

Local

County: Budget adopted, resolutions passed

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The Baker County Board of Commissioners held a regular session on Wednesday, June 15, 9 a.m., in the Commission Chambers, which included adoption of the 2016-2017 County budget, approval of numerous resolutions, and outspoken community members.

Present from the Board were Commissioners Mark Bennett and Tim Kerns, and Executive Assistant Heidi Martin.

Attendance also included Baker County 911 Consolidated Dispatch Center Director Lindsey Hope, Baker County Administrative Services Coordinator Christena Cook, Baker County Facilities Maintenance Foreman Dan McQuisten, Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash, Baker County Emergency Management Program Manager Jason Yencopal, Art Sappington, Ken Anderson, Guy Michael, Dave McQuisten, Ed Hardt, Gary Dielman, John and Ramona Creighton, Dave Hunsaker, Wanda Ballard, and Vicki Valenzuela.

Kerns called the session to order, and he led in recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. He followed this with a moment of silence, for Commission Chair Bill Harvey (absent from this session), whose daughter, Kristi, passed away Monday.

Noting several changes to the agenda, it was then adopted, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

Citizen Participation included comments from Sappington, Jefferson Mining District Coordinating Officer (he and Dielman were listed on the agenda for this segment), who read a significant amount of material into the record (copies of which he provided to the Board), regarding what "...started out as a review of an Oregon Federal District Court's assistant prosecutor's response to a wrongfully charged mineral grantee...Citizens, and mineral grantees contend that, as a holder of a valid, unpatented mining claim...the possessory property right to occupy that claim is recognized, and to reside on his claim, to conduct legitimate, and lawful mining activities, is recognized, and protected by Congressional Grant."

He read the material into the record, as part of Jefferson Mining District's notice that the State of Oregon violated Federal and State laws, regarding the rights of mineral developers. The decision was made to forward this notice to Baker County District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff for review, as it deals with State law violation claims, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns. Michael added comments, regarding the term "recreational mining," which he says is confusing, and misused, among other details he mentioned.

Dave McQuisten added comments about what he sees as an out-of-control government, including the possibility of land confiscation. He said the BLM (Bureau of Land Management), and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) don't have jurisdiction, the public owns the land, and he referenced the Harney County/Hammond situation as an example of the issues. "They're (the agencies) coming here next; mark my words," he said, to confiscate land, and water. He applauded Harvey for his efforts with coordination, but he sees a negative future, with government overreach, and harm to Baker County citizens. McQuisten encouraged Bennett to meet with him personally, and to keep up with studies, regarding the (U.S.) Constitution.

Sayers asked Sappington what he thinks the County should do, in response to the notice of claims of violations by the State. He responded that he wanted to bring attention to the issue, by informing the Board, who in turn can possibly cause some form of action to be taken.

Dielman, President of the Baker County Library District Board of Directors, commented about his desire for Baker County to "...recognize global warming..." He spoke to the Board and attendees, as he held up a section of the Wednesday, June 8, 2016 issue of the Baker City Herald, with an article titled "Second Wind," by Joshua Dillen, in which Sumpter Valley resident, owner of Lime Wind, LLC, and Baker County Planning Commission Board member Randy Joseph speaks about the development of renewable energy resources, to reduce carbon emissions, during a recent workshop. Dielman praised Joseph for his efforts, in promoting renewable energy ideas, and Dielman stood firm on his thoughts about the claimed realities of global warming, which he says the County has ignored, as he commented about effects of wildfires.

Dave McQuisten asked Dielman whether

Joseph really cares about the environment, or if he's just benefiting from financial gain, and Dielman responded that, without a doubt, it's to benefit the environment. Dielman asked the two Commissioners whether they believe in the idea of global warming, and Bennett said that conversation wasn't part of the agenda, and that he would talk with anyone, one-on-one, but he would not entertain a heated, devious argument during the session.

Sayers said he spoke to Baker County Roadmaster Jeff Smith, in reference to an earlier discussion about the condition of the McCulloch Mine Road bridge, which he said has since been improved, and he thanked the Board for that.

The minutes from the regular sessions on Wednesday, May 18, 2016, and Wednesday, June 1, 2016 were approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

Two discussions were postponed until Harvey is present: Sumpter Dredge tailings mining opportunities, and a County counsel RFP (Request for Proposal) award.

Prior to the Baker County 2016-2017 Budget adoption, Changes to the Approved 2016-2017 Budget Before Adoption was approved, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

The following were approved, as part of the Baker County 2016-2017 Budget adoption segment, individually, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns:

Resolution No. 2016-1026, Declaring The Ad Valorem Property Tax And Categorizing The Property Tax Limitation For Baker County For 2016-2017. According to the resolution, taxes of \$3,7286 per \$1,000 of assessed value of taxable property within the County will be imposed, and \$90,000 in Local Option tax for weed control operations.

Resolution No. 2016-1027, Adopting The 2016-2017 Baker County Budget And Making Appropriations There Of. According to the resolution, a total of \$30,853,092 is adopted for the 2016-2017 Baker County budget.

Cook provided an Administrative Services Department update, the following among other details: Cook's Payroll Clerk is resigning next week, and the Department is hiring Shelly Christensen to fill the role, full-time, on July 1, 2016; Accounts Payable employee Shaylynn Sells is due to give birth in September; and some projects include electronic distribution of timesheets, with electronically-distributed month end reports, and refining the healthcare insurance processes.

The City of Unity's budget was adopted (approved during a previous session), with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

Dan McQuisten discussed a bid for replacement of the Baker County Justice Center Dispatch Server Room air conditioning (AC) unit. McQuisten recommended the low bid (of two bids received), from Baker County Heating and Cooling, LLC, for \$6,985, for a 36,000 BTU unit. According to McQuisten and Lindsey, the current temperature of the room is up to as much as 80 degrees (around 68 degrees is acceptable, they said). Lindsey said, the lowest temperature she's seen since she was hired as Director is 78 degrees. The bid was accepted. Kerns asked McQuisten when the new unit could be installed, and McQuisten said by next Friday.

The following resolutions were approved, with explanations for each, provided by Cook prior to approval, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns (the exception being Resolution No. 2016-1007, which was approved, with a motion from Kerns, and a second from Bennett):

Resolution No. 2016-1006, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Non-Departmental Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$5,000 was received for Molly Atwater and Friends, for a new total of \$7,000, in Mollie Atwater Expenditures.

Resolution No. 2016-1007, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Non-Departmental Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$33,756 was received from the State Department of Agriculture, with a new total of \$53,756 in Wolf Depredation Prevention.

Resolution No. 2016-1008, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Sheriff Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$7,500 was received from

Leo Adler, for Search and Rescue, for a new total of \$17,500 in Equipment.

Resolution No. 2016-1009, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Sheriff Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$11,965 was received from the sale of a boat, and a truck, for a new total of \$35,465 in Equipment.

Resolution No. 2016-1010, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Parole And Probation Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$35,000 was received from OR Community Corrections, with a new total of \$360,000 in revenues. The amount received is broken down as: \$30,000 in Parole and Probation Clerk, and \$5,000 in Retirement.

Resolution No. 2016-1011, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Emergency Management Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$24,415 was received from Federal Title III, for a new total of \$24,415 in Equipment.

Resolution No. 2016-1012, Appropriation Transfer Within The Emergency Management Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$7,422 was transferred from Supplies, for a new total of \$8,399, to Equipment, for a new total of \$31,837.

Resolution No. 2016-1013, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Non-Departmental Department Of The Economic Development Fund. According to the resolution, \$2,000 was received in contributions (\$1,000 in Mining Summit Expenditures, and \$1,000 in Contract Service).

Resolution No. 2016-1014, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Non-Departmental Department Of The Drug Task Force Fund. According to the resolution, \$9,400 was received from seizures, with a new total of \$9,400 in Seizure Distribution.

Resolution No. 2016-1015, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Public Transportation Department Of The Transportation Fund. According to the resolution, \$25,000 was received from Special STF Funding, for a new total of \$25,000 in Amended STF Funding.

Resolution No. 2016-1016, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Non-Departmental Department Of The Museum Fund. According to the resolution, \$6,005 was received from TEC Employee Work Reimbursement, for a total of \$6,005 in Museum Assistant.

Resolution No. 2016-1017, Appropriation Transfer Within The Non-Departmental Department Of The Technology Fund. According to the resolution, a total of \$15,000 was transferred from Server Replacement, and \$6,000 was received in Replacement Computers, with a new total of \$21,000, and \$9,000 was received in Equipment, for a new total of \$24,000.

Resolution No. 2016-1018, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Non-Departmental Department Of The County Health Fund. According to the resolution, \$30,698 was received as a result of an increase in Public Health Administrative Fees, with a new total of \$54,698 in EHR (Electronic Health Records).

Resolution No. 2016-1019, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The SSPH Department Of The County Health Fund. According to the resolution, \$342 was received from an Oregon State Health Grant, with a new total of \$542 in Travel.

Resolution No. 2016-1020, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Immunization Department Of The County Health Fund. According to the resolution, \$201 was received from the State of Oregon, for a new total of \$70,201 in Vaccine Expenditures.

Resolution No. 2016-1021, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Bioterrorism Department Of The County Health Fund. According to the resolution, \$7,966 was received from the State Ebola Grant, with a new total of \$7,266 in Ebola Coordination, and \$3,200 in Travel/Training.

Resolution No. 2016-1022, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The CAHS Department Of The County Health Fund. According to the resolution, \$329 was received from the State, for a new total of \$5,736 in Department Assistant II.

Resolution No. 2016-1023, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The CAHS Title V Department Of The County Health Fund. According

to the resolution, \$2,228 was received from a Title V Grant, for a new total of \$2,228 in Department Assistant II.

Resolution No. 2016-1024, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Local Community Advisory Department Of The County Health Fund. According to the resolution, \$15,773 was received, for a new total of \$1,000 in Clinical Supplies, and \$14,773 in Marketing and Services.

Resolution No. 2016-1025, Transfers Of Funds Per The 2015-2016 Budget Document. According to the resolution, a total of \$207,709 was transferred.

Resolution No. 2016-1028, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Emergency Management Department Of The County General Fund. According to the resolution, \$50,753 was received from FMAG (Fire Management Assistance Grant), for a new total of \$31,000 in Cornet/Windy Ridge; \$10,000 in Cornet/Windy Ridge OT; \$26,353 in Group Insurance; and \$9,603 in Social Security.

Resolution No. 2016-1029, Appropriation Of Unanticipated Funds To Be Expended In The Non-Departmental Department Of The School Based Clinic Fund. According to the resolution, \$5,500 was received from an increase in providers fees, for a new total of \$34,151.

Resolution No. 2016-1030, Appropriation Transfer Within The Non-Departmental Department Of The School Based Clinic Fund. According to the resolution, \$3,000 was transferred from Mental Health Clerical, with a new total of \$5,577, to EHR Maintenance, with a new total of \$11,500.

Resolution No. 2016-1031, Appropriation Transfer Within The Non-Departmental Department Of The Museum Fund. According to the resolution, \$14,800 was transferred from Museum Assistant Store Volunteer, with a new total of \$200, to Museum Assistant, with a new total of \$16,805, and Social Security, with a new total of \$5,311.

Tax Refund Resolution No. 98-01. According to the resolution, a total of \$4,913.77 in taxes on real and personal property, which have been collected in excess of the taxes levied, has been authorized to be refunded on a total of 12 accounts: Roger and Audrey Brown (\$547.99); Edward, Jr., and Pissamai Busciglio (\$168.01, for 2014); Edward, Jr., and Pissamai Busciglio (\$246.26, for 2015); Daniel Domey (\$1,627.44); David Hobson (\$450.63); Jeremy Maddox (\$1,134.75); Bruce and Carol Morrison (\$30.33); Charles Payton (\$94.75); Charles and Peggy Payton (\$41.32); Bobby and Rolyne Stockwell (\$184.08, for 2014); Bobby and Rolyne Stockwell (\$189.51, for 2015); and Brent and Jeanette Thompson (\$198.70).

A previously signed letter, dated May 22, 2016, addressed from the Board, to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Director Neil Kornze, regarding the County's comments on BLM's "Planning 2.0," was ratified, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns.

A previously signed Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) No. 24800-16-0007, between the Oregon Military Department (OMD), and Baker County, and Baker County Fairgrounds Board, was ratified, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns. The purpose of the IGA is to facilitate the cost apportionment of demolition, and removal of the old armory compound improvement, as agreed upon on April 7, 2016.

A previously signed Amendment to No. 1 To the Memorandum of Agreement, between the OMD, and Baker County, was ratified, with a motion from Bennett, and a second from Kerns. Section 1 of the agreement is deleted in its entirety, and replaced with different language, according to the amendment.

Prior to adjournment, Dave McQuisten began a discussion aimed at Bennett, regarding government overreach and McQuisten's doubts about the progress of Baker County in taking a stand. McQuisten used the BLM as an example, and Bennett replied that the County has worked well with the BLM, and progress is being made. McQuisten expressed concerns about confiscation of land, and agency corruption, among other issues, and Bennett said that the County is moving forward, as he cited examples such as efforts on the Boardman to Hemingway project, Sage Grouse issues, and timber removal. He stated that continued divisiveness won't accomplish anything, and the community needs to work together, and not lose sight of goals.