



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon
(541) 388-6571

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

DESCHUTES COUNTY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

8:00 AM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2024

ZOOM MEETING

A legislative work session was held on Friday, February 9, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. via Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform.

Deschutes County Attendance:

x	Commissioner Patti Adair, Chair		Nick Lelack, County Administrator
x	Commissioner Anthony DeBone, Vice Chair	x	Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator
	Commissioner Phil Chang	x	Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator
	Kristie Bollinger, Property Manager		Tim Brownell, Director Solid Waste
x	Sara Crosswhite, Director 9-1-1		Steve Dennison, County Clerk
x	Chris Doty, Director Road Department	x	David Doyle, Legal Counsel
	Charles Fadeley, Justice of the Peace	x	Janice Garceau, Director Health Services
x	Stephen Gunnels, District Attorney		Peter Gutowsky, Director Community Development
	Geoff Hinds, Director Fair & Expo		Kathleen Hinman, Director Human Resources
x	Deevy Holcomb, Director Community Justice	x	Bill Kuhn, Treasurer
	Scot Langton, Assessor		Keith MacNamara, Manager Veteran's Services
x	Tania Mahood, Director Information Technology	x	Kevin Moriarty, Forester
	Shane Nelson, Sheriff	x	Elizabeth Pape, Internal Auditor
x	Lee Randall, Director Facilities	x	Robert Tintle, Chief Financial Officer

x	Heather Kaisner, Director Public Health		Holly Harris, Director Behavioral Health
x	Tom Kuhn, Public Health Program Manager	x	Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager
x	Angie Powers, Administrative Assistant		
Others Present:			
x	Doug Riggs, Director NW Policy Advocates	x	Katy Brooks, CEO Bend Chamber of Commerce
Legislators Present:			
x	Rep. Emerson Levy	x	Rep. Jason Kropf

1. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Adair called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

2. Updates and Priority Briefing from Legislators

Rep. Levy reported on the ongoing discussions related to Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) in the housing bill. An emphasis has been the need for acreage for complete communities, which is important for controlling urban sprawl. The most important piece of this bill to unlock housing opportunities in Deschutes County is the infrastructure funding. Doug added the hearing was contentious and there are many people who are in opposition to the expansion of UGBs. Although there are three separate housing bills, **SB 1357** will be the one to move. Commissioner DeBone stressed that we are currently in gridlock with the homeless situation, adding that we must prioritize and aim for a brighter future. We can't accept that people will live in substandard conditions for the long term. Rep. Levy echoed this urgency.

Rep. Levy briefly discussed the revenue forecast which came in higher than expected. She is fighting for infrastructure funding and is hopeful that funding will be unlocked for East Redmond's 21st Street improvements. This project is on Rep. Gomberg's infrastructure bill. She is unsure if the southeast Bend sewer project is on the list.

Chair Adair shared that South Deschutes County groundwater will need funding. DEQ's well tests show that septic systems in south county have created a large nitrate load in the groundwater. Commissioner DeBone added that there's not currently a project due to land use restrictions. Chair Adair will send Rep. Levy an email outlining the south county groundwater issue.

Rep. Levy said that BM 110 had a long hearing this week. She's comfortable with misdemeanor A and is advocating for it. Commissioner DeBone highlighted that county sheriffs, district attorneys, the League of Oregon Cities (LOC), the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC), and county commissioners are all in alignment in advocating for misdemeanor A, and it's important to provide help to those who

want it. Rep. Levy said that legislators are being vulnerable in sharing their stories. The consensus is to crack down tougher on dealers and suppliers. Commissioner Adair added that our county is fortunate to have Ideal Options working in its jail.

Janice appreciates the no-nonsense, common-sense approach. Penalties and diversion programs can be very effective in helping those with Substance Use Disorder (SUD). She hopes to avoid a stalemate with the misdemeanor A vs. C debate. It's critical that adequate investments follow recriminalizing. Janice thanked Rep. Levy for her advocacy. Commissioner DeBone said it's important to remember there is discretion within the DA's office.

Responding to Heather Kaisner, Rep. Levy said that funding towards primary prevention focused on adolescents in the schools and with parents, is part of the package. Doug acknowledged a bias in this area and is encouraged to see a focus on youth behavioral health in this discussion. **HB 4070** expands youth behavioral health in all schools, including those with School Based Health Centers. In Doug's opinion, youth substance abuse has been ignored far too long in Oregon. Janice shared that our local prevention program is doing a lot of fentanyl awareness education, including public service announcements and increasing access to Narcan in schools. Heather said that youth SUD prevention could use much more funding, but feels we are ahead of most counties. Rep. Levy stated her goal is to secure funding then let the experts do their important work. Her pharmacy copay accumulators and e-bike bills are both moving.

Deevy Holcomb expressed appreciation towards the conversations on the importance of funding community corrections within the Joint Committee on Addiction Community Safety Response (**SB 402**).

Rep. Kropf joined the meeting and thanked Chair Adair for her testimony on Wednesday. The Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response is in the process of vetting the different proposals. Wednesday's hearing was 95% focused on misdemeanor crime level. He applauded Janice Garceau and Holly Harris for their work on the stabilization center, adding that it's a highly respected state model and funding the center is critical. He also spoke about funding for youth substance use/abuse prevention. Funding for housing and homelessness, addiction and public safety will be the bulk of the funding this short session, and they are currently awaiting the final budget numbers. Janice thanked Rep. Kropf for truly listening to the issues and hearing what the community needs.

Chair Adair reported the apartment rental vacancy rate is currently 9.4%. Affordable housing continues to be an important issue, and Treasurer Bill Kuhn shares vacancy data with the Board monthly.

3. NW Policy Advocates Update

Doug walked through the bills on the tracking list, noting the list for department head review has been narrowed down to 21 or 22 from 93. Bills were prioritized to discuss today and next week.

4. Bill Tracker Review Report

A. Board of Commissioners

HB 4042 was flagged by Commissioner Chang. It authorizes the Oregon Business Development Department to provide financial assistance to projects related to industrial land. Doug fully expects this bill to pass, and ways and means will determine whether to invest in the program. Position: support, priority 2.

HB 4140 / SB 1587 were flagged by Commissioner DeBone, and appropriate money and grants certain immunities to children's advocacy centers, such as our local KIDS Center, and to employees and designated agents of these centers. Position: support, priority 2.

SB 1511 was flagged by County Forester, Kevin Moriarty. It directs the State Fire Marshal to establish a neighborhood protection cooperative grant program which includes a wildfire risk assessment. Grant awards are based on wildfire risk. It creates a fund for the grant and a certification program. Position: support, priority 2.

HB 4107 provides that compensation for loss or injury to livestock or working dogs under the Wolf Depredation and Financial Assistance grant program must be based on certain multipliers of fair market value and streamlines the process for ranchers. This bill is supported by ODFW and AOC. Doug will follow up, as there may be a companion bill to HB 4107. Position: support, priority 2.

B. Administration

No bills were discussed.

C. Health Services

HB 4002 Janice said this bipartisan bill aims to reform measure 110. She doesn't have a strong opinion on the level of misdemeanor, noting that our country spends a lot of money on incarceration and little on treatment. She hopes for adequate funding towards treatment. Chair Adair shared that BestCare Treatment Services lost 26 clients last year from drug overdoses. Life expectancy in our country has dropped in large part to obesity and addiction. Treatment programs are critical and must be funded at a level

higher than current levels. Janice added that we have hundreds more dying from alcohol addiction than opioid addiction, and alcoholism is also causing community harm. It is her hope to destigmatize addiction, as many addicts are housed with jobs. The treatment system for addiction in Oregon has been neglected and is finally getting attention due to Measure 110 and the houselessness crisis. Position: support, priority 2.

HB 4092 requires the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to conduct a study to determine the funding required for community mental health programs. Janice said this is the administrative burden bill and she hopes this gains traction. Time ran out before the Board's position on this bill could be determined.

HB 4081 is the EMS modernization bill Tom Kuhn spoke about last week. The Board adopted a position of support, priority 2 on this bill last week.

D. District Attorney

The District Attorney's Association will speak later today with Rep. Kropf regarding the different proposals in the legislature for BM 110 reform particularly **HB 4002**. Rep. Kropf said there's been a significant change in prosecution of drug delivery charges in recent years, and he wants to make sure law enforcement and district attorneys have the tools they require to crack down on drug dealers. Responding to Chair Adair, Rep. Kropf said that crime statistics data for the City of Bend has been relatively steady since 2019. Other communities have seen greater increases in crime rates. Commissioner DeBone stressed the common ground amongst law enforcement, county sheriffs and county commissioners advocating for misdemeanor level A, and thanked Rep. Kropf for the work he's doing. He expressed his support as the joint committee moves forward with making decisions.

5. Other Items

Chris Doty spoke about **SB 1566**. His testimony was sent to the Board for review yesterday. This bill allows counties to charge fees and issue permits for utility work occurring in the right-of-way, so we can be reimbursed for our time. AOC is advocating for wastewater fee recovery to be part of the bill. Doug attended the hearing last night.

Jen Patterson shared that Katy Brooks is spearheading a regional effort for a Central Oregon Innovation Hub grant application to Business Oregon, on behalf of OSU Cascades. The Hub promotes and supports entrepreneurship and start-ups throughout the tri-county area. It's a collaborative model between OSU Cascades, COCC and EDCO. She requested the County's support, which is a requirement of the

grant application. Responding to Chair Adair, Katy clarified that initial funding was from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, but current funding is a pass through from the state via Business Oregon. Additionally, the Ford Family Foundation and OSU Cascades are other current funding sources.

DEBONE: Move to approve a letter of support for the Central Oregon Innovation Hub grant application

ADAIR: Second

VOTE: DEBONE: Yes

ADAIR: Yes. Motion carried

Next Meeting: The next virtual legislative update meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 16 at 8:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Chair Adair adjourned the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Angie Powers, Administrative Assistant