

**MINUTES
JOINT MEETING OF
UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AND
MORROW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

May 28, 2020
1:30 p.m., Stafford Hansell Government Center, Room 113
915 S.E. Columbia Drive
Hermiston, Oregon
Zoom conference or phone call in available

Umatilla County Commissioners Present: Chair John Shafer, Vice-Chair George Murdock, and Commissioner Bill Elfering

County Counsel: Doug Olsen

Morrow County Commissioners Present: Chair Melissa Lindsay; Vice-Chair Don Russell; and Commissioner Jim Doherty

County Counsel: Justin Nelson

Other Attendance: Morrow County: Darrell Green, County Administrator; Bobbie Childers (zoom); County Public Health: Diane Kilkenny, Interim Health Director; Shelley Wight, Emergency Preparedness; Undersheriff & Emergency Manager John Bowles (zoom).
Umatilla County: Joseph Fiumara, UCo Health Director (zoom).
Torrie Griggs (zoom); J. R. Cook, NOWA (phone)

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Shafer called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. He advised the meeting is being video and audio recorded and minutes will be taken.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Lindsay called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

City/Citizen Comments – This is for public input for other than agenda items. None.

Open Agenda – The Boards may introduce subjects not already on the agenda.

Business Items

1. **COVID-19 and Public Health.** Morrow County representatives Diane Kilkenny & Shelley Wight advised of 12 cases and that all have recovered. They have 9 trained tracers. Joe Fiumara, UCo Health, advised of 115 cases and 96 recovered plus four presumptive with one still in the hospital. There are three deaths at this time. The number of people in place to trace changes daily. There are 12 people available for contact tracing with at least eight on 7 days/week operation. Commissioner Murdock asked Joe to explain the operations center. Mr. Fiumara advised there are 10 work stations (additional staff were hired) on the third floor of courthouse in Pendleton. Seven people are on a varying schedule to account for 7 days/week and to allow some to have time off. Part-time people are available and trained to work additional hours if needed -- ramp up can come quickly.

In response to Commissioner Lindsay’s question about a “tipping point”, he feels that number would be high, but with additional help he is thankful for slowing of the work. Umatilla County has exceeded the number (contact tracers) per capita outlined by the Governor. Question by Diane Kilkenny about estimate of how

many hours contact tracers have spent on cases. Mr. Fiumara didn't have that information (that specific) at this time -- it is more inclusive. Activity sheets are kept, however. Ms. Kilkenny commented it appears to be about 10-15 hours in Morrow County, but she doesn't know specifics either.

Mr. Fiumara advised the state requirement for contact tracing of 12 FTE for Umatilla County's population (about 88,000), 7 day/week operation equates to 480 hours/week. Current staffing is for 488 hours and can go a few more if needed.

Commissioner Lindsay encouraged the joint conversation today with all public health. Shelley Wight commented about processing plants (awareness of Clark County, Washington) -- unknown if the virus appears there and suggested the need to contact trace right away. It is on their radar.

Commissioner Murdock asked if Umatilla County is expecting about \$640,000 in funding from the State. Mr. Fiumara advised that is the allotment with another \$92,000 going to regional support. The push now is to run through the existing modernization collaboration. In response to Commissioner Murdock's question, Mr. Fiumara advised the CARES amount is \$740,000.

2. Phase 2 Reopening – Governor's Office. Commissioner Lindsay is not sure about the phase 2 target – feels it may be premature. She wants to be sure both counties talk about what that might entail. Commissioner Shafer talked about a problem with not putting information on ORPHEUS (data site?). Mr. Fiumara agreed there are issues with the ORPHEUS system at some level. However, there is time to commit to input data. The more users, the more issues. That system is not set to track some things; however, a new system is in works for contact tracing with monitoring by public health. It is 2+ weeks to being launched live. Data will be included hoping to streamline the process. All are hopeful it comes out okay. Commissioner Shafer pointed out this was supposed to be 2 weeks ago, so it is already delayed. Regarding contact tracing to other agencies, Mr. Fiumara advised OHA may designate another business organization to do contact tracing (and maybe more). A committee (?) vote of 9 to 2 was in favor for contract amendment. But, to make it operational, all parties must sign.

Commissioner Shafer asked what are the challenges? Mr. Fiumara noted one thing is individuals being released from prison without complete information if there was exposure – that needs to be figured out. He feels peaks may come with reopening; however, this is the timeframe. Ms. Wight feels there may be peaks in 2+ weeks. Another concern is people traveling out of state and also to Mexico – Morrow County has issues with workers in their type of ag businesses. And, Ms. Kilkenny talked about workers traveling regionally – Boardman, Hermiston, and Tri-Cities.

In response to Commissioner Elfering's question about an idea of numbers with a surge, Mr. Fiumara advised metrics are pulled on a weekly basis and posted on Thursdays; it seems to appear 5% increase is expected – a relatively small number though could be a big spike. Also looking at community spread getting contact that way. 24-hour contact tracing is required and very time-consuming. And hospital capacities must be available.

Commissioner Lindsay commented PPE is a factor. She feels we our region is coming along pretty well. Commissioner Murdock asked Mr. Fiumara about other places in state possibly having issues reopening due to contiguous counties. He was not aware of problems. Discussion turned to stand alone counties and talk of regional numbers as well as hospital regions, CCOs, county partnerships, and the importance of collaborations.

Commissioner Shafer asked about gathering sizes in the next phase. Mr. Fiumara advised only from original drafts for the framework, where a gathering number of 50 came from; he's not seen any updates or reiteration and didn't know if that will be the number. Ms. Wight & Ms. Kilkenny concurred.

Commissioner Shafer advised of keeping in close contact with the Governor's office and the need to keep on top of conversations. Commissioner Doherty expressed concern about delays in current updates and challenges of notifications from the Governor's office. All are writing the phase 2 outline without any input from the Governor – that is no direction or leadership. He feels AOC could have discussion and maybe take a leadership role in crafting the phase 2 plan – it needs to be ready to go when approval is given by the Governor.

Commissioner Murdock added we are a bit over a week from phase 2 and he's also concerned about the Governor's office taking too much time. He feels it must be applied for tomorrow (May 29) to work within the 3-week next phase. Mr. Fiumara advised that Alisha Southwick (Deputy Director of Health) attended an advisory meeting yesterday where they were told next week there should be guidance from the Governor's office. (Laughter – that is too late!)

Commissioner Murdock feels the Governor's office isn't leading or taking responsibility and is certainly focused on Multnomah County. He noted all should keep in mind rural counties are moving to phase 2, but urged caution. He is concerned with liability with possible lawsuits.

Justin Nelson commented the Governor's office sets the rules and that is the basis for responsibility. He also advised the Sheriff's office's enforcement is based on the Governor's rules.

Commissioner Murdock is not so sure in the near future that we won't still be keeping distancing, stay home if you are sick – that is not different from before COVID-19. He also pointed out businesses need to keep their insurance informed moving forward.

Commissioner Shafer asked about churches and if Morrow County has received a lot of comments. Commissioners Lindsay and Doherty advised they don't hold authority for churches. When they crafted their rules, they deferred to the state with recommendation that churches contact the state. Mr. Nelson concurred that the 25 gathering number holds. There is not a separate rule for churches – it is the mass gatherings number. There was discussion about 25 people per room and separate entrances. Commissioner Murdock noted churches are worried about the 6-foot rule – he's heard that it may be more; it depends on fragility of members. Both county boards have not given direction regarding churches other than the numbers -- 25 gathering and 6-foot distance.

Commissioner Murdock noted AOC is talking daily on the dollars -- it is not on phase 2. Commissioner Doherty feels like Salem is setting up a firewall.

Morrow County Health (Ms. Kilkenny and Ms. Wight) want to get out a press release, including current work on phase 2, while keeping in mind the pushback of phase 1. And maybe to include monitoring and indicators from phase 1.

3. CARES Act Funding. A joint letter is to be considered (Morrow County wrote the letter) for how the CARES funding should be distributed. Commissioner Doherty gave the framework (Commissioner Elfering got copies for all to review). He outlined the allocation by the federal government regarding health care costs and shoring up businesses – a lot of losses. In that regard, Jackson County prepared a very direct letter. AOC was asked to sign on as well as any and all commissioners. The AOC Executive Committee convened using Jackson County's letter as a template with working points, but Commissioner Doherty is looking to recraft it for non-partisan support. A team was put together at the legislature to work on a letter of support for obtaining federal funds as was intended. However, the Governor is the one who interprets federal law for distribution of funds.

Commissioner Doherty read the letter (copy attached). Comments were made about “autonomy” and “unanimity” coming together with a collective voice **For Umatilla County, Commissioner Murdock moved to approve. Seconded by Commissioner Elfering. Carried, 3-0.**

For Morrow County, Commissioner Russell moved to approve. Commissioner Doherty seconded. Carried, 3-0. All six commissioners signed the letter addressed to Governor Brown. Commissioner Doherty also suggested courtesy copying Representative Smith, Senator Hansell, and Representative Barreto.

Commissioner Doherty commented this is an important step moving forward (\$1.6 million). He also talked about convening a task force (including Representative Powers, Representative Drazan, Senator Golden, Gina Nikkel (AOC Executive Director), Mike Colley (LOC), Senator Bill Hansell, Frank Stratton (Special Districts), and maybe himself (as AOC President) as well as Rob Bovett (AOC Counsel). The group might hold a meeting the coming Saturday (May 30). He asked about other possible people to include in mailing. Commissioner Elfering suggested Senator Findley (regular phone calls (Ways & Means), Representative Owens and Representative Bonham.

4. Green Energy Corridor and Planning. Presented by Commissioner Lindsay. This has increased in size with the conversation, starting on the bombing range. It seems now is a good time to begin the conversation with Umatilla County – it was noted Commissioner Shafer was part of that conversation. J. R. Cook via phone: NOWA is very supportive and when time is appropriate, would like to move forward through the landowner side of membership. His part was rulemaking, and with those established, counties could develop it if they choose. This is part of high value ag area. It has evolved from the bombing range, to near UEC plus more. Looking to include wind and solar energy perhaps making a substation in the Stanfield area, and also the “green energy loop” with a mix of both counties to support high level industrial needs. There is a lot of potential to streamline the development side and also investment and preplanning standpoint where transmission lines would run when demand is there. Mr. Cook advised he will facilitate and answer questions when the time is right.

In response to Commissioner Lindsay, Mr. Cook, in his opinion, the next step and easiest way is through overlay zones, but the counties would make that decision. He feels a 1,000-foot contour is a good baseline to start to develop South, East, and West of that contour, which would follow the existing process. That is where main development and landowners are located. It is important to get local buy-in with establishing a local advisory committee to determine the overlay zone. Geography needs to be considered along with advisory members to guide the process. That would occur post-acknowledgment/amendment process. Step 1 would be overlay of starting/stopping to guide committee membership then go to developing rules moving forward.

Commissioner Lindsay advised this is just an initial conversation today and felt it was a good place to start. Commissioner Murdock commented this sounds a bit like the process of the two counties coming together (similar to the B2H (Boardman to Hemmingway) project). Mr. Cook feels Umatilla County and Morrow County recognize the value of energy development, transmission, and use with industrial pieces – also the value and balance of regionally significant high value ag. Other counties have approached it differently (offensive or defensive), whereby these two counties look at balance (dryland and irrigation). He stressed the importance of getting the right people at the table and working with planning staffs.

5. Joint Grants and Processes. Commissioner Shafer explained this refers to community corrections. Commissioner Elfering thought Dale Primmer (Community Corrections Director) would be attending; however, he was not. Commissioner Shafer advised with this grant opportunity, Umatilla County is hoping to get over \$1 million for housing needs for repeat offenders and/or chronic homeless. This would allow funding to assist those in need. It would include a case manager (like a probation officer) to keep track. Counseling is a means to help prevent people going back to court again and again. He noted Morrow County would have the opportunity as well.

Commissioner Lindsay also pointed out this opportunity has to do with the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council. A good idea from Morrow County is a drop off center, hoping to fund a building. And, second would be the idea of an advocate. She believed the application is a short timeframe of June 12.

Mr. Nelson talked about bench probation and probation officers. Supervision is an issue. With delays between court and defense attorneys representing a homeless person, housing is difficult as are repeat offenders. He talked about types of offenses, jail time, probation, supervision, etc.

Commissioner Lindsay urged conversations need to continue. Commissioner Shafer pointed out that Mark Royal, LPSCC Coordinator, has great experience and knowledge as he was Umatilla County's prior community justice director (25 years).

Commissioner Lindsay reiterate the grant application deadline is fast-approaching. No action was needed or taken.

6. Licensing and Joint Contracts. (meeting froze @ 2:48... Back on @ 2:50.) Regarding on-site inspections, Morrow County feedback is positive – the program is working well. They are working with the Forest Service on a guard station and also the COVID aspect.
7. Dispatch and Radio Recording System – Joint Project. Commissioner Doherty wanted to be sure the two counties are working together to be sure the connection is right. In response to a question by Commissioner Doherty, Undersheriff John Bowles advised the radio district has been working for many years. Shawn Halsey is the contact. The two dispatch centers are connected and this joint project is for redundancy for back-up. A new recording system is part of the radio upgrade. Funding comes from the state to operate dispatch centers, but an upgrade was needed and the associated increased cost is shared by the two counties.

Commissioner Shafer advised this used to be his life and it sounds about right. He elaborated. The old radio system needed to be upgraded and recording system had to be upgraded as well. All radio traffic and phone calls are evidence if needed down the road. Neighboring counties/agencies have access to make it work. Undersheriff Bowles noted the special radio district has its own advisory board (including representatives from both counties). And, Commissioner Shafer added there is a user board as well. The user board includes those familiar with all aspects of operations, also with representatives from both counties. That board give recommendations to the advisory board, which members are elected.

8. Miscellaneous. Back to Commissioner Murdock's comments regarding costs to be turned in to the state – the "first ask" is separate from the CARES Act fund. The first request was for public health funds (amount of \$640,000). The second was for expenses identified as COVID related. Discussion turned to meeting required deadlines – fast approaching (first is June 5?). Commissioner Doherty remarked the first allotment is \$200 million, the next allocation is \$200 million plus more funds, with a total of over \$500 million. AOC is asking the first allotment go out to the 34 counties that were supposed to get those funds and didn't. The two counties that received their portion directly were Multnomah and Washington. There was more discussion about funding distribution and any deductions.

On behalf of Morrow County, Commissioner Lindsay thanked Umatilla County for hosting.

9. Umatilla County - adjourned at 3:06 p.m.
10. Morrow County - adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, *Melinda Slatt*, Executive Secretary, Umatilla County Board of Commissioners