



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

BOCC MEETING MINUTES

1:00 PM

MONDAY November 27, 2023

Allen Room
Live Streamed Video

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

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

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

CITIZEN INPUT:

- Kevin Guadagno reported that last weekend, a person shot a gun at others who were riding ATVs in the China Hat area. Stating that he plans to move his family due to their lack of safety, Guadagno said efforts to address homelessness and drug addiction with services and resources negatively affect this area.
- Dorinne Tye shared the conclusion of a recent study that 70% of all airborne lead pollution issues from aviation activities, saying this contributes to higher death rates, environmental degradation and increased economic costs.

CONSENT AGENDA: Before the Board was Consideration of the Consent Agenda.

1. Authorize the County Administrator to sign Document No. 2023-980, amending the contract with Parametrix for Phase II services for the Terrebonne Wastewater System project

2. Appoint Kristin Toney to the Audit Committee

CHANG: Move approval of the Consent Agenda as presented
ADAIR: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes
CHANG: Yes
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried

AGENDA ITEMS:

3. Informational presentation on the Behavioral Health Division's Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST)

Kara Cronin, Behavioral Health Program Manager, said the Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST) offers behavioral health and substance use disorder support to homeless persons with acute psychiatric conditions. Cronin reviewed HOST's staff, which currently total 9.0 FTE, and shared how each of the positions is funded. HOST teams serve La Pine/Sisters, Redmond and Bend; in addition, one behavioral health specialist provides case management services full-time at Bend's Navigation Center.

Commissioner Adair noted that the Lighthouse Navigation Center is currently under construction. Colleen Thomas, HOST Supervisor, said until services can be resumed at that location, those have temporarily transitioned to the Blue Dog RV Park.

Thomas explained the Homeless Response System, the purpose of which is to prevent, assist and solve homelessness by offering programs such as rental assistance, emergency shelter and rapid re-housing. Thomas shared a list of organizations which assist in addressing homelessness in Deschutes County through the provision of various services including long-term shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and affordable housing. Discussion ensued regarding the coordination of the providers and their services, and Thomas confirmed that DAWNS House will be added to the list of providers.

Continuing, Thomas said the estimated number of homeless persons in Deschutes County is 1,467, of which 1,076 are unsheltered. Thomas described the average day of a HOST staffer, which involves contacts with homeless persons and service providers and the documentation of activities. She added

that many people encountered by HOST teams require crisis management due to the levels of hopelessness and despair being experienced.

Cronin identified barriers and challenges to meeting the needs of homeless persons and moving them out of homelessness, one of which is the lack of affordable housing. Commissioner Adair noted that in many areas, people pay up to 45% of their income for housing. Cronin added that rental inventory is acutely low—less than 2%—which results in extreme competition for rentals.

Commissioner Adair reported that of 64 churches in Bend, just four have agreed to offer safe parking on their properties—and one of those offers just two spots. She advocated for more safe parking opportunities as these can be highly effective.

Janice Garceau, Health Services Director, said the HOST team focuses its efforts on homeless persons who display symptoms of psychosis or another debilitating mental illness. While the vast majority are not dangerous to others, they themselves are susceptible to being victimized by crime at a higher degree than the housed population. Garceau spoke to efforts by the Coordinated Houseless Response Office Board to identify sites that could be used to shelter homeless persons.

Thomas verified that HOST has identified persons who are ready to transition to permanent supportive housing, but cannot proceed due to a lack of sufficient available spaces.

4. Work Session: Draft 2020-2040 Transportation System Plan Update

Tarik Rawlings, Senior Transportation Planner, and Peter Russell, Senior Transportation Planner, reviewed that a public hearing has been scheduled on November 29th to receive input on the update of the County's Transportation System Plan (TSP). Russell explained that the TSP is an element of the Comprehensive Plan which prioritizes transportation projects over the next 20 years and estimates their costs. The TSP serves as a long-term vision of a county-wide system that allows people to travel via driving, flying, bicycling, walking and the use of public transit.

Russell described the groups and organizations which contributed to the update, including ODOT and the County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. He referred to a chart showing potential investments according to project type and possible priority rating of high, medium or low. He said the TSP will incorporate the County's Transportation Safety Action Plan.

Rawlings shared that approximately 170 to 180 comments have thus far been received from members of the public. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on August 10th, after which it developed recommendations for the Board's consideration.

Commissioner Chang asked if the County would be involved in approving the proposed multi-use path from Sisters to Black Butte Ranch, should that move forward. Noting that the location of the proposed path is on federal land, Russell said the question of whether County land use approval would be required is currently before the Hearings Officer for a declaratory ruling which will be heard on December 6th with specific application to the proposed Lava Butte trail. Russell said one reason to consider including a project in the TSP is for the purpose of assisting a third party in securing grant funding.

Road Director Chris Doty confirmed that a project which is located on federal land or within the State's right-of-way does not have to be included in the County's TSP in order for it to proceed, although the Board could choose to include a general statement of support for multi-modal connections between communities.

5. Discussion and Consideration of Safe Parking Program in Rural Deschutes County

Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator, introduced the topic of establishing a safe parking program in the unincorporated County by reviewing the safe parking programs implemented by the Cities of Bend and Redmond, noting that Bend's program has two levels: the first for overnight camping, and the second for transitional overnight parking accommodation.

Community Development Director Peter Gutowsky added that beyond the Urban Growth Boundary, a safe parking program would be limited to non-resource lands (i.e., not allowed on farm or forest land) and vehicles only.

Stephanie Marshall, Assistant Legal Counsel, clarified that safe parking is no longer restricted to public property or property owned by a religious entity.

Kropp presented two draft orders for the Board's consideration and reviewed the proposed details of each. Because the orders were drafted to conform with the city's programs, and Bend allows tents or yurts in its safe parking program but Redmond does not, one of the orders would allow tents or yurts within Bend's UGB only—not in Redmond's UGB, and nowhere outside of a UGB.

Kropp then presented a matrix of decision points to guide the Board's deliberations. Discussion ensued that if land is zoned EFU, it could not have safe parking in the absence of a change in State law to allow this use on resource lands. Alternatively, a property could be rezoned to something other than EFU in order that it be used to provide managed shelter.

The Board was in consensus to hear the Treasury Report and Finance Report before resuming discussion of this subject (see later this page).

6. Treasury Report for October 2023

Bill Kuhn, County Treasurer, presented the Treasury Report for October 2023, including a high-level economic overview.

7. Finance Report for October 2023

Chief Financial Officer Robert Tintle provided an update on the bond sale for the courthouse expansion project, reporting that 17 bids were received with an aggregate rate of 3.86%--far below the 5.075% rate initially anticipated. Due to the favorable conditions, the County proceeded with refinancing the 2013 bond at a rate of 3.51%; the rate for the courthouse expansion bond will be 3.93%. Tintle added that the debt savings from refunding the 2013 bonds will be about \$27,000 per year.

Tintle then presented the Finance Report for October 2023.

A break was announced at 3:55 p.m.; the meeting reconvened at 4:00 p.m.

5. Discussion and Consideration of Safe Parking Program in Rural Deschutes County (continued)

In response to questions, Deputy County Administrator Erik Kropp clarified how a vehicle would be defined by the program and confirmed that a property used for safe parking could either be owned or leased by a public entity.

Commissioner Adair spoke to the success of safe parking programs and said when these include supervision or management, they aid people in receiving services and transitioning to a healthier lifestyle. Adding that these programs also enhance the safety of neighborhoods, she supported expanding safe parking in Bend.

Commissioner DeBone commented that many homeless persons struggle with either serious mental health issues and/or a substance use disorder and referred

to constraints imposed by State land use regulations which have thus far prevented the siting of a managed shelter outside of the urban growth boundary.

Commissioner Chang said safe parking is a proven approach to moving people out of homelessness, particularly those who are employed yet can't afford rent. He believed that some churches are hesitant to offer space for safe parking due to a fear of homeless people.

Following further discussion, the Board was in consensus to have the two orders, as drafted, brought back next week for formal action.

OTHER ITEMS: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURN:

Being no further items to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:43 pm.

DATED this 20th day of December 2023 for the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.


ANTHONY DEBONE, CHAIR


PATTI ADAIR, VICE CHAIR

ATTEST:


RECORDING SECRETARY


PHIL CHANG, COMMISSIONER