



## Table of Contents

Jackson County Mental Health.....1  
 Jackson County Commissioners.....1  
 Absences.....1  
 8/13/2015 - Jackson County Commissioners by Kathleen Donham: .....1  
 Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development (SOREDI).....2

I would like to thank our Observers: William Mansfield, Susan Orth and Kathleen Donham — Jackson County. Tricia Hahn – Ashland City Council; Carol Ingelson – Medford City Council; Diane Shockey – Eagle Point City Council; Sue Roberts – Jackson County Mental Health; and Jackie Cleary – Josephine County Commissioners. I would like to thank Olena Black for the work she does with the SOU Board of Trustees. We are off to a good start. ~Joyce Chapman, Observer Corps Chair

First posted in the Voters Voice the Newsletter of the Rogue Valley League of Women Voters Sept 2015

### *Jackson County Mental Health*

Our Observers have reported on a number of issues such as, the Jackson County Mental Health committee which meets once a month and failed to have a quorum three months in a row. We brought this issue to the attention of Danny Jordan, Jackson County Administrator, who said he would look into it.

### *Jackson County Commissioners*

#### **Absences**

Observers report that out of 41 meetings reported on by Observers, Commissioner Breidenthal has been absent 12 times, Commissioner Dyer has been absent once and Commissioner Roberts has had no absences. In addition, numerous Work Session and Staff meetings have been canceled. We will be looking into and reporting more on this in the coming weeks.

Jackson County Health and Human Services will be adding 120 to 150 more employees, currently has 30 vacancies, and has an 8% vacancy rate. The department received good marks in its recent triennial review by the State of Oregon.

#### ***8/13/2015 – Jackson County Commissioners by Kathleen Donham:***

Danny Jordan absent but Harvey Bragg attended in his place. **Administrator Input:** Bragg reported on liability limits of \$25,000; Receipt of tax money (\$300,000) for the Sobering Unit; Receipt of \$72,000 grant money for Stop Violence Against Women; and an Airport improvement grant. **Discussion with Breidenthal re perceived value of his trips** to attend meetings about changes to “payment in lieu of taxes.” Breidenthal believes that more than half of his expenses are being covered by the organizations he is serving: National Association of Counties, and the WIR (Western Interstate Region) which is a subgroup of NACO which lobbies for changes to the Endangered Species Act, increased logging which benefits the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funding, and changes to the Forest Management Act. Breidenthal is recommending that the county press for increased “coordination” with the **BLM** and **Forest Service** allowing the counties to be included in forest management decisions by those agencies. Ordinance 2011-15 created a new chapter 1231 which defined the interests of the county. [Copies were provided.] **Dam removal:** A discussion was held



League of Women Voters Rogue Valley  
Observer Corps Report August 2015

regarding a letter sent by Roberts as a private citizen to the Governor regarding dam removal. The discussion was difficult to hear but all members present discouraged Roberts from this activity.

Minutes

[2015 08 18 BoC Work Session Minutes](#) as of 6/27/2016

[2015 08 19 BoC Regular Meeting Minutes](#) as of 6/27/2016

[2015 08 13 BoC Staff Meeting Minutes](#) as of 6/27/2016 1:43 PM

### **Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development (SORED)**

Observers report that Jackson County Commissioners have received two quarterly reports from the Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development (SORED). SORED received \$200,000 from Jackson County and their total budget is approximately \$500,000. We learned that the Commissioners made the contribution in 2014 without the knowledge of the Budget Committee and that the Budget Committee now has the SORED contribution as a specific line item and will be carefully reviewing the contribution. The Commissioners expect SORED to attract other contributions and decrease its dependency on Jackson County. We learned that SORED feels that obstacles to attracting new business to Jackson County include a lack of inventory of industrial buildings, a limited skilled/knowledgeable workforce, and that asking prices for real estate are higher here than in other West Coast locations. SORED advises that despite the limitations they believe they are on track to attract at least three new businesses and at least 100 new jobs to the area by the end of 2015.