

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2014

1. At 9:05 a.m., Commissioner Pope declared the Tuesday meeting of the Polk County Board of Commissioners in session. Commissioner Ainsworth was present. Commissioner Wheeler was excused.

2. **MINUTES** **COMMISSIONER AINSWORTH MOVED, COMMISSIONER POPE SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 18, 2014.**

MOTION PASSED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE QUORUM.

3. **EARLY LEARNING HUB UPDATE** - Brent DeMoe was unable to attend the meeting but Greg Hansen wanted to pass on that he wanted to discuss the letter from TRI that he forwarded to the Commissioners regarding being a fiscal intermediary.
4. **BUDGET EXPENDITURE REQUEST** - Marty Silbernagel reminded the Board that Debbie Aldport has been working the last three years with women transitioning out of prison through her organization, New Leaf. She currently works with Marion and Polk Counties, and is working to expand into Linn County. New Leaf was being funded by Dick Withnell for the past several years, but was notified that funding is ending this year. Marion and Linn County have agreed to match what Polk County is willing to contribute to keep this program operating. Marty has 1145 funds available for transition programs, and requested the Board's permission to allocate \$10,000 for the New Leaf program. The Board expressed concern with the sustainability of these types of programs.

BY CONSENSUS, THE BOARD APPROVED THE BUDGET EXPENDITURE REQUEST.

5. **DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY UPDATE** - Mike Totey, District Forester for the West Oregon Division, Jeff Classen, Unit Forester for Dallas Unit, and Matt Flock and Baird McCloud, Community Wildfire Foresters with the Department of Forestry gave an update.

Mike explained that the department is gradually dealing with more litigation from opponents of timber harvesting, which drains resources and time. The State Forests program should be self-sustainable, it runs off the income from timber harvests, but litigation and opposition eliminates both the resources and blocks harvesting. Currently, the department needs another approximately \$5.7 million to operate fully. Mike reviewed the two State Forests timber sales in Polk County over the past year. The County's share of the revenue from those two sales total approximately \$200,000, but that is received over the course of a couple years. There is one planned sale that is currently open for public comment, which is estimated to bring in revenue for the county of \$147,000. Timber prices were very high at the beginning of the year. They have dropped off a little to a more sustainable amount, but is still a healthy market. There is a dock being developed in Newport that once completed will provide closer access for exporting wood. Currently the closest exporting location is Longview Washington.

A majority of the private forests in Polk County are owned by Weyerhaeuser and Hampton. Private forest landowners are increasingly dealing with questions regarding improving water quality. Despite the increase in Coho Salmon population, pressure to improve water quality continues to be an issue based on new cold water rules and standards.

There were two fires in Polk County last year for a total of approximately 50 acres and a cost to the Department of \$97,000. However, none of the costs of fighting include timber, investment, or lost opportunity costs to the landowner.

The Polk County Forest Classification Committee was formed in 2008 to review lands within the fire protection district boundary to determine what was forestland and what wasn't. Inside the boundary is now completed, and are moving on to outside the district boundary. Two of the committee members have terms that are expiring. They were appointed by the previous Board of Commissioners, and Mike requested Board approval to reappoint Terry Lamers and Tom Parsons. The Board requested a memo to reappoint so it can go on a Wednesday Consent Calendar.

Matt Flock reported on the Pioneer/Reuben Boise/James Howe Road Fuels Grant. To date, 43% of the grant has been spent and is 74% completed. The grant was written for 175 acres, but Matt estimates that 200 acres will be assisted with the fuel grant. This grant includes assisting with fuels reduction and landowner education. A new fuels grant was awarded for the Falls City area, and the Department should begin working with landowners through that grant October 1. The Department is also working with OSU Extension to provide small woodland owners training.

Mike Totey also commented on the Sheriff's recent announcement that the woods patrol program is being cut. This deputy was a benefit to the State forests and expressed hope that someday the program can be restored. The Commissioners encouraged the Department to have continued conversations with other agencies to cooperative and pool resources to assist with woodlands patrolling.

The Commissioners requested that they be sent the results of the Trask project, because it is important that the landowners not only be educated but also the elected officials. The Board also thanked the Department for participating in the annual County fair and encouraged continued participation for outreach and community education.

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

- (a) **COUNTY COUNSEL INTERVIEWS** - Greg Hansen announced that County Counsel interviews will be held Thursday in three different panels, and the top two will be interviewed Friday in executive session.

Commissioner Pope adjourned the meeting at 10:29.

Minutes: Heather Merrill
Approved: April 8, 2014