



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Tuesday, June 18, 2024  
9:00 a.m.**

**Present:** Xanthippe Augerot, Chair; Nancy Wyse, Commissioner; Vance Croney, County Counsel; Rachel McEneny, County Administrator; Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator

**Excused:** Pat Malone, Commissioner

**Elected Official:** Jef Van Arsdall, Sheriff

**Staff:** Jenn Ambuehl, Marilee Hoppner, Debbie Sessions, Financial Services; Dawn Dale, Sheriff's Office; Cory Grogan, Public Information Officer; April Holland, Health; Maura Kwiatkowski, Amanda Makepeace, BOC Staff; Erika Milo, BOC Recorder; Lacey Mollel, Community Health Centers; James Morales, Darla Rush, Records & Elections; Jesse Ott, Natural Areas, Parks, & Events; Matt Wetherell, Juvenile Services

**Guests:** John Harris, Horsepower Productions; Christopher Jacobs, Corvallis-Benton Economic Development Office; Kirsten Miller, Ten Rivers Food Web; John Phillips IV, Linn-Benton NAACP; Aliza Tuttle, A Tuttle Consults

**1. Opening:**

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Introductions**

**2. Review & Approve Agenda**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**3. Proclamations**

3.1 Proclaiming June 19, 2024 as Juneteenth in Benton County, Proclamation #P2024-013 – John Phillips IV, Linn-Benton NAACP

Augerot introduced Phillips, Linn-Benton NAACP Vice President since January 2023.

Phillips read the Proclamation aloud. Juneteenth commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African-Americans in the United States. Juneteenth provides opportunity for

reflection, education, and community engagement that fosters understanding and appreciation of African-American history, culture, heritage, and contributions. The Linn-Benton NAACP Juneteenth Celebration will be held in the City of Albany.

**MOTION:** Wyse moved to proclaim June 19, 2024 as Juneteenth in Benton County, Proclamation #P2024-013. Augerot seconded the motion, which carried 2-0.

#### **4. Comments from the Public**

No comments were offered.

#### **5. Work Session**

##### **5.1 Public Health Update – April Holland, Health Services**

Holland updated the Board on recent respiratory virus transmission. COVID-19 hospitalizations overall remain low at this time. So far, 2024 had the lowest rate of spring hospitalizations since the pandemic began. However, between early June and June 11, 2024, statewide hospitalizations rose from 103 to 138. Test positivity is around 5%, up from 4% in April 2024; 10% would suggest widespread community transmission. About 25% of wastewater surveillance sites in Oregon are experiencing sustained increases, most of which are in northwest Oregon; other sites remain at a plateau. In fall 2024, a vaccine will likely be released that is tailored more closely to circulating variants such as JN.1 and its offshoots.

Pertussis continues to circulate at above normal levels, but the most recent news item is measles, which had not been seen in Oregon for some time. Oregon now has three cases: two in Clackamas County, and one in Marion County, with investigations ongoing to determine exposure sites. Measles is one of the most infectious diseases. Before the vaccine, 48,000 people were hospitalized annually in the United States with measles, and 100 people died. Most people have been vaccinated for measles, but the virus could rapidly spread in a pocket of low vaccination. Though Benton is not on an exposure list, teams are on alert. Anyone born in 1957 or later who is not vaccinated for measles can receive a measles vaccine, which will protect from severe outcomes.

##### **5.2 South Corvallis Food Hub Needs Assessment Report – Christopher Jacobs, Corvallis-Benton Economic Development Office (CBEDO); Aliza Tuttle, A Tuttle Consults**

Tuttle provided a timeline and review of the Food Hub project. Benton County received an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant from the State to identify gaps in local food and beverage supply systems and create a food hub by December 31, 2024. Tuttle delivered an assessment to the City of Corvallis in May 2024 (available on [www.southcorvallisfoodhub.org](http://www.southcorvallisfoodhub.org)). CBEDO published a grant application for food hub operators. A food hub manages aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified food products. Tuttle described survey questions and community member responses. Tuttle also cataloged equipment and facilities. The community supports a variety of food hub forms. Potential partners include the business community and social

service agencies. Based on these needs, Tuttle developed and assessed three options: a commercial kitchen, a food cart pod, or a warehouse.

**5.3 Presentation of Benton County Elections Integrity Informational Video**  
– Cory Grogan, Public Information Officer; James Morales, Records and Elections

Grogan explained that Communications and Records & Elections staff collaborated on an educational video designed to provide greater transparency and increase voter participation. Grogan presented the video.

Morales added that the video can be used as a supplement to observer training and as an educational resource. Links to the video will appear in emails, the County website, social media, and the voter’s pamphlet. Morales will share the video with party leadership, candidates, and state officials.

Grogan to release an outreach campaign before the November 2024 elections.

**6. Consent Calendar**

**6.1 Renewal of Annual Liquor Licenses for Fiscal Year 2024-25**

**6.2 Approval of the March 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

**6.3 In the Matter of Re/Appointments to the Following Advisory Boards and Committees:**

<b>Board or Committee:</b>	<b>Order Number:</b>	<b>Re/Appointees:</b>
<b>Corvallis-Benton County Library Board</b>	<b>D2024-036</b>	<b>Chris McMorran Ari Annachi</b>
<b>Courthouse Preservation Committee</b>	<b>D2024-037</b>	<b>Adrienne Fritze Carol Chin Cornelia Levy-Bencheson David Dodson Roz Keeney</b>
<b>Disposal Site Advisory Committee</b>	<b>D2024-038</b>	<b>Jennifer Field Chuck Gilbert David Hackleman Jeff Morrell Ian McNab Brent Pawlowski Rachel Purcell Matthew Ruettgers Lansing Stout</b>

<b>Economic Development Coalition</b>	<b>D2024-047</b>	<b>Scottie Jones</b>
<b>Enterprise Zone Advisory Committee</b>	<b>D2024-039</b>	<b>Rachel McEneny</b>
<b>Fair Board</b>	<b>D2024-040</b>	<b>Rylee Henderer</b>
<b>Food Service Advisory Committee</b>	<b>D2024-041</b>	<b>Brendon Gilbert John McEvoy</b>
<b>Historic Resources Commission</b>	<b>D2024-042</b>	<b>Brad Anderson Mariapaola Riggo</b>
<b>Mental Health, Addictions and Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee</b>	<b>D2024-043</b>	<b>Alan Acock Elizabeth Hazlewood</b>
<b>Natural Areas and Parks Board</b>	<b>D2024-044</b>	<b>Bryce Downey Phillip Hays Carol Walsh</b>
<b>Property Value Appeals Board</b>	<b>D2024-045</b>	<b>David Coulombe Andrew Freborg</b>
<b>Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund Advisory Committee</b>	<b>D2024-046</b>	<b>Greg Gescher Heidi Henry Nick Meltzer Robert Keith</b>

**6.4 Authorizing an Application for Oregon State Parks Local Government Grant for McBee Campground Improvements, Resolution No. R2024-018 – Jesse Ott, Natural Areas, Parks, and Events**

Wyse noted that one of the liquor licenses, Deb’s Café, was stamped ‘server education expired’, and some licenses do not list designee or insurance.

Dale explained that the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC) verifies all the information. The County simply checks zoning and performs current background checks.

Augerot noted that more applicants for Property Value Appeals Board are needed.

Wyse shared that the Board received over 20 applications for the Disposal Site Advisory Committee and is making its official appointments.

**MOTION:** Wyse moved to approve the Consent Calendar of June 18, 2024. Augerot seconded the motion, which carried 2-0.

## 7. New Business

### 7.1 Discussion Regarding Annual Contract with Linn County for Youth Detention Beds – Matt Wetherell, Juvenile Services

Wetherell reported that Benton currently has no youth in detention. Wetherell works closely with Linn County Juvenile Services Director Torri Lynn to lower costs. Benton contracts for four of 20 beds in Linn County and maintains 10% of the director's and office manager's salaries. The total budget for this fiscal year (FY) is \$2,421,262. Of that, \$21,470 is for salaries, for a total operating cost of \$2,400,436. However, an administrative fee was removed, there was a detention budget savings of \$148,000 due to staffing changes, the County received a 20% credit for staffing changes, and \$58,000 in detention bed revenue was received from outside contracts, with a meal credit of \$2,266, resulting in an adjusted total cost of \$2,233,281. Benton's total contracted amount for the FY is \$446,776, or \$306 per day, an increase of \$1,121 over the previous contract. These costs are lower than most other detention centers in the state.

Augerot asked if Linn County takes the lead during State audits of policies and procedures.

Wetherell confirmed; an audit is underway. The two Counties wrote detention guidelines in 2018-19, which Youth Development Oregon is still reviewing.

**MOTION:** Wyse moved to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between Linn and Benton County to house youth at the Linn/Benton Detention Center. Augerot seconded the motion, which carried 2-0.

### 7.2 Modified Proposal for Health Services Structure – Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator; April Holland, Health Services; Lacey Mollel, Community Health Centers

Crager referred to pages 236-238 in the packet. Last night, the Community Health Center (CHC) Board appointed Mollel as CHC Executive Director; this still needs County final processing, so the effective date is July 1, 2024. In May 2023, the Board decided to combine Health and the CHCs into one department, Health & Human Services, under one director, moving all other staff into a division. The goal was improved, streamlined, and integrated services. The County still supports those goals, but much has changed. Crager became Assistant County Administrator in March 2024, with a priority of supporting health services. After several months of analysis, staff propose continuing the two-department structure, under Crager's direct supervision. Staff also suggest the Board assign a task of completing the Strategic Health Services Plan by October 31, 2024. A key piece is an assessment of the Health Business Office; some billing changes have already been made. Crager is pondering how to better integrate Behavioral Health (BH) into the department structure. The Crisis Center will launch soon, requiring many new staff. Crager will review the management span of control (number of employees per manager), which is questionable in some areas, especially in BH. Crager will also examine County classifications in relation to Health Services, including compression issues and challenges with retention and hiring.

Augerot shared that the combined department decision was partly due to a longtime lack of clarity of roles between Public Health and the CHCs. A common strategic vision and clarity of roles and lines of authority will make a huge difference.

Responding to a question from Augerot, Holland confirmed that all the mandated advisory and Board of Health functions of the Board of Commissioners are considered in the process.

Augerot suggested rephrasing the motion to be more specific.

**MOTION:** Wyse moved to approve a modification to the May 2023 proposed Health Services structure based on the recommendation contained in the staff memorandum dated June 7, 2024. Augerot seconded the motion, which carried 2-0.

**8. Announcements**

No announcements were made.

**9. Other**


No other business was discussed.

**10. Adjournment**

Chair Augerot adjourned the meeting at 10:16 a.m.



Xanthippe Augerot, Chair



Erika Milo, Recorder

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