

**POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 23, 2024**

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. COMMENTS (for items not on this agenda):**

During public comment, Derrick Godwin from OSU extension presented, along with the director of Polk Soil and Water Conservation district. They asked for a letter of support for an OWEB technical assistance grant. The grant is for the Salt Creek Watershed, which has experienced flooding over the years. There is a belief that flooding has increased in the last few years. The grant money would be used for technical assistance on design changes and other fixes to potentially decrease the flooding and limit erosion and sediment that reaches the Willamette River.

Commissioner Gordon stated he supported the project and asked why the Salt Creek area is a specific area of concern. Mr. Godwin said the Salt Creek area provides an opportunity to utilize best practices that could be used in other watershed areas throughout the County. If the grant is successful, they would anticipate starting design work in the fall, with implementation of the plan starting next summer.

Commissioner Mordhorst supported the project as well, and asked whether the creek/watershed area contained fish. Mr. Godwin stated that cutthroat trout are present, and ODFW lists the Salt Creek area as a spawning ground for other fish species as well.

Commissioner Pope asked for grant submission history for these types of projects. Mr. Godwin stated that Extension has submitted several federal grants that were unsuccessful. This current grant is the first OWEB project with Extension and PSWCD. Commissioner Pope stated he was excited about landowner participation.

The board unanimously agreed to sign the letter of support.

**3. OREGON DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES UPDATE**

Joel Plahn, District 22 Watermaster, from Oregon Water Resources Dept provided an update. Mr. Plahn stated the bulk of his work in Polk County surrounds the Rickreall Creek and the Luckiumute river basin. Mr. Plahn outlined the water cuts engaged in 2023. Mr. Plahn outlined that the state has been more cognizant of local hemp and cannabis growers and has added staff to address issues related to these crop productions and ensuring proper water rights and access. Mr. Plahn stated he has been proactive working with local farmers over the years and that this relationship has led to increased compliance with shutoff notices and he is happy with the relationships and compliance within the community.

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

None

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 9:43 a.m.