



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon
(541) 388-6570

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

BOCC MEETING MINUTES

1:00 PM

MONDAY February 27, 2023

Barnes Sawyer Rooms
Live Streamed Video

Present were Commissioners Anthony DeBone and Patti Adair. Also present were Nick Lelack, County Administrator; Kim Riley, Assistant County Counsel; and Brenda Fritsvold, BOCC Executive Assistant.

This meeting was audio and video recorded and can be accessed at the Deschutes County Meeting Portal website www.deschutes.org/meetings.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair DeBone called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

CITIZEN INPUT:

Commissioner DeBone reported the receipt of emails from Morgan Greenwood, representing the Central Oregon Builders Association, and Robert Carrie.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Congressionally-Directed Spending Follow-up Discussion

Deputy County Administrator Whitney Hale reminded that last week, the Board directed staff to reach out to other jurisdictions about requests for Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) allocations which the County might want to support. Hale reported that the City of Redmond will seek \$2 million to expand its wastewater treatment plant, and the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District has asked for \$3 million to upgrade two fire stations to meet increasing service demands and enhance firefighter safety.

Commissioner Chang said he has been asked to provide letters of support for requests from Mosaic Medical and Heart of Oregon Corps. Commissioner DeBone noted his enthusiasm for the work of the Corps and said the full Board may be interested to issue a letter of support. Commissioner Adair said while she is concerned about the federal debt and inflation, she would like to see the request.

Commissioner DeBone said even if the requests are not approved, the CDS process sheds light on community needs. He was in favor of sending letters of support from the Board.

Commissioner Chang supported the requests by Redmond, Mosaic Medical and the Corps. With respect to the request from the La Pine Fire District, he was concerned that the District appears to be experiencing financial problems.

Commissioner DeBone said the fact that La Pine does not have any bonded debt demonstrates prudence by its leadership. Commissioner Chang disagreed that forgoing bonded debt is always a good fiscal decision and said borrowing money to make strategic investments can facilitate future prosperity.

ADAIR: Move approval of Board signature of a letter of support for the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District's request for \$3 million in Congressionally Directed Spending

DEBONE: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes
CHANG: No
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried

Hale said staff will return with draft letters of support for the Board's consideration on Wednesday.

2. Continued Discussion of Request from City of Bend regarding Hunnell Road

Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator, reviewed a draft letter to Governor Kotek, via the Oregon Department of Emergency Management, asking that the State suspend statutes and rules which prohibit the siting of managed and partially-managed homeless camps on all rural lands outside UGBs.

Discussion ensued regarding the wording of the letter, the need for a safe parking ordinance, and if properties outside of city limits zoned Rural Residential might be suitable for siting camps.

Commissioner Adair said the safe parking site in Redmond is working very well. She supported expanding this to other locations and added that treatment beds are needed to assist persons experiencing substance use disorder and mental illness.

The Commissioners directed edits to the draft letter, which staff agreed to bring back for the Board's final review on Wednesday.

Continuing, Kropp summarized a request from the City of Bend that the County collaborate in efforts to site and manage a sanctioned campground for the purpose of relocating some persons who will be displaced from the pending clearing of the Hunnell Road encampment. Kropp reminded the Board that the City has asked for a response by February 28th.

Commissioner DeBone asked if this matter could be handled by the Coordinated Office on Houselessness. Commissioner Adair noted the matter at hand involves just the County and Bend, whereas the joint office includes the cities of Sisters, Redmond and La Pine. Commissioner Chang said while the joint office can help with fleshing out ideas and options, initiatives such as this require a great deal of discussion at many levels.

Bend City Manager Eric King added that the City intends to contribute \$100,000 of the \$1.5 million ARPA funds previously allocated to Bend by the County for costs associated with the new sanctioned camp. Commissioner Chang preferred that the City contribute more funds towards this effort; King responded that the City does not have more than this amount available.

Kropp explained the three maps provided to the Board and described the various boundaries shown, including properties owned by the State and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). He referred to information provided on a program model for a supported camp along with a conceptual layout. Kropp shared that the City has proposed using a one-acre parcel owned by it and located in Bend for a supported camp; the County could contract with a third party to manage it.

Chuck Hemingway, representing Central Oregon Villages (COV), spoke to the proposal and whether COV might be interested to provide those services.

Commissioner DeBone noted the goal is not to keep establishing supportive camps—instead, these facilities are meant to serve as temporary shelter while persons are transitioned to permanent supportive housing.

Cheyenne Purrington, Director of Houseless Strategies and Solutions, said approximately 80 to 100 people are camping in the Hunnell and Clausen area; of these, about half are medically fragile due to age, disabilities or other conditions.

Commissioner Adair said the surrounding community will be concerned about security at the proposed campground. She questioned how the County can declare that establishing a supportive camp will reduce crime.

Purrington said staff will identify safety measures including lighting, and the site would also offer trash disposal along with other sanitation and hygiene facilities. She believed that the proposed approach would address many problems.

Commissioner DeBone asked why the City is seeking to involve the County in this initiative. King responded that the City has one person doing all the work for three or four facilities, and is at its capacity from a contract management perspective.

Commissioner Chang asked to know how much of the needed infrastructure and operating costs could be covered by \$100,000. Purrington said this might cover an initial nine-month period, assuming some of the necessary work is done pro bono.

Commissioner DeBone clarified the discussion to mean that this would be the first of several supportive campsites. Commissioner Chang said the need is greater than just one site can meet.

Commissioner DeBone said the site's layout and density may not be inviting for people who are currently dispersed over a larger area. Purrington agreed that one location will not be sufficient and said the idea is to offer multiple options across three to five locations—for example, one site might be restricted to families.

Responding to Commissioner Adair, Purrington said the one-acre site currently under discussion could accommodate about 30 spaces. She confirmed that the site would be fully fenced and offered to bring back estimates for security services along with possible funding sources.

In response to Commissioner DeBone, Purrington verified that Bethlehem Inn has empty beds at this time. Purrington added this is a high-barrier shelter which conducts a background screen on all potential clients.

Commissioner Chang supported the County accepting Bend's request to manage the contract for this one-acre site. He further supported investigating the establishment of similar campgrounds at other sites.

Commissioner DeBone expressed his support of the request from Bend and noted the same from Commissioner Adair.

Following discussion of the planned timeframe for clearing the Hunnell Road encampment, which the City understood to be necessary due to an upcoming County public works project, Purrington offered to return with a more refined timeline for the Board's review. She added that her office will continue to evaluate other sites for supported campgrounds for the Board's consideration.

OTHER ITEMS:

- Lelack shared a report from the County's lobbyist Doug Riggs that a hearing has been scheduled for Wednesday on SB 644, which pertains to rural accessory dwelling units and wildfire mitigation standards. Will Groves, Planning Manager, added that Riggs has recommended the County submit a one-page comment letter in addition to testifying.

Commissioner Chang indicated he has signed up to testify remotely. Commissioner Adair said she will testify either in person or remotely.

- Commissioner Adair referred to a letter from Linn County regarding the \$7,000 per-call cost of the State's hotline for addiction recovery service assistance.
- Commissioner Adair reported that Dr. Sharon Meieran has predicted that the number of deaths this winter from fentanyl use and freezing will be high in Portland.
- Commissioner DeBone met with Redmond Mayor Ed Fitch and others to discuss the Oasis Village project.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURN:

Being no further items to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

DATED this 22nd Day of March 2023 for the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.



ANTHONY DEBONE, CHAIR

ATTEST:



PATTI ADAIR, VICE CHAIR



RECORDING SECRETARY



PHIL CHANG, COMMISSIONER