

MINUTES
UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Administrative Meeting of July 26, 2019
10:00 a.m., Room 130, Umatilla County Courthouse
Pendleton, Oregon

Commissioners Present: Chair George Murdock and Commissioner John Shafer
Commissioner Absent: Commissioner Bill Elfering

County Counsel: Doug Olsen

Members and Guests Present: Milton-Freewater Ambulance Area Health District, Board Members Janice Holden and Wes Koklich; Linda Hall, Milton-Freewater City Manager; Leanne Steadman, Milton-Freewater City Recorder; Steve Irving, Milton-Freewater City Councilor; Sherri Widmer, Milton-Freewater; Dan Lonai, County Administrative Services Director

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Murdock called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He reminded those present that the meeting is a public forum, and minutes will be taken. It is being video and audio recorded and minutes will be taken. Comments will become part of the meeting record. If persons wish to speak before the Board, please come to the podium, identify yourself and state where you live by coming to the microphone in order to be heard on the record – also note if you are speaking on behalf of others.

Pledge of allegiance was led by Commissioner Shafer.

Additions to the Agenda. Doug Olsen noted addition of authorization to purchase a vehicle.

Business Items

1. Milton-Freewater Ambulance District. Chair Murdock called the public hearing to order at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Olsen gave the staff report. Action is to consider a new health district for ambulance services in the Milton-Freewater area. The larger proposal is to dissolve the old district and form a new one with a new tax rate. Today is scheduled the first hearing on the formation of the new district. The Board would need to ultimately decide to refer to voters for an election.

Testimony in favor

Janice Holden, Milton-Freewater, Board member for Milton-Freewater Ambulance Service Area Health District. In forming a new district, there would be a new name proposed as well.

It is estimated \$1.15/\$1,000 would be added to the existing rate of \$.25 for a total of \$1.40/\$1,000. Compression rate would have a small effect on entities in the area. Total impact would be just over \$100/year spread out over all different taxing districts – a negligible amount. This is according to Paul Chalmers, Director of Assessment & Taxation. It would equate to \$112 total loss per year to all other entities within their district area. It is a large enough area, so it shouldn't trigger a problem to other taxing entities due to compression.

In addition, a budget has been drafted. She explained losses, increasing costs, which is true all over the area. They are struggling to meet needs monthly; wages keep increasing and funds are limited.

Wes Koklich, Board member for Milton-Freewater Ambulance Service Area Health District, presented a copy of finances and budget to the Commissioners. Expenses are increasing and service is in jeopardy, therefore, the Health District hopes to get a tax base increase moving forward.

Chair Murdock and Mr. Olsen clarified the process. The first step was authorizing issuance of a petition (Board action taken one month ago). This is the same process from 2011 when the current health district was formed. In addition, Commissioner Shafer and Mr. Olsen noted in 2014 it was the same process for Athena area ambulance. There were no further questions or testimony in support.

Testimony in opposition

Steve Irwin, 827 Jaclyn Street, Milton-Freewater, advised he is more a neutral position. He serves as councilor in Milton-Freewater, but this is his personal comment. He is concerned with the proposed increase in tax rate (6 times higher). In addition, he had a question about any associated increase in property taxes.

Chair Murdock felt the issue is one for citizens in the area to weigh in. He proposed asking permission from the City of Milton-Freewater to hold the second hearing in its council chambers -- it makes sense. Commissioner Shafer agreed. Linda Hall, Milton-Freewater City Manager, also agreed. She will confirm arrangements.

There was no further comment or testimony.

Chair Murdock closed the public hearing at 10:11 a.m.

Commissioner Shafer moved to adopt Order No. BCC2019-057, setting a second hearing on formation of the Milton-Freewater Ambulance District for August 16, 2019, 10:00 a.m. in Milton-Freewater at the council chambers, Albee Room. Motion seconded by Chair Murdock. Carried, 2-0. Ms. Hall advised the room is available and booked.

2. New Vehicle for Maintenance Department. Dan Lonai, Administrative Services Director, presented. The department is seeking authority to purchase a new pickup. This truck would replace the old (80s?) ¾ ton pickup with a lift gate. The Fleet Management Committee recommends purchase through the Enterprise Fleet Management program. **Commissioner Shafer moved to approve and authorize purchase of a 2020 Chevrolet Silverado in the amount of \$33,110. Motion seconded by Chair Murdock. Carried, 2-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda Slatt

Executive Secretary, Umatilla County Board of Commissioners