



Management Update Minutes

O R E G O N

Tuesday, October 4, 2022, 9:30 a.m.

Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Salem
5th Floor, Suite 5231, Commissioners Boardroom

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Danielle Bethell and Colm Willis, Jan Fritz, Chad Ball, Cheryl Carder, Jeff White, Leslie Martin, Salvador Llerenas, Dennis Mansfield, Austin Barnes, Aidan Bammes, Kelli Weese, Crystal Dupell, Chris Eppley, Sherry Lintner, Paige Clarkson, Brandon Reich, Kim Aldrich, Brian Nicholas, Jane Vetto, and Shawnnell Fuentes as recorder.

Jan Fritz called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

INFORMATIONAL:

Septic Wildfire Grants

-Brandon Reich

Summary of presentation:

- Update on septic grant programs offered by the county and the Council of Governments (COG) to property owners recovering from the wildfires:
 - Each entity has \$2 million for septic repair and replacement; and
 - The COG grant has more restrictions:
 - Only for owner occupied properties; and
 - Low to moderate income criteria.
- COG is proposing to provide different grant amounts depending on income level:
 - Below \$45,000 in income COG would provide \$20,000; and
 - At the highest income of \$75,000 they would provide \$2,000.
- The county has the ability to fund additional amounts regardless of income:
 - Staff would like feedback from the Board.
- The COG grant is not for Linn County property owners;
- Approximately 50 septic systems have been repaired in Linn County; and
- The county's grant could be used for properties in unincorporated Linn County:
 - Staff would like feedback from the Board.

Board discussion:

- Commissioner Willis supports the county funding additional septic costs above what COG is funding;
- The county will work with COG so property owners only have to fill out one application:

- The one application will be turned into two applications, one for the county program and one for the COG program.
- Commissioners Willis and Bethell support providing grant funds to properties in unincorporated Linn County;
- Linn County could still apply for their own grant money;
- Commissioner Willis supports secondary homeowners receiving these funds;
- Most property owners have spent under \$25,000 on their septic systems:
 - Commissioners Willis and Bethell support there not being a limit to the grant amount awarded.
- Property owners are reimbursed for expenses incurred since March 2021;
- The county only funds expenses that are not reimbursed through insurance;
- The county's grant program will be online towards the end of this year or the beginning of next year; and
- The funds have to be spent by June 2024.

Sublimity Urban Growth Boundary Request

-Austin Barnes, Brandon Reich

Summary of presentation:

- The county has a request for an urban growth boundary expansion from the City of Sublimity:
 - Comprises 7.2 acres along the western edge of the city; and
 - Required for a new road that will connect subdivisions and future development.

Board discussion:

- A public hearing will be held.

Marion County Urban and Rural Code Amendments

-Brandon Reich

Summary of presentation:

- Staff has been working on code amendments that incorporate recent changes in legislation;
- Have held two work sessions with the Planning Commission, and have had one public meeting; and
- Looking for Board feedback on whether they would like to have a work session on the amendments, or if they would like to go straight to having a hearing.

Board discussion:

- The Board would like to have a work session:
 - Members of the Planning Commission would like to attend.

Cemetery Hill Road Dust Control

-Brian Nicholas

Summary of presentation:

- The county received a request from a representative of the All Nations Native American Veterans Memorial located near the City of Jefferson:

- The request is for the county to provide dust control for a segment of Cemetery Hill Road:
 - Cemetery Hill Road is a county road from Marion Road up to the entrance driveway to the cemetery:
 - This is the southernmost gravel road that the county maintains; and
 - The road is graded and treated with Earthbind approximately once per year.
 - The request is for the county to treat with Earthbind the segment of Cemetery Hill Road that is not a county road.
- Following are options for the Board to consider:
 - Deny the request since this segment is not a county road:
 - Local property owners maintain it.
 - Invite the All Nations Native American Veterans Memorial to participate in the county's dust abatement program:
 - Under the program there is cost sharing with the property owners:
 - The county does the grading and preparation of the road, and the property owners pay the cost of the Earthbind application:
 - The cost to the property owners for this segment of road would be approximately \$1,500 to \$1,600.
 - The Board could issue an order authorizing the county to spend county road funds on the maintenance of this segment of road:
 - The Board would have to specify if it was one time maintenance or ongoing maintenance.

Board discussion:

- County staff would be able to grade all of Cemetery Hill Road within one day;
- The additional cost to the county is the cost of the Earthbind application;
- The county has a contractor who supplies and applies the Earthbind; and
- The Commissioners support the request for the county to provide dust control for this segment of Cemetery Hill Road:
 - The Commissioners would like it to be ongoing maintenance; and
 - Staff will make the order for ten years.

Fair Marketing/Sponsorship and Event Coordination Agreements

-Kelli Weese, Chris Eppley

Summary of presentation:

- Both agreements are with Ingalls & Associates;
- Both agreements expired at the end of September 2022;
- The Fair Board considered the following options:
 - Extend both contracts for up to two years; or
 - Do a procurement.
- The Fair Board voted to recommend extending the current contracts for two years.

Board discussion:

- Commissioner Willis would like to see improvement in the County Fair:
 - The quality of the events and the carnival were less than in past years.
- The Commissioners support a one year renewal of the contracts; and
- The Commissioners would like to review the contract expectations, meet with the Ingalls, and meet with the Fair Board chair.

Paid Leave Oregon

-Jeff White, Cheryl Carder

Summary of presentation:

- Oregon is joining ten other states in adopting a paid leave program where employees can submit claims for wage replacement while they are out on an approved leave status;
- The program begins January 2023, and is funded through a new payroll tax:
 - The payroll tax is 1 percent of gross payroll, with employees paying 60 percent and employers paying 40 percent; and
 - The tax starts after the first \$1,000 of wages up to a wage maximum of \$132,900, at which point the tax drops off.
- The county can go with the state's plan or an equivalent plan:
 - If the county goes with an equivalent plan, they have to guarantee that it will provide the same benefits or better;
 - Following are the two equivalent plan options:
 - Third party administered plan:
 - Have received quotes, and they are substantially higher than going with the state plan.
 - Employer sponsored plan:
 - Staff does not recommend this.
 - The county must notify the state by November 30, 2022, if they choose to go with an equivalent plan.
- The leave is in addition to leave provided by the Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA) or the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Board discussion:

- The county currently provides employees with 12 days of sick leave per year;
- Employees can take additional leave for up to 12 weeks through OFLA and FMLA:
 - This is unpaid leave.
- There could be a problem with employees utilizing Paid Leave Oregon just because they have had the money withheld from their paychecks:
 - The way the program is structured could incentivize employees to take leave they may not have taken otherwise.
- The state is currently not charging any administrative fees to manage the program;
- The Commissioners are not comfortable with the state managing the plan:
 - They would like staff to obtain additional quotes from third party administrators.
- The Oregon Employment Department will manage the state plan;
- The county is responsible for providing this leave to its employees;

- The Commissioners would like information on how the leave pay is calculated;
- The new payroll tax starts on January 1, 2023, and employees can apply for the leave starting September 3, 2023;
- Employees may not opt out of paying the tax;
- The Commissioners would like staff to do a request for proposals for third party administrators;
- Mr. White does not support allowing employees to augment the program with their sick leave:
 - Sick leave is not a liability to the county.
- Staff is planning on communicating with employees regarding the program during the upcoming open enrollment.

Communications Update

-Jon Heynen

Summary of presentation:

- Would like the Commissioners feedback on the following video projects:
 - 988 suicide hotline;
 - ERA2; and
 - Check presentation to the Lyons Fire District.
- The Commissioners support doing the videos on the 988 suicide hotline and the check presentation in Lyons, they need to think about the video promoting ERA2; and
- Project LTD gave a briefing on the homelessness project they are working on for the county:
 - Project LTD is a local marketing firm;
 - The project purpose is to develop an education based communication strategy that highlights the efforts that are being done in Marion County to combat homelessness, and to specifically promote the county's efforts, progress, and successes in generating solutions to homelessness;
 - Project LTD interviewed contacts working for programs identified by the county to get a high level overview of those programs;
 - There were common reasons provided by the programs regarding what is contributing to the homeless problem:
 - Lack of affordable housing;
 - Barriers to entry level housing including credit issues and criminal backgrounds;
 - A lack of personal resources;
 - Mental health issues;
 - Insufficient income and unemployment:
 - Senior fixed income households are not able to keep up with market rates.
 - A lack of low barrier shelters;
 - Drug and alcohol addiction; and
 - Homeless by choice:
 - This is a controversial idea; and

- This choice is often driven by addiction and behavioral health issues.
- Following are solutions that were provided by the programs that were interviewed:
 - The county needs more affordable housing;
 - Address shelter issues and the lack of low barrier shelters;
 - Create permanent supportive housing where a case manager is on site;
 - Address health and safety issues;
 - Increase productive prevention services;
 - Address specific populations; and
 - Increase community engagement.
- The programs provided success stories that will be highlighted in the communication strategy;
- Following are the high level goals of the communication plan:
 - Educate the community regarding available programs and how the county supports these programs;
 - Create awareness;
 - Engage stakeholders; and
 - Gain community support.
- The target audience is the homeless sector and the general public;
- Following are some of the tools that will be used in the communication plan:
 - Social media;
 - Blog posts;
 - Potentially an all inclusive website that would list all of the resources available;
 - Press releases in local newspapers and news stations;
 - Infographics on partners' websites;
 - Email blasts to internal and external groups; and
 - Potentially physical mailings if budget allows.
- Following are key messages that have been identified:
 - Success stories of individual programs;
 - Program introductions;
 - Explain why homeless are homeless;
 - Explain what ending homelessness means from a variety of perspectives; and
 - Debunking being homeless is a choice.
- Next steps include the following:
 - Confirm the purpose of the campaign;
 - Establish goals;
 - Identify the audience;
 - Develop key messages for each audience;
 - Design elements for the various mediums;
 - Define advertising budgets;
 - Select communication plans;
 - Launch a campaign; and
 - Track results.

Board discussion:

- Data provided to Project LTD by ARCHES does not correspond to the Point-In-Time (PIT) Count or the Homeless Alliance's data:
 - ARCHES data is not accurate data for this project.
- The January 2022 PIT Count reported 1,805 homeless individuals living in Marion and Polk counties;
- Ms. Fritz would like to hold a work session with Project LTD and all of the Commissioners;
- Commissioner Willis is hesitant to accept some of the perspectives given by some of the social service agencies;
- Commissioner Willis' hope for the project is that the county has less homeless individuals over time, and the community is a safe place:
 - The messaging needs to support this.
- Need to start with good data to make good decisions;
- Unfortunately, there are a lot of individuals making a lot of money due to the homeless crisis, but they are not solving the problem; and
- The county needs to make sure that they are communicating accurate information.

OTHER:

Paige Clarkson:

- There is a county policy that prohibits employees testifying at the legislature without Board approval;
- There are several employees in the District Attorney's Office who participate in a legislative committee, and who testify regularly as subject matter experts; and
- The Board needs to be informed in advance of what legislation employees are working on.

Meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

COMPLETED BY: **Betsy Orr**
Reviewed by: Shawnnell Fuentes