

**POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES**  
**Aug 10, 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 Gordon and Commissioner Mordhorst were present.
2. **MINUTES:** **COMMISSIONER MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER GORDON SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 3, 2021**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. POLK COUNTY TOURISM ALLIANCE**

Shawn Irvine, with the Polk County Tourism Alliance (PCTA), presented a request for financial support to fund a shared tourism position that would facilitate collaborative projects between local communities and businesses and help engage local residents in supporting and promoting Polk County businesses. PCTA convened a large group of regional stakeholders to discuss the potential of reviving this position, its duties, supervision and how to adequately fund it.

Susan Duffner, from the City of Monmouth Community and Economic Development Director, spoke about the position being housed in Travel Salem because they are neutral and would not have a biased to one of the cities and are already a part of the Tourism Alliance. If approved, the position would be hosed in Travel Salem but would be a mobile position.

Ms. Irvine explained that they would like to be able to hire somebody into this position that has some experience and that is why they are seeking funding from the cities and county to increase the salary in an effort to attract the right person. The cities have already agreed to contribute \$20,000 each for 3 years and they are asking the Board to fund \$40,000. The Board was provided a hand out with the scope of work proposed for this position, the metrics they would use to track the progress, as well as the budget. They plan to attempt to get private businesses and individuals engaged to support the work of the Polk County Destination Development role. In-kind contributions allow the budget to stretch further. The hope is for the position to be self-sustaining within three years. They would like a MOU to outline how the position would be managed. The Commissioners discussed possibly contributing as little as \$20,000 instead of \$40,000 but ultimately decided that the larger amount would likely attract somebody who is qualified to meet their expectations. Irene Bernards, with Travel Salem stated that they will also be finding more sponsors so the cities and counties won't have to continue to fund after the three years. Commissioner Pope pointed out that Polk County already contributes \$15,000 to Travel Salem for the services that they already provide. Ms. Bernards explained what that \$15,000 is paying for.

Commissioner Mordhorst proposed they agree to four years with a phased out method of funding. Year one they would fund it at \$40,000, year two would be \$30,000, year three would be \$20,000, and year four would be \$10,000. Ms. Bernards also suggested that they will do regular reports to the Board to show them what they are getting out of the position.

**MOTION:** **COMMISSIONER MORDHORST MOVED, COMMISSIONER GORDON SECONDED TO APPROVE THE SPONSORING OF THE SHARED TOURISM POSITION AS DISCUSSED AND AGREED ON.**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **4. ARPA FUNDS DISCUSSION**

Greg Hansen, Administrative Officer, discussed the American Rescue Plan Act funds in the amount of approximately \$16.8 million dollars. Mr. Hansen provided the Board with a spreadsheet of potential county projects to fund with that money that would benefit the residents in Polk County the most. At this time the County is still waiting on the final guidelines for how the federal government will allow the money to be spent because those rules change regularly. Mr. Hansen discussed the areas of which he knows are allowed to be funded with ARPA funds as well as many others that he tentatively believes could be covered. They will discuss these possibilities further and in more depth once the guidelines have been established. Potential projects could include revenue replacement, building improvement, broadband, county emergency communications, public works infrastructure, water resource planning, Polk County FCO building, child care/resource center, Grand Ronde Sanitary District, Falls City Waste Water Improvement, Fairgrounds, Cybersecurity, additional Mobil Crisis Response, School based mental health, suicide prevention, and Transitional Housing.

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

#### **a) BUSINESS RELIEF APPLICATIONS**

Mr. Hansen informed the Board that the application for the Business Relief Grant was posted and Willamette Workforce Partnership has received 20 applications so far. Some of those applications were missing some information and have been asked to submit the missing documents.

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m.