

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
February 5, 2019

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

2. **MINUTES** **COMMISSIONER AINSWORTH MOVED, COMMISSIONER MORDHORST
SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 29, 2019.**

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **BROADBAND UPDATE** – Dean Anderson, Director of Information Services, stated that our rural residents do not have access to broadband service. This inhibits not only their entertainment options but access to education, tourism, business and health services. Internet providers continue to say that they offer adequate speeds in our area but there is still a large number of residents who do not have broadband options. Mr. Anderson stated he would approval from the Board to attempt to obtain an Economic Development Grant to survey rural Polk County citizens and businesses to identify what services are being provided and if they are adequate.

He sent out a survey to the Polk County employees and 162 responded with 31 being in rural areas. Currently 90% do not have Broadband, 100% of them want better speed, and a large percentage of these people also wanted this faster speed for use in education, personal business, entertainment, and personal use. Commissioner Pope stated that he supports this and in the past they have looked into having a surveyor come tell them what exactly is in the ground right now that the county could possibly be using and they wanted approximately \$50,000 to find that information out. He also stated that with this survey Mr. Anderson is proposing they will have more data to provide in the future when we are looking at possible grants for broadband infrastructure. The Board unanimously agrees that Mr. Anderson should move forward with his application for an Economic Development Grant.

4. **DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY UPDATE** – Jeff Classen, the Department of Forestry's Dallas unit Forester, Mike Totey, West Oregon's District Forester, and Eric Jacobs, Community Wildfire Forester, updated the Board on the West Oregon Fire District. Mr. Totey informed the Board that there was a new Deputy State Forester named Lena Tucker. He stated there were was an uptake in the timber market in 2018 and then prices dropped significantly last fall. In the past, there was a Deputy in the Sheriff's Office that was assigned to forestry land and they are considering reinstating that position. They manage 8,000 acres and two thirds of the revenue goes to the county. They currently have several sales pending for Polk County. Mr. Classen stated that their notifications have gone electronic and they have 65 subscribers. He also stated that their biggest workload is forest protection and that the West Oregon District had a fairly average fire season in 2018. The state relies on the assistance they receive from out of state to help manage the fires all across the state. Terry Lamers is the Chair of the Forest Classification Committee and his term recently expired. It was recommended that the Board of Commissioner re-appoint Mr. Lamers to the Forest Classification Committee to serve another term and the Board unanimously agrees to re-appoint Terry Lamers for another four year term. They also informed the Board that next year Committee member Frank Pender's term expires and he does not want to be re-appointed so there will be a vacancy to fill. They will provide the Board with some names that they believe would be a good fit for the Committee.

5. **POLK COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #1 UPDATE** – Polk Fire Districts Chief, Ben Stange, informed the Board that they staff 17 employees and up to 50-60 volunteers. In 2018 they took 2,618 calls and the majority of those calls were for EMS. There is a standard of care for the service that is provided and how that service is provided. The goal is to have somebody on scene within 8 minutes in an urban area, 15 minutes in a suburban area, and 45 minutes for rural areas. Chief Stange feels Polk County is doing very well in this regard meeting all of those standards nearly every call. He stated that he does have some goals set for the future and those are: 1) provide more skill training, 2) expand

community relationships, 3)enhance the overall moral of the organization, 4) continue building realistic response models, 5) put together an EMS Committee, 6) ensure equipment is being cared for appropriately and replaced in a timely manner.

Mr. Stange discussed how difficult it is to get volunteers in rural areas and that they gave volunteers an option to be “non-entry” and it did not seem to impact the numbers. He also discussed the impacts of Medicare/Medicaid rates and the fact that they do not pay the full rate. Considering this Commissioner Pope asks Chief Stange what the total revenue loss is from the underpayment from Medicare/Medicaid. He said he will get back to him with those numbers.

6. **NEW JOB SPEC, SALARY RANGE UPDATE & RECLASS** – Matt Hawkins, Business Services Administrator, recommended that the Board of Commissioner adopt a new job specification for a General Services Project Manager. With the many new building projects in the future the expertise of an individual in this position will be vital. Mr. Hawkins stated that Heath Kumnick has been working out of class as a Building Maintenance Supervisor. Heath has performed very well and has a varied background in building maintenance as well as the construction industry. He has been a great asset to Polk County and has the experience needed in the new GS Project Manager position. Mr. Hawkins recommended Heath be reclassified into the new position.

He also recommended that the salary range of the Building Maintenance Supervisor be adjusted because when this job was originally created there were four individuals supervising the maintenance and custodial staff. We now have one individual supervising the custodial staff and the new position will supervise the majority of the maintenance staff. The effect date of the reclassification would be February 1, 2019 if approved. The Board unanimously agrees to adopt the new job specification and the salary range adjustment.

7. **COMMITTEE VACANCY INTERVIEW** – Abby Weekly, of Dallas Oregon, was interviewed for the Planning Commission. She informed the Board that she has limited knowledge of Land Use Laws but has been very interested in learning more about them and intends to study up on them if appointed to this commission. She stated that she realizes there may be bigger issues at hand, but at this time she feels that housing is the biggest land use issue we are currently facing. Commissioner Pope asked Ms. Weekly if she believes Polk County Land Use laws have been appropriately regulated. She stated that she feels she would need to spend time learning these laws and Polk Counties practices before she would be able to adequately answer that question. Ms. Weekly stated that she understands that the Board of Commissioners ultimately could overturn a decision made by the Planning Commission if they so choose and she believes that is part of the process and it should not be taken personal. Commissioner Pope asked her what her thoughts on Urban Growth Boundaries. She said she believes there is a need for expansion but also understands why people are against it and want to preserve the land. She has no opinion on the use of solar energy on farm land. Commissioner asked her about her opinion on marijuana and she stated she would prefer that that industry stay away from homes because of the affect it can have on resale value. She feels that her generation needs to be more involved in the County and that is why she wants to be on the Planning Commission.

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

- a. **EXTENSION DISTRICT QUARTERLY PAYMENT** – Greg Hanson, Administrative Officer, recommended that the Board only pay a half of the usual amount to the Extension District office because they we short on their expenditures. The Board agrees.

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Minutes: Ciera Atha
Approved: February 19, 2019