



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

BOCC 2023 RETREAT MEETING MINUTES

12:30 PM

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2023

Deschutes Services Building
VIRTUAL MEETING PLATFORM

Present were Commissioners Anthony DeBone, Patti Adair, and Phil Chang. Also present were Nick Lelack, County Administrator; Dave Doyle, County Legal Counsel (via Zoom); Deputy County Administrator Erik Kropp; Deputy County Administrator Whitney Hale; Internal Auditor David Givans; and Brenda Fritsvold, Board Executive Assistant. Additional staff present were District Attorney Steve Gunnels; Health Services Director Janice Garceau; and Human Resources Director Kathleen Hinman.

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

Commissioner Priorities

Commissioner DeBone:

- Possible budget request from the DA's Office to digitize files that are stored in the old courthouse to free up space for staff;
- Need to address land use and housing cost issues;
- Coordination with the City of Bend and other municipalities, especially with respect to addressing homelessness;
- The County's leadership and administration make for a great organization;
- How the cost of housing impacts recruiting efforts;

- Land Access is important—affordability, the opportunity to purchase real estate as an investment. In the 1950s, much of the southern area of the County was subdivided into one-acre parcels which facilitated ownership and pride.

Commissioner Chang:

- Long-term funding for workforce and affordable housing projects. Our community is at a deficit for housing units, and public investment is necessary to get units at the price point we need to support working people where they work.
- Employee housing—a recent survey of employees confirmed that the issue of housing costs is significant. If we can address this, we wouldn't have to raise salaries and benefits so much. KOR's land trust program is an innovative opportunity.
- Enable the DSL land exchange to move forward, which will require offering a sufficient number of appropriate places where people can go to access pathways out of homelessness.
- The need for more behavioral health treatment beds, which will entail securing federal or state funding for additional beds and treatment capacity.
- County parks, especially Fort Thompson Lane and upstream from Lower Bridge. Support moving these feasibility studies forward, developing viable park concepts and finding the needed capital to get these built.

Commissioner Adair:

- Workforce housing-- rural ADUs are a real opportunity for Deschutes County;
- A public/private partnership to build workforce housing in the DSB parking lot;
- Childcare availability and affordability;
- Hwy 97 – more funding needed for improvements;
- Hwy 20 – ODOT is building four roundabouts but the work is taking a long time;
- Need more hospital beds—very low numbers per capita;
- Bunkhouse Project in La Pine for veterans;
- Need to be accountable with respect to ARPA funds—make sure that the money is being used and reallocate if it is not;
- Terrebonne Sanitary Sewer plan and Community Plan update;
- Firefree – the County is years ahead of other communities in these efforts but needs to engage cities to become involved;
- Continue to provide great service to community;
- Employee retention;
- Compensation and the effects of high inflation;
- Homeless population—the Revere roundabout is filling up again;
- Need to put more energy into the safe parking program.

BOCC Meeting Schedule for 2023/2024:

The Board reviewed the 2023 calendar and determined its meeting dates for the year, subject to change.

Committee Assignments for 2023:

The Commissioners reviewed their appointments and concurred in the following changes:

Association of Oregon Counties Legislative Committee—transfer from Adair to Chang
Coordinated Homeless Response Office –assign to Adair
Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council—transfer from Chang to DeBone
Deschutes County Investment Advisory Committee--transfer from Chang to DeBone
Deschutes County Public Safety Coordinating Council—transfer from DeBone to Chang
Redmond Economic Development, Inc.—transfer from DeBone to Chang
COIC's Regional Housing Council—assign to Chang

Break: *At the time of 1:45 pm, a break was taken. The meeting reconvened at 1:54 pm.*

Department Participation:

Departments requested to present during the afternoon discussion were the District Attorney's Office, Human Resources and Health Services.

Steve Gunnels, District Attorney, spoke to the challenge of recruitment and retention, due to the high cost of housing and childcare, and reported a fairly high turnover of staff and volunteers in recent years. He said these efforts are also complicated by a growing bias against the criminal justice system, which influences some people to prefer working in the civil sector. He described another challenge posed by the backlog of trials and cases which were delayed during the pandemic.

Break: *At the time of 2:10 pm, a break was taken. The meeting reconvened at 2:13 pm.*

Commissioner DeBone suggested that the records storage area on the 4th floor could be converted for offices or meetings rooms. He said the first step would be to assess all of the records being stored there to determine which can be scanned and thus stored electronically.

Responding to Commissioner DeBone, Gunnels said the delays in accessing mental health treatment present a tremendous challenge to the criminal justice system. Gunnels called for State hospital resources to address this problem.

Kathleen Hinman, Human Resources Director, agreed that the Bend area's cost of living may be a deterrent to recruitment and retention efforts. She said it could help to offer creative opportunities to support those who are relocating—for example, allowing remote work before new hires are fully moved. She said many people want the flexibility of remote work and reported that some departments have requested salary increases to keep up with the rising cost of living.

Commissioner Chang referred to the results of an employee survey which indicated that staff who have been here for less than ten years experience difficulty in securing rental housing or purchasing a home.

Janice Garceau, Director of Health Services, reported on the expansion of the Homeless Outreach Services Team, which has quadrupled the department's capacity to assist persons with mental health issues or substance use disorders.

Commissioner Chang spoke to: efforts to reform Measure 110, compulsory treatment for substance abuse disorders, and the need to address the overflow at State hospitals. Discussion ensued regarding possible legislative actions this session.

Commissioner Adair encouraged efforts to address obesity, which leads to many health issues. Garceau advised framing this work in terms of nutritious eating and physical activity to foster good health.

Break: At the time of 2:52 pm, a break was taken. The meeting reconvened at 3:09 pm.

Group Discussion—Budget Priorities:

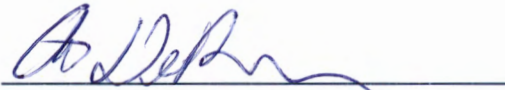
The Board discussed the following potential budget priorities: the need for workforce and other affordable housing, and if and how the County could help buy down the cost of housing for County employees using either TRT or County operating funds, and/or by partnering with other entities; how short-term rentals can constrain housing supply and drive up housing costs; the need for modest starter homes with basic amenities; and the fact that the County was able to lower the property tax rate while home values are rising.

Other Items:

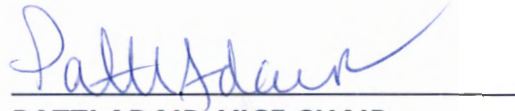
- Deputy County Administrator Erik Kropp reported that two County-owned vehicles are ready to be sent to public auction and asked if the Board supported donating one of these to Mountain View Community Development for use in providing services to persons residing at the safe parking site. The Board was in consensus to support this donation as described.

ADJOURN: Being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

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



ANTHONY DEBONE, CHAIR

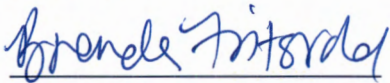


PATTI ADAIR, VICE CHAIR



PHIL CHANG, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



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