

**MINUTES**  
**UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
Meeting of January 7, 2015  
9:00 a.m., Room 130, Umatilla County Courthouse  
Pendleton, Oregon

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**Commissioners Present:** Commissioner George Murdock, Vice-Chair, and Larry Givens, Appearing by phone: Bill Elfering, Chair

**County Counsel:** Doug Olsen

**Members and Guests Present:** Renee Straub, BLM; Tamara Gertsch, BLM; Maxwell Woods, ODOE; Scott Whitesides, BLM; Don Gonzalez, BLM; Gary Rhinehart, UCPC; Mark Mullins, Pastor at First Christian Church; Dan Lonai, Administrative Services; Todd Adams, IPC; Stephanie McCurdy, Idaho Power; Jeff Maffuccio, Idaho Power; Undersheriff Jim Littlefield; Capt. Dave Williamson, UCSO; Capt. Stewart Harp, UCSO; Tamra Mabbott, Planning; Bob Levy; Craig Reeder, Hale Company; Bob Stoltz, Print Shop

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. Vice- Chair George Murdock reminded all present that the meeting was a public forum. It is being recorded and minutes will be taken. If persons wish to speak before the BCC, identify yourself and where you live for the record. (Note: *prior to the meeting, employees welcomed the “new chief” with flower petals and palm fronds, while singing Hail to the Chief!*)

**Pledge of Allegiance.** Those in the room stood, saluted the flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Awards/Recognitions/Correspondence.** None.

**Swearing in of Commissioner Murdock** for his second term. Dan Lonai gave the oath of office to Commissioner George Murdock. Pastor Mark Mullins held the bible. (Bob Stoltz took pictures). Commissioner Murdock introduced his wife, Donna. He thanked Pastor Mark Mullins for being a part of the ceremony. He looks forward to 4 more years serving the county.

**Minutes.** Commissioner Givens moved to approve the minutes of the 10/15/14 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Elfering. Carried, 3-0.

**Public Input** – None, other than on the agenda.

**Additions to Agenda** - None.

**Business Agenda**

1. **Boardman to Hemingway Line Presentation.** Don Gonzalez, Director of the BLM-Vale office would make the presentation regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) public

comment period. Chair Elfering noted he worked a fire in 1957 or 1958 for the BLM in Vale where he grew up. He also noted his father retired from the BLM office many years ago. He mentioned names of many people in Vale and then asked Mr. Gonzalez to proceed. Mr. Gonzalez noted in addition to the Vale office, he oversees the Baker City office. He and staff are traveling through the area and speaking to County Commissioners for a few weeks. He noted many staff in the audience have been traveling with him for public meetings and providing information at those forums.

Last night they met at the Pendleton Convention Center for a presentation to the public. About 25 attended. The B2H document has been out since mid-December. He felt it was good to ask for comments early-on in the comment process. He is requesting substantive comments from the public, in particular regarding concerns with their own property. It has been noted satellite pictures need to be updated for more current activity.

Public comments will be addressed during the process. He noted that the transmission line is not a foregone conclusion. The line may not be built based on public comment and final decision after appropriate review. He asked the Commissioners to consider other committees/groups where he can make a presentation, and to please let him know he is invited to attend. In addition, 3/19/15 is the deadline for all public comments. Analysis will be done after that time. A subsequent decision will be announced towards the end of spring next year. Next, the Governor will review the document and comments and, after that, a full and complete decision will be made.

He thanked Umatilla County for putting the project documents on display in the front lobby. He thanked the BCC for the time to address them and encouraged any questions to BLM, Idaho Power, DOE (Department of Energy) and others.

Chair Elfering asked how the project affects BLM. Mr. Gonzalez noted that of 305 miles of use, approximately 100 miles is in BLM boundaries. They also need to evaluate impacts on private land as well as public land, including national forest ground. Chair Elfering noted concerns with high-value agriculture land in the proposed project area. Mr. Gonzalez noted the evaluation process of private land and effects of other types of land (i.e., wildlife habitat). It is a balancing act. They will try to minimize utilizing high value agriculture land as much as possible. Chair Elfering also talked about the need to coordinate with others to be efficient and be sure input is taken and make sure things are not missed.

Commissioner Givens talked about siting -- is the BLM using their own studies? Will they look at county studies (of value consideration) based on the type of property affected? He elaborated - for example an agriculture circle – if any part is taken, it affects the whole and thus value is high. He noted that Craig Reeder (in attendance) is a farmer who could speak to a ballpark value. Craig Reeder says rough ground is about \$15,000/acre for irrigated land. The full circle is important, but costs of production can raise 10 to 15% if it is less than a whole circle. He also talked about vine and cane crops in the area and the “corner pieces” do have value because other crops can be planted there.

Mr. Gonzalez noted BLM will consider all best data and cities and counties have the best and most current information. He requested comments be sent to him including the source of the

information so it can be considered. Commissioner Givens asked where is majority of the 100 miles referred to previously? Mr. Gonzalez responded it is probably in Malheur County and there is also quite a bit property in Baker County.

Chair Elfering asked about how much routing has changed in light of public comments? Is the route really open to change? Mr. Gonzalez feels most input has been considered and issues will be addressed in the project document. There may still be some fine-tuning, but as far as major routes to evaluate, it is feasible that another area would be considered. Commissioner Givens reiterated the importance of valuing agriculture production and he is not in agreement with environmental concerns taking a front seat. The science is important and he is concerned about this issue.

Commissioner Givens spoke from the natural resource side that he has heard extreme concern about federal agencies not paying special attention to private landowners. This is not just in this county – he feels it is important for private citizens to be heard in this process. Chair Elfering asked that the agriculture interests in attendance be heard. Craig Reeder noted they have not been in opposition to the line – he clarified a recent news article -- they have been involved actively in the process for over 2 years. Bob Levy and other landowners have been active in the process. There is a 14-mile stretch near Bombing Range Road. He noted across the road is a huge grassland area (50,000 acres) that could be considered. He talked about protection of species in that area. The landowners have done the right thing environmentally. He talked about mitigating the “footprint” of the towers in regard to the squirrel species – they can be moved to nearby wildlife areas. Their issue is about why the route is placed where four agriculture landowners are being asked to make a sacrifice when across the road is a perfectly good area to be used that would be less costly. He elaborated about working with the effect on 3 of his 7 circles. He talked about tower heights and spacing being considered and should include the Navy bombing range property rather than making the farmers take 100% of the impact. He feels that part of the route be considered to move across the road to the bombing range as he has discussed. He and many others will be making comments regarding this specific area to push for the West side of Bombing Range Road.

Chair Elfering and Commissioner Murdock asked if Bob Levy would like to speak. Bob Levy from Echo said a presentation will be forthcoming about the specific issues by the irrigation community to the proposed location by the BLM. He talked about letters early on in the process stressing high value agriculture and noted support letters have been provided.

For the record, Commissioner Givens addressed BLM and Idaho Power representatives, saying that Senator Wyden will be speaking about agriculture value in Oregon – it is the driver in economy. Umatilla County is # 2 in agriculture production in the state (Marion County is #1). Umatilla County may soon surpass Marion County in light of cattle production increases. The Governor wants to make sure rural counties have a better footing for economic development. He asked both entities today to keep that in mind. He expressed the importance of rural counties. He talked about mitigation and the negative impact on ranchers of terrible fire damage in the West – he feels that we must look at the balance between agriculture and environmental concerns of sage grouse, squirrels and other species. He noted strong support for agriculture.

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director, noted she attended the BLM's public meeting along with Commissioner Murdock and others. This has been a many years long process. People are not opposed to the transmission line, but it is all about the micro-siting. She asked if the Commissioners, Planning and affected landowners would like to meet to provide specific details for submitting comments to help with legal standing. Ms. Mabbott said she could provide a list of landowners and could invite to a meeting with the Commissioners to go over these issues and the opportunity for the Commissioners to come up with comments based on contributions from landowners. She reiterated landowners input must be included. Chair Elfering agreed it would be a good idea and also supported by Commissioners Givens and Murdock to have Ms. Mabbott move forward with setting up a meeting as she proposed. Commissioner Givens said a level of trust is there with the local county government. Commissioner Murdock agreed that sharing information is very useful and felt a landowner meeting is appropriate. **Commissioner Givens moved to instruct Planning Department staff to move forward with setting up a joint meeting with landowners as proposed. Seconded by Chair Elfering. Carried, 3-0.**

Chair Elfering asked if anyone else wished to address the Commissioners. Maxwell Woods, DOE in Salem came to the podium. He noted the project is regulated and there is a separate process regarding permitting. Further, the DOE will have public meetings in the regulatory process. EFSC is appointed by Governor and will make a decision on this project as it relates to the permitting/regulatory aspect. He is working out of Salem and will attend local meetings. He would like to be invited and will attend. The EFSC representative in the Umatilla County area is Bryan Wolfe. The Commissioners thanked him for his information. Chair Elfering expressed appreciation for all attending.

2. **Authorization to Purchase Vehicles.** Captain Dave Williamson reported. The Criminal Division is requesting authorization to purchase five patrol vehicles for the fleet. They are looking at four Ford Interceptors and one Dodge 1500 4X4 pick-up. The estimated total for all five vehicles is \$146,923. The dealerships are utilizing the state contract. At the end of the process of vehicle rotations, next year some will go into the county motor pool. Some older vehicles will go out to auction. Now, most cars are newer and very reliable. Commissioner Murdock asked about the patrol force. Capt. Williamson noted two of the new vehicles will be going to two new deputies. Commissioner Givens asked about a deputy using a really older SUV on Highway 11, it appeared to be 80s or 90s? Capt. Williamson didn't recall, but it might be for the Reserves and it can be used as back-up. **Commissioner Murdock moved to authorize purchase of five vehicles in the amount of \$146,923 for the fleet according to the fleet management plan in place. Seconded by Chair Elfering. Carried, 3-0.** Commissioner Givens asked about emblems on vehicles. Capt. Williamson noted they are using Creative Designs to create graphics and all will be the same in the near future. Undersheriff Littlefield noted that some of the older vehicles still have old graphics.
3. **Data Allowance for CIS Staff.** Dan Lonai presented. He noted cellphone allowance needs to be updated for Computer Information Services staff to allow for a data allowance. He talked about Help desk, data needs, remote access, and etc. He noted the DA's office does something similar to this process. He would like same for CIS. Staff currently utilizes their personal cell phones to provide support; they rely heavily on smart-phones and their data plans support the county's computer and network systems. Commissioner Givens asked about use of personal cell phones with their own plan – is data charge separate from the actual phone? Mr. Lonai reported the

DA's office negotiated allowance for cell phones. Discussion continued about types of plans, charges, and data increases. Mr. Lonai noted the great process with the Help Desk getting consistent notifications and ability to fix issues as they arise. The request is to approve a \$35 data allowance; an increase from \$15/month for voice but not data.

Commissioner Givens wondered if this figure is adequate. Mr. Olsen noted several departments are going through Verizon off of the state contract, and a phone costs \$50. This increase allowance would allow them to carry only 1 phone instead of 2. Commissioner Murdock asked Meghan DeBolt about Public Health's cell phones. She noted their department is looking at changes along a similar line. Discussion about Google docs being tied to newer cell phones and data enhances the ability in the field rather than having to come back to the office. Commissioner Givens suggested this increase could be implemented for department heads (Senior Managers). Chair Elfering noted Robert Pahl, new CFO, is looking at cell phones county-wide. He suggested Mr. Lonai work with Mr. Pahl on cell phones issue. Mr. Lonai talked about personal use vs. public use. Mr. Olsen noted the law now says that work done on a personal phone is considered public information. **Commissioner Givens moved to approve a \$35/month data allowance for CIS staff. Seconded by Commissioner Murdock. Carried, 3-0.** Commissioners Murdock and Givens want discussion continued on cell phones to get the best deal.

4. **Creation of Position – Public Health Department.** Meghan DeBolt, Public Health Director presented. The request is to add an additional OA II position for clerical support for the school based health center for Public Health to get through the end of the school year. At this time, budget supports 1 additional staff for school-based health. She noted this position is for 19 hours/week and does not include benefits. She will be meeting with the High School principal later today to work out details. She noted last recruiting brought in 6 qualified people. Chair Elfering asked Ms. DeBolt to talk to the budget part. She said funding is through a State grant – now operating below budget. School based health is in the process of being restructured so that positions are sustainable. **Commissioner Murdock moved to approve creation of a new position. Seconded by Commissioner Givens. Carried, 3-0.**
5. **Authorization for RFP for Weed Control Products.** Mr. Olsen reported. Authorization is sought for annual request for proposal for these products. **Commissioner Givens moved to approve as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Murdock. Carried.**
6. **Authorization for Construction of EOTEC Access Road.** Commissioner Givens asked Mr. Olsen if the Board needs to take action on this item today. Mr. Olsen noted it may be more cost effective for someone else to do the construction, so no action is needed. He gave background – The Public Works Department has been asked by the EOTEC Authority to construction the access road from Airport Road to the EOTEC site. **Commissioner Givens moved to table this item. Seconded by Chair Elfering. Carried, 3-0.**
7. **Authorize Hermiston Glass Contract.** Mr. Lonai presented. This is for the second floor of the courthouse to replace doors with the exception of fire and cell doors. All will be matching with the existing doors – courtrooms, employee entrances and criminal with proper legal specifications. The request for proposal was posted on the website and sent to potential providers. Chair Elfering noted he is concerned with only 1 bid received. Mr. Lonai noted this is because sometimes only 1 vendor is available for specialized requests/needs. This is for ADA

compliant doors. **Commissioner Givens moved to approve the contract with Hermiston Glass for door replacement in the amount of \$16,007. Seconded by Commissioner Murdock. Carried, 3-0.**

8. **Appointment to Solid Waste Advisory Committee.** Commissioner Murdock noted that Gina Miller, Code Enforcement, asked him if he knew of someone who could serve on the SWAC board to fill the position vacated by Scott Fairley. No one has applied for the position. Commissioner Murdock called Arne Swanson who is very interested in serving on the board. The SWAC met yesterday and recommended appointment. **Commissioner Murdock moved to adopt Order No. BCC2015-002. Seconded by Commissioner Givens. Carried, 3-0.**
9. **Appointment of 2015 Chair and Vice Chair.** This is the annual appointment of chair and vice-chair. **Commissioner Givens moved to adopt Order No. BCC2015-001 naming annual appointment of Chair and Vice-chair. Commissioner Murdock for chair and Commissioner Givens as Vice-Chair. Seconded by Chair Elfering. Carried, 3-0.**

Commissioner Murdock thanked Chair Elfering for his guidance and service over the last year as Chairman. Commissioner Givens advised that his swearing in ceremony was held at Umapine on January 3. Commissioner Murdock advised he would like to have the CFO regularly attend Board and Administrative meetings.

#### Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Givens: He attended a DOGAMI meeting on Monday of that week. They are dealing with many issues – aggregate sites and permitting. DOGAMI is regulatory and permitting for aggregate sites, mines, gas wells, and geothermal. They also map geologic hazards throughout the state. They are contract and fee driven. They receive less than .03% of the State General Fund. This has caused drops in revenues, and reduction of staff. He noted the importance of mapping.

DOGAMI's Deputy Director, recently retired, and was in charge of enforcing permits and other process regarding aggregate sites and mines. Recruiting occurred and right after he was hired, the deputy director (Vickie McConnell) now is resigning. The Governor has approved funding of 1 year, but more was received for the first year, with caveat that a steering committee be put together by DOGAMI to come up with a business plan as such. Commissioner Givens is the Board's chair. The Board discussed the fact there is not a director and they need to get an interim director immediately – by 2/28/15. Secondly, proposals are to be put together by staff for job description (working with Michael Jordan and with Richard Whitman, DOGAMI budget person). Commissioner Givens was charged yesterday to work with Mr. Jordan, Mr. Whitman and Jim Ruhe to have one agency called the Department of Natural Resources – with all those divisions being under the one department. He will attend meetings in January and February before 2/28 to make proposals. This will take a lot of his time in the next 2 months.

Commissioner Givens also advised he had attended a legislative committee meeting Tuesday. Regarding water issues, the Governor is committed to working with rural counties through AOC and other agencies/departments, in particular Water Resources and DLCD – changes will be forthcoming. He also talked about forestry issues. He noted a new staff person from Washington DC who is coming up to speed about Oregon issues. Another big issue coming is transportation and financing (in light of losing license fees and gas revenues). Commissioner Elfering noted it is looking like tax increases are coming.

Chair Murdock reported about the facility where the Developmentally Disabled Program is currently located costs about \$7,500 for utilities per month (it is the building across from the prison). He and Dan Lonai, Mark Royal, Carolyn Mason and Mary Olsen looked at the old Juvenile Detention building –to come up with diagrams and a proposal for space needs. They are looking at an umbrella idea to coordinate with departments for efficiency and cost-savings on rents of various places and to possibly that facility if it can be remodeled to fit the needs.

Commissioner Elfering reported about the Coumbila Development Authority meeting he attended the day before. Newspaper articles have talked about upper echelons now not wanting to turn over depot property for no cost which, for 20 years, was to be turned over free at the end of the process. He talked about Don Chance’s plans to retire as the CDA’s Executive Director in the next few months. Mr. Chance will work through this turn-back process.

There was no further business.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Melinda Slatt*

Executive Secretary  
Umatilla County Board of Commissioners