



## **CURRY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Approval Date:

May 20, 2020

Commissioners' Hearing Room,  
Courthouse Annex 94235 Moore Street, Gold Beach, Oregon

[www.co.curry.or.us](http://www.co.curry.or.us)

### **SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

April 22, 2020

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Chair Paasch called meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Present; Chair Chris Paasch, Vice Chair Court Boice, Commissioner Sue Gold

Also present County Counsel John Huttel, Director of County Operations Julie Schmelzer, and Administrative Assistant John Jezuit

#### **2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **3. ADOPTION/AMENDMENT OF AGENDA**

Boice - Add to Item 11 - Letter to Governor Brown supporting Phase 1 reopening signed by Curry, Coos, Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine County Commissioners

Motion by Gold seconded by Boice to approve agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously

#### **4. COVID 19 UPDATE – PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Schmelzer gave statistics about Curry County COVID-19 tests, cases, and deaths; spoke about conversations with Emergency Management Coordinator, Jeremy Dumire, and Public Health Administrator, Sherrie Ward, regarding safely opening the County; spoke about anticipated delivery of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment); and warned of scammers. Boice expressed concern about the way some PPE providers were treated. Gold expressed concerns about medical people being furloughed. Gold also stated she spoke to Dumire who advised a National Guard mobile hospital will be set up if needed.

#### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Boice read comments from three (3) citizens who were not in attendance - -

- Andre Bay who observed people in County are getting hurt financially and who asked about the plans for the County.
- Lyn Boniface who stated she was concerned about consequences if the County is not open for business by May 31, 2020, and who encouraged more communications from Chair Paasch.
- Garry and Val Early's letter urging the County to open up for business as soon as possible due to the loss of the fishing season, and who feel activities can be done with social distancing.

Beth Barker-Hidalgo, Curry Homeless Coalition Director, spoke about the Curry Homeless Coalition's response during the COVID-19 pandemic. David Barnes asked what might be happening to help

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individuals compared to organizations. Carla Fultz stated there are no deferment programs for mortgage companies. Representative David Brock Smith stated he appreciates the efforts of the Board to communicate, spoke about his communications, primarily conference calls with, among others, Vice President Pence; commented on the incremental steps, both financial and selective lifting of restrictions, being taken to get back to pre-COVID-19 pandemic, and emphasized the need for PPE. Paasch stated he is fearful rural counties have been forgotten in the disbursement of federal and state emergency funds. Gold also asked about the where the stimulus money will be disbursed and observed a lot of banks are sending out letters advising to defer mortgage payments rather than furlough the payments. Boice echoed Paasch and Gold comments about funds disbursement stating, based on a recent conference call, other county commissioners are quite concerned, too. Boice also spoke about PPE supplies and encouraged the Board to reconsider the decision of April 1, 2020 regarding purchasing of PPE supplies. Ginny Williams (by phone), CEO, CHN (Curry Health Network) stated she has been following the Governor's office closely, spoke about the supply of PPE in stock, spoke about the need to demonstrate a reliable supply chain before being able to re-open, and noted they have enough masks.

**6. TRANSITION PLANNING: DISCUSS COUNTY ORDER 20842 – BAN ON TRANSIENT LODGING**

Schmelzer stated order 20842 did not have an end date; suggested May 1, 2020, with certain stipulations; and is looking for staff direction to prepare an order repealing 20842. Paasch stated the economic devastation from the COVID-19 pandemic will be more severe than the 2008 Recession; observed it is in the best interest of the county to look to re-open, specifically, consider reopening county parks and county lodging; and cautioned if we do not begin to start wheels moving forward to get County open, we will face loss of economic values. Gold agrees, emphasized using a common sense approach as motel owners are asking to get things open, and stated she is all for the motion. Boice stated if we communicate as a region (which is topic of Added Agenda Item 11), specifically, Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson and Josephine Counties; we will have more leverage and to that end read a letter, with a signature section for Commissioners of each of the five (5) counties, to the Governor supporting Phase 1 reopening. Jodi Fritts, City Administrator, City of Gold Beach, stated if there is an influx of people from outside the area, she is concerned we may not have enough food supplies for our citizens, and recommends using a measured approach. Janell Howard, City Manager, City of Brookings, stated she is supportive of opening in safe ways, agrees the economic crisis will over shadow the health crisis, and observed we need to work together and work slowly. Sheriff Ward is in full support of getting the County back open stating, based on conversations with other county Sheriffs, there will not be a flood of people coming to the County; expressed concerns about the impact the economic crisis will have on County tax revenues; observed in the Sheriff's department, there is an uptick in the case load; and concluded by urging the Board to open the County by May 1, 2020.

Motion by Paasch, seconded by Boice, to direct staff to prepare an order to vacate order 20842 and reopen transient lodging by May 1, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. TRANSITION PLANNING: DISCUSS GOVERNORS EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-12 – BAN ON CAMPING, BARBERSHOPS AND HAIR SALONS**  
*COMBINED WITH AGENDA ITEM 8.*

**8. TRANSITION PLANNING: DISCUSS GOVERNORS EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-14 – BAN ON-SITE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD AND DRINK AT FOOD EST.**

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Schmelzer stated, based on Boice's letter (added Agenda Item 11), agenda items 7 and 8 are covered. Paasch agreed stating our needs are as stated in this letter.

Motion by Paasch, seconded by Boice to accept the letter in conjunction with the five (5) counties to reopen transient lodging by April 25, 2020.

**9. TRANSITION PLANNING: COUNTY EMPLOYEES, SERVICES, OFFICES**

Schmelzer asked about when to re-open doors to the public. Paasch stated he is concerned about employees who do not have closed door offices, advised employees to keep social distancing, suggested employees who can work remotely do so and also work in the office a few days a week, encouraged employees to be smart about they are doing, and would like to see this on the April 29, 2020 meeting agenda. Boice suggested May 1, 2020. Gold agrees, advised trust people to do the right things, and recommended discussing protocols at the April 29, 2020 meeting. Jim Kolen, Assessor, would like a discussion about best practices with department heads and elected officials before re-opening. Kolen also stated the Assessor's office has handled working with the public through E-Mail or phone.

**10. OTHER MATTERS PERTINENT TO COVID 19**

Schmelzer asked if there was anything else the Commissioners wanted to talk about regarding COVID-19. Gold emphasized we need to take the a common sense approach, cautioned the sky is falling down is not the right approach, and stated she has heard a lot about herd immunity. Boice stated to be as prepared as we can and noted testing is everything. Paasch observed by opening parks and transient lodging, we're going to have an influx of more cases which requires smart management. Paasch also commented we have to move forward, stated he hopes panic does not set in, and praised the work Schmelzer, Sherrie Ward and Dumire are doing.

**11. ACTION ON DISCUSSION ITEMS**

ADDED TO THE AGENDA: LETTER TO GOVERNOR BROWN SUPPORTING PHASE 1 REOPENING SIGNED BY CURRY, COOS, DOUGLAS, JACKSON, AND JOSEPHINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. SEE AGENDA ITEM 8 FOR MOTION.

**12. DISCUSS ELECTED OFFICIAL AND DEPARTMENT HEAD ROLES IN AN EMERGENCY**

Schmelzer spoke about the staff qualifications of Sherrie Ward and Dumire, summarized the County's Emergency Operations Plan, and addressed leadership succession in the Plan. HuttI asked about details of succession and the Plan. Jim Kolen stated he was not aware of this policy. Boice stated Beth Barker-Hidalgo had a lot to do with this plan in 2015.

Paasch stated he wanted to discuss what the Board's responsibilities are during an emergency. A lengthy discussion followed. In summary - -

Paasch feels it is the Board's duty to set policies, to act as a group in making decisions, and to be unified as a Board. Looking at Boice, Paasch described specific actions that prompted his wanting to cover this in public rather than Executive Session. Boice explained the reasons for those actions and addressed inaccuracies in Schmelzer's resignation E-Mail to the Board. Schmelzer stated the reasons for her resignation E-Mail. HuttI advised he has not seen Schmelzer's resignation E-mail. Jim Kolen spoke in support of Boice. Gold stated we are here to improve the situation and observed (1) Boards are to set policy and (2) when acting as a Board, we act together.

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**13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: ORS 192.660(2)(h)** – To consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.

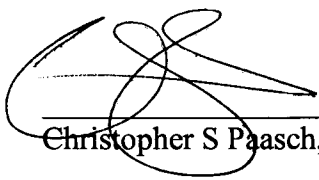
Staff to proceed as directed.

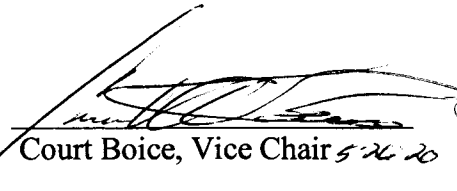
Chair Paasch entered executive session at 4:25 p.m. and exited at 4:41 p.m.

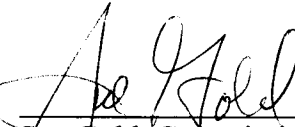
**14. ADJOURN**

Chair Paasch adjourned meeting at 4:42 p.m.

Dated this 20th day of May, 2020.

  
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Christopher S Paasch, Chair

  
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Court Boice, Vice Chair 5/20/20

  
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Sue Gold, Commissioner

Minutes prepared by: John Jezuit, Administrative Assistant

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