke in opposition to using the Charter as a justification for fee increases.

Mark Seligman, Selma, spoke in opposition to the regulation the County has imposed which requires the fees.

Judy Ahrens, Merlin, spoke in support of making documentation convenient so that the public can be more informed.

Jim Frick, Grants Pass, spoke in support of fee increases for Community Development (Planning).

Commissioner Fowler made a motion to approve Order No. 2019-061; In the Matter of Uniform Procedure for Setting Fees Charged by County: Community Development (Planning) – Various Fees; Adopting Fee Schedule, seconded by Commissioner DeYoung. Upon roll call vote, motion passed 3-0; Commissioner DeYoung – yes, Commissioner Fowler – yes and Commissioner Morgan – yes.

Commissioner Morgan closed the Public Hearing at 10:09 a.m.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS IN CONSIDERATION OF:

BOARD DECISIONS UNDER ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS WERE MADE AFTER PUBLIC COMMENT WAS RECEIVED

a. Approval of Four Additional Dispatchers in the Sheriff's Office to Facilitate Increasing Patrol Service Hours (Motion only – no documents)

Sheriff Daniel requested an increase in dispatchers to provide better service to Josephine County residents. This increase in dispatchers will aid in residents connecting with dispatchers for much needed assistance. Sheriff Daniel reported that 169K is required to fund these additional dispatchers, this is not an additional tax or fee for citizens. Mr. O'Hare explained that these additional dispatchers would be funded through the Counties' portion of State fees collected from Marijuana grows registration fees. Each year the County receives roughly one million from these fees, but this can fluctuate as it is dependent on registration.

b. Approval of Position Addition in the Transit Department for a Transit Dispatcher to Facilitate Saturday Service (One original Position Requisition returned to Human Resources)

Commissioner DeYoung reported that only one dispatch position was budgeted in anticipation of service expansion. After further analysis, it will take an additional dispatch position to accommodate all service improvements. The additional position will be funded with existing Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) funds allocated and approved for Saturday service.

c. Approval of Grant Award 2019-DC-BX-0006 with the Bureau of Justice Assistance and Josephine County for Josephine County Drug Court (One original Grant Award filed with the County Clerk)

Commissioner DeYoung reviewed that Community Corrections was recently awarded a grant by the Federal Bureau of Justice Assistance for Drug Court for the period October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2022. The majority of the grant monies will be allocated to Choices Counseling Center for the funding of a Treatment Advocate as well as enhanced treatment services for participants with families. The funds will also provide for a .25 full-time equivalent (FTE) drug court clerk as assigned by the Josephine County Circuit Court. Community Corrections is able to provide the required matching funds through the continued assignment of a .5 FTE parole/probation officer to supervise drug court clients. In addition, Community Corrections will receive approximately \$17,600 for administrative costs.

4. REQUESTS/COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: (Each person will be given three (3) minutes to speak)

Raymond Smith submitted his comments via email (**Exhibit 1**).

Sandi Cassanelli, Merlin, spoke in opposition to approving budgetary items without the public having access to those numbers, BoPTA setting a fee, and the Chair being out of line.

Mark Seligman, Selma, spoke in opposition to Commissioner Morgan traveling, the Board not allowing the public to interview the Finance Director, Commissioner Morgan taking a stance prior to putting the Fire District on the ballot, and the Board passing ordinances to regulate marijuana.

Judy Ahrens, Merlin, spoke in opposition to how our children are being educated.

Jim Frick, Grants Pass, spoke in opposition to regulation of natural resources to the point of detriment to our county regarding finances.

Jay Meredith, Grants Pass, spoke in support of increasing law enforcement through dispatchers.

Tina Hughes, Grants Pass, spoke in support of opening the Josephine County Fairgrounds arena for shelter for the homeless.

5. BOARD MAY REVIEW PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

The Board addressed public comments.

Board Discussion and Action – Agenda Item 3(a)

Commissioner DeYoung made a motion to approve Four Additional Dispatchers in the Sheriff's Office to Facilitate Increasing Patrol Service Hours, seconded by Commissioner Morgan. Upon roll call vote, motion passed 3-0; Commissioner DeYoung – yes, Commissioner Fowler – yes, and Commissioner Morgan – yes.

Board Discussion and Action – Agenda Item 3(b)

Commissioner Fowler made a motion to approve Position Addition in the Transit Department for a Transit Dispatcher to Facilitate Saturday Service, seconded by Commissioner DeYoung. Upon roll call vote, motion passed 3-0; Commissioner DeYoung – yes, Commissioner Fowler – yes, and Commissioner Morgan – yes.

Board Discussion and Action – Agenda Item 3(c)

Commissioner DeYoung made a motion to approve Grant Award 2019-DC-BX-0006 with the Bureau of Justice Assistance and Josephine County for Josephine County Drug Court, seconded by Commissioner Fowler. Upon roll call vote, motion passed 3-0; Commissioner DeYoung – yes, Commissioner Fowler – yes, and Commissioner Morgan – yes.

6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR:

- a. **Minutes** (*Draft minutes are available for viewing in the Board's Office*)
Executive Session (open session) – November 12, 2019
Weekly Business Session – November 13, 2019
County Administration Workshop – November 14, 2019

Board Discussion and Action:

Commissioner Fowler made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar Agenda Items 6(a) as listed, seconded by Commissioner DeYoung. Upon roll call vote, motion passed 3-0; Commissioner DeYoung – yes, Commissioner Fowler – yes, and Commissioner Morgan – yes.

7. **OTHER: (ORS 192.640(1))** “. . . notice shall include a list of the principal subjects anticipated to be considered at the meeting, but this requirement shall not limit the ability of a governing body to consider additional subjects.”)

None reported.

8. MATTERS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner DeYoung reported that Josephine County received a Citycounty Insurance Services (CIS) award for safety at the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) event this last week. Commissioner DeYoung also reported about a new THC testing device that will be available soon for testing crops and determining if a plant is Marijuana or Hemp. Commissioner Fowler spoke about his participation in County College through AOC. Commissioner Fowler also discussed the necessary travel and participation for a Commissioner to be involved in for legislation movement concerning certain issues at a state and federal level. Commissioner Morgan discussed forest management, wildfires, education and how all of these issues need a Commissioner advocate, this involves travel and the Commissioners going out and being a part of the process so Josephine Counties' voice will be heard.

Weekly Business Session adjourned at 11:31 a.m.



Trish Paredes, Recorder

Entered into record:

Exhibit 1 – Raymond Smith's email

Exhibit 2 – Weekly Business Session – November 27, 2019

October 30, 2019

Order Number 2019-058

Regarding Fees Charged by County

Dear Commissioners DeYoung, Fowler and Morgan:

Josephine County Finance Director is proposing a new fee of thirty dollars to Board of Property Tax Appeals (BoPTA) applicants.

There should never be a fee charged to appeal or dispute a property tax bill.

Generally to succeed in an appeal the appellant must provide testimony and supporting evidence to BoPTA at the hearing. I would speculate that most hearings result in some property tax reduction to the appellant.

When a tax reduction is ordered by BoPTA at the hearing they have determined that the tax assessors' office has unlawfully overtaxed the appellant.

Tax law, including the property tax limitation in the Oregon State Constitution, dictates taxes owed when applied to a specific value. Regardless of the error or reason, any amount of over-taxation is unlawful.

As an example, twice in twenty years I have been unlawfully overtaxed. Both times I have appealed this to BoPTA. At both hearings I have supplied evidence to support my appeals that the county already had in their possession. The second time that I appealed a tax bill, I obtained the evidence that I submitted at the hearing from the county. This evidence was also submitted a few years before at the first appeal.

In both cases BoPTA found the over-taxation unlawful and ordered a reduction in taxes and a refund of my overpayments.

In both cases I had to schedule time off work resulting in lost wages. I had a 600 mile roundtrip to attend the first hearing, at my expense. The second time that I appealed a tax bill I had a 60 mile roundtrip at my expense. In both cases, from the time of overpayment to the refund of overpayment I was denied the use of this money because of an unlawful levy of taxes against my property.

Regardless of where this idea came from, no one should be charged a fee to appeal an unlawful charge assessed against their property by the county. In all fairness, the county should be reimbursing costs to appellants that have been found by BoPTA to be unlawfully overtaxed.

I urge you to Reject this ludicrous fee.

Sincerely,

Raymond Smith

Exhibit 2

WBS

11.27.19

Weekly Business Session – November 27, 2019

Today the County is once again having Hearings on upping fees charged by the County. How convenient to do this the day before Thanksgiving, when most citizens are busy getting ready to enjoy the holiday with family and friends.

This year there is a \$77,335 increase for departments listed in Board Order 2019-060 and 2019-061.

Please tell me how these fee increases benefit the average citizen of Josephine County? It appears these Orders only increase the coffers of County departments, but there's little benefit to the public. In fact, with 25% to 100% increases, these would actually decrease the demand for such services by the public.

Each year during our budget session, all these County departments receive approximately the same budget amounts from the previous year, plus a bit extra, through base line budgeting. These departments are run with that money.

But in order to fleece the public just a bit more, we're told that if our County employees are to be expected to provide a service, the public is to pay for the cost of that service. Slick trick, don't you think. We have already fully paid for the County employees' salaries, as well as all the paper, toner, printers and computers that they use each day.

There is absolutely no justification to pretend that zero based budgeting is in any way at play here. These fee increases are just a sneaking way to gilding the lily for the County coffers.

Tell me again how Board Orders 2019-060 and 2019-061 benefit the average, impoverished citizen of Josephine County? I'll give you a clue, it doesn't.

It will be interesting to see which of you Commissioners puts pen to paper to approve these excessive Board Orders.

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As a side note, there is no documentation for Item 3(a) in the document packet today. The Public has no idea how much 4 additional Sheriff's Office Dispatchers will cost. Once again, the Board has overlooked its duty of providing such information to the Public.

Submitted by Sandi Cassanelli