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A big thank you to Jan Craigie for her Jackson County (JC) Board of Commissioner (BOC) Observer Reports (primarily on Thursdays) and to Kathleen Donham who has filled in at the BOC when I could not attend. In addition, this month we have a report from Kathleen regarding the JC BOC Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC). Thank you, It is so important to report what we observe. – Joyce Chapman.

NRAC Meeting – 02/16/16: Natural Resources Advisory Committee

1. Commissioner Breidenthal is liaison to this committee. He wants the committee to create a “statement of Purpose” of the county’s natural resources plan that would serve as a document to deliver to other land management agencies requiring coordination with the county. He submits the Baker County Natural Resource Plan as an example. This is part of an ongoing effort by the county to urge the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and other state and federal agencies to let the county advocate for management that could replace the loss of timber payments and Secure Rural Schools monies. Sub-committee meetings will begin next week.

There are also many issues to be addressed with legalization of marijuana growing and selling. County land use rules may need to be amended depending on the status of marijuana as an agricultural crop.

Jackson Count Board of Commissioners Meeting 02/02/16: All present.

1. Proposed **Road Closures within the Cascade – Siskiyou National Monument** – Joel Brumm, Assistant Field Manager, for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lead the presentation. Mr. Brumm gave a detailed history of the Transportation Management Plan process. He presented four alternative plans. Lack of funding is a significant part of the need to close roads since they all cannot be maintained. BLM looks at abandoned roads, roads where culverts are fouling the watershed, public access, user needs, firefighting needs and access, search and rescue, among a myriad of issues and concerns.
2. Discussion Regarding the **Stepping Up Initiative** – Mark Orndoff, Health and Human Services (HHS) Director, and Stacy Brubaker, HHS Program Manager lead the discussion. Mr. Orndoff provided a historical background of the Stepping Up Initiative and provided a handout describing the program. The program includes jail diversion, crisis intervention training for police/sheriff’s officers, crisis staff available to the jail 24 hours a day 7 days a week who are able to help with suicidal prisoners, and set up a Mental Health Court. Mr. Jordan said that if the BOC supports this initiative, staff would come back to the BOC with a proclamation for approval and he recommended they support it. He indicated that this



program will help create a framework and structure so that all services can work together. The BOC approved the drafting of a proclamation in support of the Stepping Up Initiative.

3. Discussion of Billtracker Legislative Tracking System. Mr. Jordan explained the options to provide the BOC access to this system. The BOC discussed and selected the most economical way to provide the commissioners access to the system.

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Jackson Count Board of Commissioners Meeting 02/04/16: Dyer absent.

1. Discussion of **Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Land Acquisition Grant Program** – Commissioner Roberts raised the topic and began the discussion. The BOC had previously discussed the OWEB grant in connection with the acquisition of 325 acres of private land by the **Southern Oregon Land Conservancy (SOLC)** and had declared the BOC neutral on the project. There was a lengthy discussion during which Commissioner Roberts stated her philosophical opposition to have private land purchased with the assistance of public money for public or nonprofit purposes. Mr. Jordan explained that OWEB manages federal pass through grant money. A great deal of the Jackson County Park inventory was purchased through the use of OWEB grants, including the Bear Creek greenway project and the RV Park next to the Expo. Commissioner Roberts expressed her desire to revisit the neutral position on the acquisition of 325 acres by SOLC. Mr. Jordan pointed out that SOLC has so far taken the position that, even though they are a non-profit, they pay property taxes on all of their lands. Commissioner Breidenthal said that he agreed with opposing the use of public funds to purchase private property. After more and lengthy discussion, the BOC instructed Mr. Benton, the County Counsel, to draft a letter expressing disapproval of the use of OWEB funds for the purchase of private property on philosophical grounds. A draft will be brought back to the BOC.
2. Discussion of Increased **Audio Accommodations** – Commissioner Roberts again raised the issue of providing the audio file of the Tuesday and Thursday sessions on the JC website. The estimated cost is approximately \$10,000 per year, of that amount, \$1750 is for the licensing fee for software and the balance is the estimated cost of staff time. Concerns were raised by Mr. Jordan and Commissioner Breidenthal about the possibility of increased costs over time and adding to the work load of already busy staff and detailed minutes are on line. There was lengthy discussion and issues of transparency raised by Commissioner Roberts. It was agreed to bring the matter back to the agenda when the full BOC is present.
3. Discussion of the **Use of Staff Time and County Resources for Non-County Business** – Commissioner Breidenthal raised the issue in the context of insuring that commissioners don't inadvertently show up together at private or public events, causing a quorum of the BOC, without proper notice. Apparently the issue came out of Commissioner Breidenthal asking JC staff to RSVP himself and his wife to an event and to make reservations for both of them. Mr. Jordan pointed out that there is a policy that prevents staff from assisting with personal work and weekly the commissioners coordinate calendars at their Thursday meetings. Commissioner Roberts pointed out that she handles her own personal calendar and there has been no confusion. No action was taken.
4. No action.
5. **Input from County Administrator** – Mr. Jordan went over the agenda for the Wednesday meeting which included: **Wolf Committee** will be considered emergency legislation so that they can implement the committee and deal with the grant application that is due February 29. JC will likely only qualify for around \$500 the first year. The **Motorcycle Riders Association** (Commissioner Breidenthal said he is a lifetime member) is becoming a non-profit and wants an exemption from paying property taxes on



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1715.11 acres of land it owns at a cost to the county of \$3,874.72 per year in lost taxes.

6. **6. Liaison Reports** – Commissioner Breidenthal reported on the **AOC Public Lands Committee** – AOC is taking the position that we need to start discussion of moving federal land to state control and is promoting a study of the issue. AOC has taken the lead in urging the federal government to coordinate with the state. Commissioner Breidenthal said that he was approached by Jeremiah Stromberg, Community Corrections Assistant Director, to have the **Department of Corrections** perform a peer review of the County Corrections program. Commissioner Breidenthal asked Mr. Stromberg to submit something in writing that he could take to the appropriate people. Mr. Jordan said he was not interested in having a peer review at this time, and that Jackson County Department of Corrections is considered one of the top programs in the State.
7. **7. Citizen Committee Nominations** – The Recording Secretary said that there were three appointments, one reappointment (Dr. Ayers) and two new appointments. It wasn't clear who was being appointed to which committee but Veterans Advisory Committee and Vector Control were mentioned.

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Jackson Count Board of Commissioners Meeting 02/09/2016: All present.

1. Harvey Bragg filled in for Danny Jordan. **Fair Board** -- the first part of the session was the semi-annual meeting of the BOC and Fair Board. A lengthy discussion was held. Among items of interest, one of the Fair Board members asked whether there shouldn't be a more formal agreement regarding how the new RV park will operate. Mr. Bragg indicated that park staff were working on it. The discussion generally concerned future plans and budgeting for the Expo. The BOC then went into session.
Discussion of **State Marijuana Legislation** – Kelly Manning started the discussion of pending legislation at the state level. Among the areas of discussion – **Right to Farm Act** – getting clarification from the state on whether or not marijuana fall under that act would be helpful in doing land use planning and developing ordinances. The BOC asked that Ms. Manning provide an update on what the state is doing at each Tuesday and Thursday work and staff session.
2. Discussion of **Possible Program Review of Corrections Department** -- Commissioner Breidenthal raised the issue. He wants to move forward with a review (see discussion on this topic at the 2/4/16 BOC meeting above). Commissioner Breidenthal indicated that in light of recent problems he wanted to move forward. Mr. Bragg said that until pending matters are resolved and the structure is certain, it didn't make sense to do a review. Mr. Benton explained the differences between peer review and audit and indicated that an audit had been performed six months ago which found only minor deficiencies that had already been corrected. He pointed out that it would be difficult to do a peer review during a transition period Commissioner Dyer expressed the opinion that it would be a distraction to do a peer review at this time and favored putting it off and observed that our department is one of the best. Commissioner Roberts favored waiting until all investigations were complete Commissioner Breidenthal continued to favor doing a review. Mr. Bragg pointed out that if there are specific problems, there is an internal audit department and people can report anonymously. The internal audit department is independent and there is a strong non-retaliation policy. After further lengthy discussion Commissioner Dyer suggested that the issue be put back on the agenda when Mr. Jordan could be present inasmuch as Mr. Jordan has significant insight into the issue.
3. **3. Input from County Administrator** – Mr. Bragg proposed Order No. 15-16 to transfer 2.0 FTE's (Full Time Equivalent employees) from County Administration to the Expo Department. After discussion, the transfer was approved.

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Jackson Count Board of Commissioners Meeting 02/11/2016: All present.

Harvey Bragg filled in for Danny Jordan.

1. 1. Continued Discussion of **Increased Audio Accommodations -- Board approved the request for recording the meetings and posting them on the JC website** with a motion from Commissioner Breidenthal and seconded by Commissioner Roberts. Commissioner Dyer questioned the \$10,578 expense for a service he doubted few would use, but did approve. Commissioners agreed to re-evaluate in one year.
2. 2, &
3. 3. The board directed a letter be drafted which would serve as a proclamation that the BOC supported the **prohibition of additional background checks for gun purchases** in Jackson County. BOC has agreed to a **Wolf Depredation Committee** at the request of the Cattlemans Association to be established according to state rules and for possible compensation in the future. The board approved the licensing agreement with Parks reservation service and **Jackson Care Connect** which provides data for the Coordinated Care Organizations until 2019.
4. 4. Liaison Reports – Commissioner Roberts---Al Densmore will be placing a transportation tax of 13.5 cents on the May primary ballot. Commissioner Roberts met with OR Metropolitan Planning Consortium —most representatives are Portland & Eugene. She also met with Stockman’s Association re: **wolf committee**. Commissioner Breidenthal—Noted that Roberts & Dyer now have official positions in the **National Counties Association** on transportation committees [congratulations]; Will be meeting with Region 6 public lands fire issues OAC on Feb 24, predicted transportation costs of \$60 were reported. Commissioner Breidenthal has been involved with the OLCC and OAC counsel Rob Bovett to clarify **marijuana** commerce and agriculture. The legislative adoption of considering marijuana an agricultural crop will be key to establishing ordinances for growth. Commissioner Roberts remarked that she would like more coordination of efforts among the commissioners in dealing with the public and lobbyists in this matter. CommissionerDyer—met with **SORED**I, Ron Fox has retired. C. Roberts would like an update on SOREDI’s progress in meeting its unmet goals from last year. He said that attracting new business will be difficult with the new **minimum wage proposals**. A letter from the commissioners was suggested opposing such legislation and approved by the commissioners. He also met with county mental health advisers about the “**K plan**” for funding the developmentally disabled.

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Jackson Count Board of Commissioners Meeting 02/16/2016: All present.

Former Commissioner Rachor was in the audience.

1. 1. Discussion of the **ACCESS Leader’s Group** – Jackie Schad, Executive Director, invited the BOC to have a member participate in the 40th Anniversary brainstorming session. Commissioner Dyer volunteered.
2. 2. **Travel to Forest Service Meeting** – Commissioner Breidenthal requested authority to attend the meeting in Portland as an add on to his trip to Washington, DC for the **AOC**. After discussion, the



- additional expenditure of either a rental car or taxi was approved.
3. 3. Discussion of **Drafting a Letter of Opposition to the Minimum Wage Increase and the Gross Receipts Tax** – Commissioner Dyer raised the proposal and read some statistics regarding the costs of these taxes. Mr. Jordan advised that Senator Buckley disputed those statistics and had requested specific information on the increase in cost to the county, which Mr. Jordan was getting ready to prepare. After lengthy discussion staff was instructed to prepare a letter of opposition and the BOC approved having Commissioner Dyer approve and send out the final letter that day.
 4. 4. Discussion of **AOC Oregon Counties – China Council** – Commissioner Roberts went to the meeting and reported that Oregon is trying to set up something like a “sister state” arrangement with China. Roberts expressed concern that China is not our ally, jobs are going to China and their products are substandard in her opinion. A lengthy discussion continued during which Commissioner Breidenthal claimed that he had set this up and he had worked on finding investors for a destination resort in Medford. Mr. Jordan pointed out that opening economic relations with China had been a longstanding effort that included efforts by the Chamber of Commerce, St. Mary’s and Dennis Richardson. Commissioner Skundrick and Mr. Jordan were authorized to make a trip to China in the past in an effort to help local businesses. Commissioner Roberts opposes foreign investment specifically from China. Commissioner Breidenthal said he would not go on record opposing investments from China. It was difficult to follow, but apparently there AOC plans an economic development trip to China on March 24th. Dyer and Roberts expressed concern on how the trip was being paid for. AOC indicated that it was not coming out of dues, but other funds, and they want to know the source of the funds and what are the goals of the trip. Mr. Jordan was asked to draft a letter to AOC asking the source of funds and the goals of the trip.
 5. 5. **Discussion of State Marijuana Legislation** – Kelly Madding provided an update on the current state of the legislation.

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Jackson Count Board of Commissioners Meeting 02/18/16: All Present.

This Observer listened to the portion of the meeting related to a **Possible Review of Corrections Department**. I do not feel I can do justice to the entire discussion but will provide a few highlights. I urge anyone interested in this issue to listen to the full discussion by going to the JC website and downloading the discussion. Commissioner Breidenthal brought forward the issue of a peer review of the Corrections Department again. Commissioner Roberts indicated that she had spoken with Mr. Stromberg of the DOC and he had made an offer to do the review but was not pushing it and she asked Commissioner Breidenthal what he was trying to accomplish. Through a lengthy discussion, it appears that one or more employees have attempted to complain to Commissioner Breidenthal and he has referred them to the appropriate reporting avenues. Mr. Jordan gave a lengthy presentation of his credentials in Community Justice and advised that a peer review would not deal with complaints by employees. Mr. Benton pointed out that employees have an affirmative duty to report fraud and abuse and can do so anonymously and that there is a system set it up to handle such complaints. Mr. Jordan emphasized that a peer review is limited in scope but, if done, should be done when leadership is stabilized. Mr. Jordan explained again to the BOC his friendship with Mr. Hagey who is under criminal investigation and that Mr. Jordan has recused himself concerning Mr. Hagey. Further, he explained everything he did to give free access to the District Attorney and Sheriff by asking Mr. Bragg to come to county offices at 1:02 a.m. to open the doors for a search. The DA and Sheriff took away computers and other documents and, after investigation, found no connection between Mr. Hagey’s employment at the county and the criminal investigation. No related charges were brought. Mr. Jordan suggested the BOC consider a National Institute of Corrections (NIC) review after



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leadership has been stabilized. An NIC review would be far more comprehensive and would include a review of the DA's office and Sheriff. Both the DA and Sheriff would need to agree to the review for it to go forward. After considerably more discussion, the BOC asked Mr. Jordan to pursue the possibility of an NIC review after leadership has been stabilized and to report back. Again, we urge the reader to listen to the entire conversation for a more complete understanding of this important issue.

[2016 02 18 StaffMtg](#) audio/video

[2016 02 18 BoC Staff Meeting Minutes](#) PDF

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Following is the link to the county website where the recordings are made available:

<http://jacksoncountyor.org/Board-of-Commissioners/Meeting-Audio-Recordings>

~Joyce Chapman, *Observer Corps chairperson*