

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
November 27, 2012

1. At 9:05 a.m., Chairman Ainsworth declared the Tuesday meeting of the Polk County Board of Commissioners in session. Commissioner Wheeler and Commissioner Pope were present.
2. **MOTION: COMMISSIONER WHEELER MOVED, COMMISSIONER POPE SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20, 2012.**

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **ASSESSOR'S DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

Doug Schmidt, Assessor, gave an update on his Department. Doug thanked his staff for their hard work over the last year. The Assessor's office has lost two staff members, one appraiser and one office staff, and is anticipating another staff member to retire in 2013. Doug informed the Board that the amount of tax reviews being requested this year is at the same level as last year. Staff is still working on scanning in old abstracts, to help determine chain-of-title. This project is about 50% complete.

There was a law change in 2012 that requires industrial taxes on property and machinery to now be separate. This required staff to write a new property class and tax accounts. Also, the Forestry Department has finished a land classification study for what land is covered by the fire patrol. Staff was then able to use the study to create an automated system for charging for the fire protection district, which will increase efficiency.

Comcast is waiting for the Supreme Court to hear their appeal. The County currently has Comcast on a deferred billing credit, which means the County is billing them on the lower value that is being appealed. Comcast has approximately \$14 million dollars of value in the County, but are only paying taxes on \$4 million, the remainder is being deferred. If the County loses the appeal, the County will not have to pay a refund and delinquent interest. Independence Cinema has also appealed, which Doug has asked the Oregon Department of Revenue to mitigate the case.

Doug reported that the machinery and equipment at the Weyerhaeuser facility is now up for sale. The property sold earlier this year for \$2 million, and depending on what the machinery sells for, the County will be able to argue with the Department of Revenue that the property sold for lower than it was worth, which will assist with determining the tax value.

Doug also reported on property values: this last year, property taxes increased by 1.7%. In West Salem, 58% of the properties have a market value that is within 5% of the assessed value. Countywide, that number is at 43%. This has caused a \$700,000 loss to education funding.

Doug informed the Board that there has been an ongoing discussion within the legislature about exempting intangible value, mainly in industrial property. This would have a huge impact on values across the state.

4. **LUCKIAMUTE WATERSHED COUNCIL UPDATE**

Gail Oberst, Luckiamute Watershed Council Member introduced Kristen Larson, the new Luckiamute Watershed Coordinator. Kristen updated the Board on the Watershed boundaries, funding sources, and current projects, including Japanese Knotweed removal along the waterways around Pedee.

5. **AOC BRIEFING**

Laura Cleland, District 6 Coordinator with the Association of Oregon Counties informed the Board that she plans to visit the District 6 counties once per quarter. Laura also reminded the Board that at the AOC Annual Conference this month, Commissioner Pope was elected as AOC Treasurer and Commissioner Wheeler was elected Chairwoman of District 6.

6. **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS TRANSIT STUDY**

Jean Sherbeck presented a report completed by the League of Women Voters on the Public Transit Systems available in Marion and Polk Counties.

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

a. **ODOT GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Greg Hansen, Administrative Officer informed the Board that the County is submitting two applications today to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) 'Enhance it, Fix it' grant program. The first application is for the Hwy 22/Hwy 51 interchange for \$5.8 million, the second is for the Hwy 18/Hwy 22 interchange for \$5.0 million. If awarded, funds will be received in 2017, with work being completed in 2018-2019.

b. **BOC AWARD**

Matt Hawkins, Human Resources Director would like the Board to start thinking about who should be receiving the BOC Award at the County Holiday Luncheon. Mira Mar will be catering tacos for the event, no dessert is being provided this year.

Chairman Ainsworth adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Minutes: Heather Alvarez

Approved: December 4, 2012