

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

1. At 9:00 a.m., Commissioner Ainsworth declared the Tuesday meeting of the Polk County Board of Commissioners in session. Commissioner Pope was present and Commissioner Wheeler was excused.

2. **MINUTES** **COMMISSIONER POPE MOVED, COMMISSIONER AINSWORTH
SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2018.**

MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE QUORUM.

3. **SPECIAL EVENT PERMITTING** – Todd Whitaker, Director of Public Works, stated that he is back today to answer some of the questions the Board had last time they spoke about special event permitting. There were two issues he had discussed with the Board; the first was applications for these events are chronically late, causing problems because event organizers don't have time to change the route if there is a safety concern. The second problem is that the event organizers do not typically have the knowledge it takes to prepare a safe traffic control plan. One of the biggest ongoing problems is that event organizers will develop a website, post a bike route, and collect fees before even applying for the permit.

Mr. Whitaker provided a comparison sheet of Benton, Marion, Yamhill, & Linn County's policies with Polk County. Polk County appears to fall in the middle of the fee structure of the surrounding counties, but we ask for more advance notice than any of the compared counties (60 days compared to the average of 21 to 45 days). Mr. Whitaker feels that 60 days is appropriate because of the amount of time needed for staff review and incorporating any changes necessary. All except Linn County require a waiver for participants and a certificate of insurance. All but Linn County also require a traffic control plan (Benton County is dependent on number of participants). Polk and Benton are the only counties who loan out signage to event planners to use free of charge. The one thing needed by all counties is a route map, and in addition to that Marion County requires a list of where their rest stops will be. Mr. Whitaker said that is something he would like to add to Polk County requirements because they have had complaints of people using landowner's property as a restroom. Benton County also has a sign off sheet in the event that the route crosses into another county. Which is just to acknowledge that they did not authorize the event to go across the county line and the event planner still needs to get the appropriate permit from any county it will be entering.

Commissioner Pope would like staff to look more deeply in the coming year at how they could enforce traffic control laws better. He has had multiple witnesses see people with a flag and a vest step out into the middle of a busy highway to stop traffic so participants in a bike event can cross. Mr. Whitaker reminded the Board that if a race event crosses a state highway we have no jurisdiction. The permit we provide is only for the county and event organizers are directed to the state to fulfill whatever requirements the state has for crossing the highway. He also believes the state does not require a permit unless it is a competitive event, but regardless at least two certified flaggers are required to stop traffic on a highway. Those events not following policy is an enforcement issue, and an additional option would be to have the sheriff review the traffic control plan and monitor those events more closely. At one time, the County prepared a traffic control plan for events, however the cost for the fee was high and the County received complaints about the permit being required so the

County changed to the current process, which still includes a requirement to have a traffic control plan, but it is not approved or denied which is what staff is concerned about. He suggested that we possibly change the policy so if the submitted traffic control plan is not sufficient the department would create one but the planner would then have to pay additional charges for the staff time spent developing that plan. He also pointed out that a lot of these events are fundraisers that people pay quite a bit of money to participate in, which can give them a false sense of security thinking the road is just for their use, and can lead to increased risk for accidents.

5. **NON-LISTED ITEMS** – (Pursuant to ORS 192.640, the Board of Commissioners considered the below identified non-listed items.)

Commissioner Ainsworth adjourned the meeting at 9:20 AM.

Minutes: Ciera Atha
Approved: September 25, 2018