

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Livestream: <http://facebook.com/BentonCoGov>
Tuesday, October 3, 2023
9:00 a.m.

Present: **Pat Malone**, Chair; **Xanthippe Augerot**, Commissioner; **Nancy Wyse**, Commissioner; **Vance Croney**, County Counsel; **Rick Crager**, Interim County Administrator

Staff: **Scott Anderson**, **Derek Abrams**, **Russell Barlow**, **Jasmin Brambila**, **Cassandra Carder**, **Ryan Kidder**, **Phillip King**, **John Larsen**, **Eric Padilla**, **Joe Stillings**, **Mario Veloz**, Information Technology; **Rocío Zavala Buendía**, **Cynthia De La Torre**, **Karol Elizondo**, **Miriam Estrada**, **Paula Felipe**, **Samantha Garcia**, **Mac Gillespie**, **Sara Hartstein**, **Darling Hernandez**, **April Holland**, **Kendra Meshnik**, **Rocío Muñoz**, **Melissa Murphy**, **Javier Navarro**, **Kailee Olson**, **John Pegg**, **Liesel Rolston**, **Jasper Smith**, Health; **Gabby Dibble**, **Lindsey Goodman**, **Karen Vaughn**, Finance; **Cory Grogan**, Public Information Officer; **John Haroldson**, District Attorney; **Amanda Makepeace**, BOC Staff; **Erika Milo**, BOC Recorder; **James Morales**, **Michael Rodriquez**, Records; **Darren Nichols**, **Inga Williams**, Community Development; **Pedro Polanco-Perdomo**, Facilities; **Emilia Sanguina**, **Jef Van Arsdall**, Sheriff

Guests: **Shawn Collins**, Unity Shelter; **John Harris**, Horsepower Productions; **Gustavo Esparza**, **Yanci Hernandez**, **Susan Ibarra**, **Jose Mendoza**, **Jessica Rodriguez-Salgado**, Casa Latinos Unidos; **Peggy Lynch**, League of Women Voters of Oregon; **Alma Torres**, Court Appointed Special Advocates; **Mark Yeager**, resident

1. Opening:
1. Call to Order

Chair Malone called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. Introductions
3. Announcements

No announcements were made.

2. Review and Approve Agenda

The following item was removed from the agenda:

7.2 Request to Apply for an Oregon Arts Commission Grant – Tomi Douglas, Natural Areas, Parks, and Events

3. *Comments from the Public

Cheryl Van Leuven, Alsea resident, member of the Alsea Citizen Advisory & Budget Committee, commented on improper or possibly unlawful lot line adjustments, permits, and lack of oversight on development of the property at 182 West Main Street in the Community of Alsea. Van Leuven has previously emailed the Board and Community Development about this issue, and expressed concern about a lack of transparency from Community Development. Van Leuven asked that this item be added to the next Board Meeting agenda.

Wyse noted that at least two Commissioners have followed up with staff on this matter. Wyse will follow up with Van Leuven.

{Exhibit 1: Van Leuven Public Comment}

Shawn Collins, Unity Shelter, reported that Unity received almost \$1.5 million in funding from InterCommunity Health Network and State House Bill 5019 to support emergency shelter in 2024, along with strong donor support. The current plan is to open the men's shelter in November 2023 through the winter; Room at the Inn will return to being a women's shelter, expanded to 50 beds. In spring 2024, the men's shelter will close for required renovations. Unity is the only low-barrier shelter and transitional housing provider in the City of Corvallis and Benton County. There are still large gaps in service capacity; Room at the Inn has a waitlist, the Hygiene Center sees 50-60 unsheltered people per day, and Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center sees about 75 people per day. Third Street Commons (a non-congregate shelter) will close next summer, removing 24 beds. The emergency hotel sheltering program closed due to lack of funding. Collins urged the Board to invest more in social services for people who are unhoused.

4. Proclamation

4.1 Proclaiming October as Hispanic Heritage Month, Proclamation P2023-017 – *John Haroldson, District Attorney; Jessica Rodriguez-Salgado, Casa Latinos Unidos; Cynthia De La Torre, Health*

Haroldson introduced himself as a proud citizen of Mexico and the United States, from a first-generation family. Haroldson read the proclamation aloud in English.

Rodriguez-Salgado read the proclamation aloud in Spanish.

MOTION: Augerot moved to proclaim September 15 through October 15 as Hispanic Heritage Month in Benton County, Proclamation P2023-017. Augerot noted that Malone is Board Chair (not Wyse as was read aloud). Wyse seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0.**

Wyse thanked Siddiqui, Grogan, and others who helped with the event.

5. Consent Calendar

5.1 Approval of Appointment to the Food Service Advisory Committee: Jennifer McPike, Order #D2023-072

5.2 Approval of Appointment to the State Transportation Improvement Fund Advisory Committee: Sarah Bronstein, Order #D2023-073

5.3 Approval of the September 5, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Augerot moved to approve the Consent Calendar of October 3, 2023. Wyse noted a highlighted and possibly incomplete section in item 5.3. Milo recommended that the item be pulled for correction. Augerot moved to approve the Consent Calendar of October 3, 2023 with the removal of item 5.3. Wyse seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0.**

6. Old Business

6.1 Second Reading of Ordinance Number 2023-0320 Amending the Adair Village Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) – *Darren Nichols, Community Development*

Nichols explained that the Board approved this item in September 2023. This is the required second reading to correct a mapping error by adding 0.12 acre of land to the Adair Village UGB off Ryals Avenue and Highway 99 West.

MOTION: Wyse moved to enact Ordinance #2023-0320 amending the Adair Village Urban Growth Boundary by conducting a second reading of the Ordinance. Augerot seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0.**

Counsel read the Ordinance aloud (short title). Effective date November 2, 2023.

7. Departmental Reports & Requests

7.1 Request to Apply for Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Technical Assistance Planning Grant – *Darren Nichols, Community Development*

Nichols asked the Board to authorize a grant application to DLCD for financial and technical assistance with long-range planning, and for the Board to authorize a letter to the Land Conservation & Development Commission supporting the application. Several years ago, the Board began a list of long-range planning priorities. At that time, the Planning Commission (PC) was exploring its advisory role to the Board on policy updates and long-range planning. A joint meeting resulted in a list of the top 10 issues. In July 2022, staff and the Board discussed ways to do the work, such as a Voluntary Periodic Review work plan. On September 26, 2023, a joint meeting took place with staff, the Board, the PC, and colleagues from DLCD and Wasco County to discuss specifics of what a work plan involves. The group reached general consensus to explore a work plan and ask for technical assistance.

Wyse noted that while she supported the grant application, she would vote against the item on principle because the item was submitted late to the packet, which is unfair to staff who had to work unexpectedly on their day off, and also made it difficult for Wyse and the public to sufficiently review the packet before the meeting. Wyse told all County Departments that in future, if a late packet addition causes Benton County staff to work unexpectedly on their day off, Wyse will vote no on the item.

Augerot noted this is not just a Community Development issue. It is a challenge for staff and makes it hard for the community to be aware of issues under discussion if the County does not have timely packets.

MOTION: Augerot moved to approve the submission of a Technical Assistance Grant application in an amount to be determined to the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), and direct the Community Development Director, in partnership with the DLCD, to take the necessary steps in creating a preliminary plan, scope of work, and budget for a Voluntary Periodic Review work plan, and in addition to that, to authorize staff to help the Board put together a letter of support to DLCD for this proposal. Wyse seconded the motion, which **carried 2-1 (Wyse opposed).**

Malone asked if it was accurate that these reviews used to be mandatory, which did not go well, whereas reviews are now voluntary and more a partnership.

Nichols confirmed. Periodic review was established in the 1970s, expecting that Comprehensive Plans would be updated every 10 years. Workloads were large and funding was small, so review became unwieldy in the 1980s-1990s. The State retooled to a voluntary approach. Volunteering puts Benton first in line for grant priorities and State agency assistance.

Augerot noted that the review affects all unincorporated areas and will allow the County to reconsider zoning that constrains development, which has particularly been an obstacle for the Community of Alsea. The Communities of Blodgett, Summit, Alpine, and Bellfountain will also be affected. Many long-range priorities need to be addressed at a comprehensive level with many partners, rather than permit-by-permit.

Nichols agreed that many plans for unincorporated communities need to be refreshed.

Malone thanked Nichols and staff for volunteering to do more work.

Wyse expressed appreciation for the work Nichols and staff have been doing.

Crager apologized to staff who had to work on Saturday to update the agenda and packet; it was Crager's decision to include the item.

Nichols apologized and expressed appreciation for the work of staff and the Board's Office.

7.2 Request to Apply for an Oregon Arts Commission Grant – Tomi Douglas, Natural Areas, Parks, and Events (NAPE)

Malone explained that NAPE had withdrawn the request to apply for a \$5,000 grant, and instead will apply for a \$10,000 grant in spring 2024. Malone noted that sometimes grant deadlines are short and asked if there was or could be a policy allowing a department to meet an external deadline without advance Board approval, perhaps if the item is under a certain dollar amount.

Crager replied that is not an option in current financial policy, but Crager may institute a retroactive approval for certain items. Crager reminded department heads that they can put an item on the next agenda before the application is completely finished.

Augerot shared that the Board has given authority to the District Attorney to apply for certain grants without coming to the Board for permission. The Community Development grant is a case in point; the proposal was due yesterday, so today's decision was a retroactive approval. Augerot felt that an item must come before the Board if it is a major initiative that will affect staffing. However, requesting \$5,000 to host an event may not rise to Board level; perhaps the policy should be reviewed and clarified.

Crager to follow up.

8. Other

Augerot noted that new County Administrator Rachel McEneny began work at Benton County yesterday, and thanked Crager for serving as Interim County Administrator in September 2023.

Malone and Wyse thanked Crager.

10. Adjournment

Chair Malone adjourned the meeting at 9:46 a.m.



Pat Malone, Chair



Erika Milo, Recorder

** NOTE: Items denoted with an asterisk do NOT have accompanying written materials in the meeting packet.*