



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon
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DESCHUTES COUNTY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

8:00 AM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2023

VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL

A virtual legislative update meeting was held on Friday, February 10, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. via Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform, for a weekly scheduled event during this 2023 Legislative Session.

Deschutes County Attendance:			
	Commissioner Anthony DeBone	X	Nick Lelack, County Administrator
X	Commissioner Patti Adair	X	Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator
X	Commissioner Phil Chang	X	Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator
X	Dave Doyle, Legal Counsel		Kim Riley, Assistant Legal Counsel
	David Givans, Internal Auditor	X	Robert Tintle, Chief Financial Officer
X	Chris Doty, Road Department Director	X	Janice Garceau, Health Services Director
X	Kristie Bollinger, Property Manager		Stephen Gunnels, District Attorney
X	Peter Gutowsky, Community Development Director	X	Kathleen Hinman, Human Resources Director
	Keith MacNamara, Veterans' Services Manager	X	Deevy Holcomb, Community Justice Director
X	Lee Randall, Facilities Director	X	Kevin Moriarty, Forester
X	Chad Centola, Solid Waste Director		Tim Brownell, Incoming Solid Waste Director
	Shane Nelson, Sheriff	X	Sara Crosswhite, 9-1-1 Director
	Steve Dennison, Clerk		Cheyenne Purrington, Houseless Strategies and Solutions Director
X	Geoff Hinds, Fair & Expo Director		Scot Langton, Assessor
	Charles Fadeley, Justice of the Peace		Will Groves, Planning Manager
X	Holly Harris, Behavioral Health Director	X	Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager

X	Tom Kuhn, Public Health Program Manager	X	Angie Powers, BOCC Administrative Assistant
Legislators Present:			
	Senator Lynn Findley		Representative Jason Kropf
	Representative Emerson Levy	X	Representative Werner Reschke
X	Representative Vicki Breese Iverson		
Others Present:			
X	Doug Riggs, NW Policy Advocates President	X	Gabriel Velásquez, NW Policy Advocates Legislative Coordinator
X	Pappy Winkle, Oregon Liquor Control Commission	X	Sherrie Grief, Community Member

1. Introductions

Doug Riggs called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Legislators will join us on the 2nd and 4th of each month, so we may have some joining us this morning.

2. Updates from NW Policy Advocates

Doug Riggs, Northwest Policy Advocates President, provided a brief update to the group. The capitol building has been under construction for earthquake upgrades, so space is compact and amenities are limited. Week four just concluded and they will finish by mid-June. The mood in the capitol has been positive, people are willing to work across the aisle and appear happy to be back in-person. All three commissioners have had good meetings with our delegation, working towards County priorities such as uncoupling ADUs from wildfire risk maps. So far, the session has focused on large overall packages: homelessness, semiconductors and drought.

Industrial land owned by Department of State Lands near Redmond Airport may have an opportunity for the Semiconductor Committee to fund tech industry infrastructure. Ballot Measure 110 will go through some revisions. Behavioral health is a hot topic, with between 20 and 30 related bills. They may choose to put some of these together to form a larger package.

The beginning of the session is educational, informational and meeting new committee members. Mr. Riggs has been impressed by the new members, especially in our delegation.

3. Department Updates on Priority Bills

Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator, discussed two requests from Health Services to testify. Holly Harris, Behavioral Health Director, discussed a request by

the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to testify on the continuation of IMPACTS funding (\$4.8 million in grants helping the Stabilization Center staying open 24/7). Ms. Harris said that it would be beneficial to provide a written letter of support as testimony from the County. This grant funding was a pilot project, and the testimony will attest to the importance of longer-term stable state funding. Commissioner Chang directed staff to draft a letter of support.

Tom Kuhn, Public Health Program Manager, suggests priority 2 support for **HB 2574**. This bill requires hospitals to adopt policies to provide post-HIV exposure prophylactic drugs following healthcare workers' possible exposure. This bill targets rural hospitals. County Health Officer Richard Fawcett, MD is testifying in support of this bill. Commissioners Adair and Chang were in full support of Dr. Fawcett testifying for the County. Commissioner Chang directed staff to draft a letter of support towards this testimony.

Mr. Kuhn asked for priority 2 support of **HB 3090**, which prohibits distributing or selling flavored inhalant delivery systems or flavored tobacco products. This bill's aim is to reduce vaping by youth. Many vape canisters are imported and unregulated and contain harmful chemicals and nicotine. Vaping products are not a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes. Commissioner Adair is very supportive of this bill, and has supported similar bills in the past.

Mr. Kuhn suggest priority 2 support for **SB 5525**, the Oregon Health Authority Budget. Within the budget is Public Health modernization funding including an additional \$50 million. \$60 million has already been approved, for a total of \$110 million total for public health modernization. This represents a 50% increase over previous funding levels. Commissioner Chang asked if this is OHA's entire budget, to which Mr. Kuhn responded this bill is the entire budget but he is only highlighting the public health portion. Commissioner Chang expressed support for this additional \$50 million in funding. Mr. Riggs said that this will be one of the last appropriations bills coming out of the Ways & Means Committee, likely in May or June.

Kevin Moriarty, County Forester, suggests priority 2 support of **SB 653**. It appropriates \$50 million funding to State Forestry to fund thinning operations in fire-prone counties, and allocates \$5 million to fund thinning operations on public lands in fire-prone counties, which includes Deschutes County. Although there is not a substantial amount of state lands in Deschutes County, this is an important bill state-wide. Commissioner Chang reported that AOC is working on this bill as well, and western juniper is included in this bill. Eric Kropp, Deputy County Administrator, shared that the state owns 2.5% (50,000 acres) of land in Deschutes County, made up mostly of state parks and ODOT. This bill will be held for a future meeting, as some amendments are in the works.

Mr. Riggs welcomed Rep. Breese-Iverson and Rep. Reschke to the meeting. Rep. Reschke provided a broad overview of the week. He is on the Revenue and Ways & Means committees, and he is not on any policy committees. He reported the mood in the building is tepid, and everyone is still getting to know one another. Few controversial bills have popped up in committee. He's working toward increasing the threshold for triggering payment of Inheritance Tax, in order to keep generational wealth within families. Oregon has a \$1 million threshold. If it's under, it is untaxed and if it's over, it is taxed. The value of homes in many areas of Oregon is increasing rapidly, and as the value of homes goes up, heirs are becoming accidental millionaires. Selling the inherited home is the only way to pay the tax, even when families would rather keep the home.

Rep. Breese-Iverson provided a brief overview of the session. She sits on the House Rules and Joint Ways & Means Committees. The Rules Committee will have a discussion on Ethics. There will also be an informational discussion of the Governor's powers and how these powers are enacted when emergency declarations are made. They have committed to more collaboration as the session moves forward. The Governor's homelessness package is front and center, and there is a joint effort to find out how this looks and to ensure that resources are applied equally across the state. Mr. Riggs echoed Rep. Breese-Iverson's opinion of holding agencies accountable for getting funding allocated to counties in a reasonable amount of time.

Mr. Riggs thanked Rep. Reschke and Rep. Breese-Iverson for their participation.

Kevin Moriarty discussed **HB 3142** which directs Oregon Dept. of Admin. Services to provide grants to counties and soil and water conservation districts for removal of western juniper to make a positive impact on water resources. He stated that a neutral position on this bill would be sufficient, but that it should be tracked. Mr. Riggs said that some specific areas could be pinpoint targeted for juniper removal projects to make the biggest impact. This bill is likely to be included in the drought package. Commissioner Adair wishes to support this bill. Commissioner Chang noted that if the bill is framed primarily as a benefit for water resources, it's not our bill, but if it's framed for habitat enhancement and community wildfire protection, then it is of concern to Deschutes County. Commissioner Chang suggests support of HB 3142 with amendments.

HB 3003 provides tax credits for electric utilities that purchase electricity produced from fuel source at least 50% sourced from western juniper biomass. Commissioner Chang would like to see this broadened to provide incentives for all types of renewable energy projects. Commissioner Chang supports HB 3003 with amendments. Commissioner Adair supports HB 3003 and doesn't want it getting

lost. Staff will keep both of these flagged for a future meeting that Commissioner DeBone is able to attend.

Next Meeting: The next virtual legislative update meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 17, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Whitney Hale adjourned the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Angie Powers, BOCC Administrative Assistant