



**SHERMAN COUNTY COURT  
REGULAR SESSION  
SHERMAN COUNTY CIRCUIT COURTROOM**

**MINUTES**

**August 2, 2017**

**Court opened: 10:05 a.m.**

Present: Judge Gary Thompson, Commissioner Tom McCoy, Temporary Administrative Assistant Carmen Frost

Absent: Commissioner Dabulskis

A quorum was present.

**Additions to Agenda:**

- 1.2 Mark Coles, Road Master – Personnel Update
- 2.6 Letter Supporting LPSCC Justice Reinvestment Grant Application

**1.0 Appointment Schedule:**

**1.1 10:00 a.m. Jessica Metta, MCEDD – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

Present: Jessica Metta, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Georgia Macnab, Planning Department, Donald Hilderbrand, Citizen

Jessica Metta, Deputy Director, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD), presented MCEDD's Columbia Gorge Economic Development Strategy and explained that every five years the region develops the comprehensive economic development strategy as a guide to understanding the regional economy and determining goals, strategies and actions to create jobs, raise income levels, diversify the economy, and improve the quality of life. The strategy is developed by a diverse workgroup of local representative from private, public, and non-profit sectors, and the plan covers five counties: Hood River, Klickitat, Sherman, Skamania and Wasco.

Jessica shared the vision of the strategy: a thriving economy supporting diverse business opportunities that act in harmony with the area's rural qualities, values and natural resources; and the SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). The top five strengths and opportunities were identified as scenic beauty; growth in the industry sectors, including value-added agriculture, high-tech, expanding tourism and leveraging our natural assets; central location; regional collaboration; and synergy across state lines. Top

weaknesses and threats included housing shortages, education quality and shortage of a skilled workforce, transportation infrastructure capacity and mobility gaps, regulatory restrictions, and gaps in broadband capacity.

Jessica then explained that the action plan is based on a community systems premise that all elements are interconnected and must be vibrant and healthy to ensure a functioning economy. The community systems model identified that some areas in the region are working well, while others are not and these needed to be the areas of focus: housing, entrepreneurial environments, workforce, infrastructure and regulatory environment.

The goal for housing is to plan for, maintain, and re-invest in infrastructure, including attainable housing, to provide for current population demands and support future economic development opportunities. Top three priorities for housing are: advocate for funding programs supporting attainable housing, seek resources to provide technical assistance and planning for housing development, and increase awareness of regional housing constraints. Currently there are no rentals, and no affordable housing for those wanting to purchase (in some parts of the region more than others).

With the entrepreneurial environment, the plan focuses on target industry sectors where there are significant business activity occurring including high-tech/drones, health care, manufacturing with fermentation science (beer, wine, cider, distilleries), value-added agriculture, renewable energy, forest and wood products, and art/culture/tourism/recreation. The priorities are to target industry sector growth in the six key sectors identified, increase business mentorship and support resources and programs, and enhance regional information resources, including business siting guides.

The workforce focus area and goal is to nurture, educate, attract, and retain a regional workforce that is career-trained and work-ready. The priorities are to increase skill level, focus on programs tied to key industry sectors (such as the food/beverage at Columbia Gorge Community College), develop more paid internship opportunities, and enhance regional participation on workforce investment boards.

The focus area of infrastructure is a broad category – broadband, transportation, water and wastewater. The Gorge Broadband Consortium is still convening to try to identify opportunities to expand broadband access points throughout the region, and work with ISPs to address middle and last-mile gaps, and improve speeds. Water and waste water systems need to prioritize upgrades; find innovative ways to address water conservation; and address water resource concerns, including the declining aquifers. Transportation priorities include coordinating transportation benefits; county/city road maintenance and funding; interstates and highways; bridges; expanded Columbia Gorge Regional Airport runways and facilities; enhance safety of the transportation network; and provide a coordinated regional public transportation network to serve the needs of a mobile workforce.

The regulatory environment focus area is how to collaborate as a region to simplify and decentralize regulatory processes and bring in more local decision making with regard to development. Priorities include developing a regulatory road map, facilitate industrial site readiness, and support interagency coordination to address multi-layered regulatory issues.

In addition to her presentation, Jessica reported that MCEDD is working on the annual economic summit, which will possibly be in early November. They will be bringing in regional economists (Scott Bailey from the Washington side of the gorge and Dallas Fridley from the Oregon side).

**1.2 10:30 a.m. Mark Coles, Road Master - Personnel Update**

Present: Mark Coles, Road Master, Donald Hilderbrand (citizen)

Mark Coles, Sherman County Road Master, gave a personnel update. He had two personnel still on probation. Mark had to let one of them go that did not work out. The other personnel is coming due on his commercial drivers' license (CDL). He hasn't been allowed enough time, so Mark is going to extend his time to get the license.

**2.0 Action Items:**

**2.1 MCEDD Board Appointment**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to appoint Perry Thurston as the replacement for Carol McKenzie on the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District Board for the two-year term, September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2019.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

**2.2 Transportation Vehicles Contract Revision**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to approve the contract revision between Larry Triebelhorn and Sherman County Community Transit, effective August 1, 2017, for the purpose of updating the vehicles in the August 1 contract, and provide a monthly rate increase from \$400.00 to \$475.00, and authorize Judge Thompson to sign.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

**2.3 IGA #11093 – Sherman County Juvenile Crime Prevention**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to approve the Juvenile Crime Prevention Intergovernmental Agreement #11093 between the State of Oregon and Sherman County, effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019, and authorize Judge Thompson to sign.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

## **2.4 Fair Board Appointment**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to approve the appointment of Amanda Whitman to the Fair Board for the purpose of completing Ted Sabey's term.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

## **2.5 Order Designating Newspaper – 2017 Sherman County Foreclosure List**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to approve the order to designate *The Times Journal* as the newspaper in which the Sherman County 2017 foreclosure list shall be published.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

## **2.6 Letter Supporting LPSCC Justice Reinvestment Grant Application**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to approve letter supporting LPSCC 2017 – 2019 Justice Reinvestment Grant Application, and authorize Judge Thompson to sign.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

## **3.0 Discussion Items:**

### **3.1 Thank-you Letter, Meghan Belshe**

The Court reviewed the letter.

### **3.2 Thank-you Letter, Connor Davis**

The Court reviewed the letter.

### **3.3 Azure Standard**

Judge Thompson reported that a citizen complained about the dust blowing from Azure Standard when they are working the fields. Judge Thompson explained to the citizen that there is nothing that can be done about dust and that Azure Standard has the right to farm.

Additionally, another citizen had reported seeing two patches of Canadian Thistle with blooms about to open up on Azure Farms. Judge Thompson talked to Rod Asher, Weed District Supervisor. Rod met

with Azure Standard last week regarding the issue, and Azure Standard took care of it by clipping the heads of the Canadian Thistle that were about to bloom.

### 3.4 Commissioner Reports

Judge Thompson – attended Frontier TeleNet meeting.

Judge Thompson met with representatives from the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) and DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality), and a contractor this week at Biggs; they did a walk-through of the 2.7 acres that Sherman County owns. It appears there are no major issues; ground surveillance will be done to determine location of fuel tank. They still have to look for septic tank and well. All of this is being taken care of at no cost to Sherman County. Lastly, a notification to move out by August 10 has been issued to the people that have been living on the property illegally.

Judge Thompson reported that there was a major water leak at Biggs Monday. Customers were out of water for about 8 hours. It has been fixed and is up and running now.

Judge Thompson attended the Pacific NW Economic Development Summit. There were attendees from Oregon, Washington, and Canada. It was an interesting exchange of information. Issues discussed included renewable energy, such as solar and hydro.

Judge Thompson met with Mike Smith to discuss the possibility of the Scott Canyon property providing a support house to Community Counseling Solutions. Bringing this service into the community would result in 20 high-paying jobs, and could be especially beneficial for Rufus. A conditional-use permit from the Planning Commission would be required. The property would either be sold, leased, or donated to Community Counseling Solutions.

Judge Thompson will be attending the MCEDD (Mid-Columbia Economic Development District) executive board meeting today at 4 p.m. Judge Thompson had provided information to Amanda Hoey, Director of MCEDD, for her presentation at the CG BREZ (Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone) meeting, and reported that she did a fantastic job representing Sherman County.

Commissioner McCoy – attended a Northern Oregon Regional Correctional Facility (NORCOR) board meeting. The audience included 30 - 40 ICE protesters and the board spent 40 - 50 minutes at the start of the meeting taking testimony and answering the questions of the protesters. A lawsuit has been filed against NORCOR regarding the housing of ICE prisoners. Commissioner McCoy encouraged NORCOR to fight the lawsuit since the revenue from the ICE contract is often very important in keeping NORCOR financially viable.

Commissioner McCoy also attended the NORCOR board meeting and confirmed that Commissioner Dabulskis will attend the next NORCOR board meeting in his absence.

Monday, Commissioner McCoy met with Wasco County Commissioner, Steve Kramer, who was touring Gilliam and Wheeler Counties to better understand the impact MCCOG (Mid-Columbia Council of Governments) has had on these counties. MCCOG will be holding a critical meeting on August 8 to discuss the possible dissolution of MCCOG.

On July 27<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner McCoy attended a long-range planning session at Mid-Columbia Community Action Council (MCCAC). The department heads explained what each of the departments within MCCAC do. MCCAC administers the heating subsidies, and the weatherization and housing programs, helping the financially disadvantaged find places to live, such as the Hamilton Motel on 6th street next to Tum-a Lum Lumber in The Dalles.

Commissioner McCoy informed the Court that he will be out of town and not able to attend the September 6<sup>th</sup> Court meeting.

Commissioner Dabulskis –

**4.0 Consent Agenda:**

**4.1 Minutes of July 19, 2017**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to approve the minutes of July 19, 2017, as presented.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

**4.2 Claims, July 2017**

**Motion by Judge Thompson, second by Commissioner McCoy, to approve the Claims for the month of July 2017, as presented.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

**4.3 Revised Treasurer's Report, June 2017**

**Motion by Commissioner McCoy, second by Judge Thompson, to approve the Claims for the month of July 2017, as presented.**

**Vote: 2-0**

**Yes: McCoy, Thompson**

**No: 0**

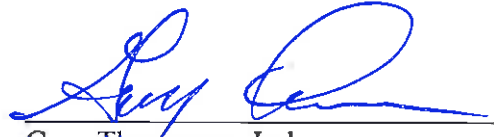
**Abstain: 0**

**5.0 Future Agenda Items:**

No future agenda items presented.

**Court closed: 11:35 a.m.**

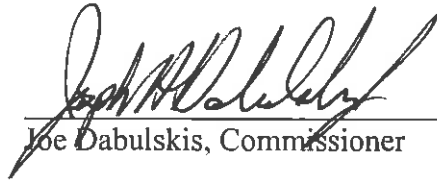
**Sherman County Court**




Gary Thompson, Judge



Tom McCoy, Commissioner



Joe Dabulskis, Commissioner

Attest:   
Carmen Frost  
Temporary Administrative Assistant