

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
April 20, 2021

1. At 9:00 a.m., Commissioner Pope declared the Tuesday meeting of the Polk County Board of Commissioners in session and led the Board and attending audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Mordhorst and Commissioner Ainsworth were present.
2. **MINUTES:** **COMMISSIONER AINSWORTH MOVED, COMMISSIONER MORDHORST SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 13, 2021**

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE

Jacqui Umstead, Public Health Administrator, reviewed the COVID-19 case data for Oregon, Polk and Marion County. Oregon has a total of 175,592 COVID-19 cases and 2,460 deaths. For the date range from April 4th to April 17th Oregon's case rate per 100,000 population of 195.4 and a positivity rate of 5.1%. For that same time period Marion County had a case rate per 100,000 population of 205.6 and their positivity rate was 6.9%. Polk County's Case rate per 100,000 population was 200.1 and the positivity rate was 5.4%.

Beginning Friday, April 23rd, Polk County will be in High Risk category based on the data from April 4th through April 17th. Polk County has 3,461 COVID cases, 5 current hospitalizations, a total of 52 deaths, and 89 people are currently isolating. Marion County has 20, 2691 COVID cases, 26 current hospitalizations, and 299 deaths.

The only outbreak that is active is Dallas Retirement Village, with 3 cases. Contact tracing is still being done by Western Oregon University (WOU). WOU is currently monitoring 107 close contacts. Due to some resignations in Public Health Oregon Health Authority (OHA) provided the county with support with case investigation.

There have been a total of 31,066 Polk County residents vaccinated. Ms. Umstead review some statistic charts she provided to the Board breaking down the vaccinations given by age and race/ethnicity. In Oregon there have been 1,600,343 people vaccinated and of those, 1,033,175 having been completely vaccinated. Beginning April 19th, all people in Oregon 16 years of age and older became eligible for the COVID vaccine. Ms. Umstead reviewed the vaccine allocation for Polk County this week as well as how many doses were given out last week. Public Health continues to plan targeted outreach events with community partners to find hard to reach population as well as vaccinating our homebound population.

*Commissioner Pope moved agenda item 5 up because the presenter was not available yet.

4. LOWER SNAKE RIVER DAM CAMPAIGN

Britni Davidson-Cruikshank and Tony Shacher with Salem Electric in attendance to present the Board with a request for a letter of support regarding Governor Browns lawsuit to breach the lower snake river dams. The federal government released a final Record of Decision on the future of the Columbia River Systems Operation (CRSO). In an Environmental Impact Statement federal agencies found that breaching the dams could double the risk of regional blackouts, significantly increase electricity costs, and make it much more difficult to reach the region's carbon reduction goals. In October Gov. Brown announced the creation of a multi-state group of stakeholders (Washington, Idaho, Montana, & Oregon) tasked with developing a long-

term agreement borne out of collaboration. On March 4th, 2021, Governor Brown sued the federal government to overturn their decision and breach the dams.

The cost to replace the capacity and energy with natural gas, while maintaining the same reliability with natural gas would be somewhere between \$274 Million to \$372 Million per year. It's estimated that carbon emissions would increase 3.0 to 2.6 million metric tons every year. The Lower Snake River Dams (LSRD) are on track to achieve standards of 96% average dam survival for young spring chinook and steelhead migrating downstream and 93% for a young summer-migrating fish. The LSRD has the capacity to generate 3,000 Megawatts of reliable, carbon-free energy each year. That's enough energy to power over 2.4 million average U.S. homes. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) estimates it would cost \$1.3 billion to \$2.6 billion to breach the dams. The Northwest's demand for electricity is highest in the winter, providing critical winter energy and capacity to serve regional loads, which cannot be replaced by other renewable sources such as solar and wind. Electrical Cooperatives and consumer-owned utilities across the state are working together to encourage Gov. Brown to choose collaboration over litigation. Ms. Davidson-Cruikshank stated that the future of the LSRD should not be decided by a federal Judge, but rather the stakeholders. As part of their campaign they are asking local elected officials, small business owners, and farmers to voice their support by submitting an op-ed in the local paper.

BY CONSENSUS, THE BOARD AGREED TO PROVIDE A LETTER OF SUPPORT AS REQUESTED.

5. RECLASSIFICATION IN CUSTODIAL

Matt Hawkins, Administrative Services Director, request a reclassification for Shane Houck. Shane is currently a Custodian and Mr. Hawkins requested he be reclassified to a Senior Custodian. This would be effective May 1st and would have a fiscal impact of approximately \$2,500 for a 12 month period including PERS contributions.

BY CONSENSUS, THE BOARD APPROVED THE RECLASSIFICATION.

6. RECLASSIFICATION IN FAMILY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Mr. Hawkins requested the Board approved the reclassification of Katia Garcia from a Community Resource Connector I to a Community Resource Connector II. Due to some changes that were recently made to the program Katia is completing work that is generally associated with the new Community Resource Connector II position. If approved this would be effective May 1st, and would have a fiscal impact of approximately \$1,800 for a 12 month period including PERS contributions.

BY CONSENSUS, THE BOARD APPROVED THE RECLASSIFICATION.

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

a) Commissioner Mordhorst presented the Board with a letter of support for the Oregon Highway 22 Expressway project. This highway is essential to Oregon's timber, agriculture, fisheries, and tourism industries. ODOT is currently working with Polk County to design a grade separated interchange and local access roads that meet State Mobility standards, comply with the EMP, and most importantly improve safety. Because this is only design funded, additional funding is urgently needed for right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation and construction in order to complete this critical project.

BY CONSENSUS, THE BOARD WERE IN FULL SUPPORT OF SIGNING THE LETTER OF SUPPORT.

8. SPECIAL PROJECT REQUEST

Alisha Atha & Richard Riggs, with OSU Extension Service District, filled in for Derek Godwin who was still in route to the meeting. Ms. Atha informed the Board that local Growers approached Polk Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) about flood issues that are causing problems including loss of infrastructure. This is a problem that has been increasing year after year. There is a group of technical experts that have been gathered to discuss the Salt Creek area and to identify issues in an attempt to find solutions for growers. The growers requested that OSU research a variety of issues they are facing such as water supply, specifically in winter and summer separately, how the county can best manage water resources to make sure there is enough to support residents, agriculture and community development in the future.

Derek Godwin, Watershed Management, put together a group of growers to help research on how they can improve irrigation practices. This was part of the process in submitting for a grant to Western SARE that was not successful this year. The group plans to refine the application and reapply as those grants are very competitive and rarely awarded during the first application. Mr. Godwin is proposing to start on 1-3 farms and out weather stations and additional monitoring stations that will look at soil moisture, water in soil and ground water levels. This project would include putting water level loggers in the streams as well as stream temperature data monitoring with SWCD. This will provide a baseline to understand the hydrology of the area. The closest weather station is too far away to provide much accurate data.

Polk SWCD has committed to support the purchase of one weather station with soil moisture and groundwater level, three stream loggers and temperature data loggers for a total of \$15,000. Mr. Godwin is requesting the OSU Extension allocate \$10,000 to purchase and install 3 additional monitoring stations that will link to the weather station and provide more data from various locations within the targeted area. This was presented to the PECAN committee and was fully supported by them. While the stations and projects target audience is large scale agriculture, the data received will also be very useful for small scale farms as well.

The Board of Commissioners expressed their support for this project moving forward as well.

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes: Ciera Atha
Approved: April 27, 2021