



WASCO COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL SESSION
MAY 25, 2011

PRESENT: Sherry Holliday, Chair of County Commission
Scott C. Hege, County Commissioner
Rod L. Runyon, County Commissioner
Kathy McBride, Executive Assistant

At 12 p.m. Chair Holliday called the Special Session of the Board of Commissioners to order to interview candidates for the opening on the Columbia River Gorge Commission as Wasco County's Representative.

Ken Bailey and John Roberts, Wasco County Planning & Development Director, were present since the Board invited them to assist the Commissioners in the interview process.

Debby Jones was the first candidate to be interviewed.

Chair Holliday explained that each candidate will be asked the same prepared questions. A copy of the interview questions is attached as Exhibit A.

Chair Holliday will be asking each candidate the prepared interview questions.

In summary Debby Jones stated that she recently built a home on property that she purchased seven (7) years ago in a key viewing area in the National Scenic Area. The permitting process was wonderful. The scenic rules are there to protect the area so that it can be enjoyed by all. Jones feels the goals fit perfectly. The cultural goal is sometimes hard to understand. Economically she feels the regulations sometime go too far. The regulations could be more resident friendly. Jones stated that the County Planning Department really wanted to work with her. The process helped her see why the scenic act was needed and how they can make it a win win situation.

Jones stated that she is a little hesitant with a four (4) year commitment since she is not aware of the time commitment. Jones is interested in the position since she is now a resident of the scenic area. She feels it is important for community members to step up

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and get involved. She is aware of the negative issues surrounding the scenic area. Jones feels you can find the balance. We need to remember this is beautiful country that we are trying to preserve. That needs to be the key focus. Jones is not doing this for political or resume building purposes. Jones has a real ownership in it since she now lives in the scenic area. It frustrates her when people who represent a group are outside the impact area.

Jones stated that some people think that we are at the butt end of the gorge. Wasco County has a uniqueness; a different look to the gorge. That is something that we need to protect and promote. She would like to see a way to figure out how the scenic area and the river can tie in together that is beneficial to most groups. Jones does not think there is a good balance between protecting the resources and getting jobs. There could be more willingness to look at economic opportunities. Jones stated that she is volunteering to represent the Board of Commissioners best interest.

As to expansion of the urban growth boundary; it has to be a case by case situation. These are the priorities that we are looking at; they need to be set. We need to see how they fit into the priorities. Jones feels that delaying the establishment of the process for urban growth boundary expansion does not do any good. We need to act on those things.

Chair Holliday asked if there were any other questions or whether Jones had any questions of the Board.

Jones stated that she is a little hesitant about applying. She asked about the representation on the Gorge Commission, and how many Gorge Commissioners there are.

Some discussion occurred.

The Board interviewed Meredith Van Valkenburgh.

In summary Meredith Van Valkenburgh stated his experience is in representing clients that were involved with the Gorge Commission as to their property rights and concerns. He has had a personal interest in the scenic area. He served on the Planning Commission many years ago and has followed the County's involvement in planning and land use issues. The enhancement of the quality of the gorge has been pretty well taken care of. The second goal has been given a back seat and not given the respect that it should have been over the years. He has always felt that the Gorge Commission has administered the act with a slant towards the concerns of the metropolitan area of Portland versus the people in the eastern area of the gorge. Van Valkenburgh does not think anybody can dispute the purpose of maintaining the quality of the gorge. The Gorge Commission can maintain that quality and enhance the economics of the area.

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Van Valkenburgh stated that they have done a good job in maintaining the quality of the gorge, but have failed at enhancing the economics of the area.

Van Valkenburgh stated that he would represent the County Commission's concerns, as well as the Cities and citizens. He would try to give more respect to the areas' immediate concerns; the city's desire to expand its urban growth boundary. He sees that as an area that would not be very viable to abuse. In viewing how the Gorge Commission operates he feels his background in law would be supportive of giving representation to the area in a better manner. The County's interest is maintaining balance. He feels it has been overboard being anti-development. Van Valkenburgh would invite the Gorge Commission to be very open and to meet in areas at times that would be favorable for people to get involved with the Commission.

Van Valkenburgh stated that the act envisions expansion of the urban growth boundaries; one-tenth of the act addresses expansion. The expansion of the City of The Dalles Urban Growth Boundary would allow development which would be subject to the City's zoning and restrictions. If appointed he would talk to the Gorge Commission and try to persuade them to open their mind to the expansion of the urban area. He would try to organize an effort amongst the city and the county to support it and advance the discussion.

Chair Holliday asked Van Valkenburgh if he had anything that he would like to expand on or any questions of the Board.

Van Valkenburgh stated that he is interested in it since the whole area is affected by the scenic act. The northwest was developed because of cheap electrical power and water. It now needs some planned expansion and development.

Some discussion occurred regarding Van Valkenburgh's comment on the Gorge Commission meeting at times when members of the public can attend.

At the conclusion of the interview with Van Valkenburgh the Board and Bailey discussed what kind of criteria should be used to judge the candidates by.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL of the Special Session Consent Agenda of May 25, 2011, (Attached as Exhibit B).

{{{Commissioner Runyon moved to approve the Special Session Consent Agenda of May 25, 2011 as presented. Commissioner Hege seconded the motion; it was then passed unanimously.}}}

At 1:03 p.m. the Board recessed for lunch.

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At 1:30 p.m. the Board reconvened.

Bid Opening and Award for Guard Rail Installation on Seven Mile Hill Road.

Chair Holliday opened the bids received. They are as follows:

Coral Construction, Wilsonville, Oregon

Bid Schedule A – \$21,900.00

Bid Schedule B - \$22,500.00

Columbia River Contractors Inc., Clackamas, Oregon

Bid Schedule A - \$17,732.50

Bid Schedule B - \$18,540.00

The Bids were reviewed by the Public Works Project Manager Arthur Smith.

Smith stated that the bids are well within the budgeted amount. These are good prices.

Commissioner Hege asked about the difference between Schedule A and Schedule B.

Smith stated that Schedule A calls for galvanized metal, while Schedule B is weatherized metal. The Seven Mile Hill Road Guard Rail Project lies within the National Scenic Area. The County had to apply for a scenic area permit. The County asked for a variance to paint the backside of the guard rail and not the front side. The County chose to see what the cost would be for weatherized guard rail.

Commissioner Hege asked how the Department determines where the guard rail should be installed versus other areas on Seven Mile Hill.

Smith responded by stating that the Public Works Department has a listing of sites where they have determine that they cannot improve the safety of the road with shaving a slope, widening or adding a shoulder. The Department has added those sites to the guard rail listing. Each fiscal year the County tries to pick one off the list. Smith stated this next budget year they put in money for another site in another area of the County. They have budgeted over \$30,000 for this project.

Smith stated that both companies have done work for Wasco County. They would be happy with either company.

Some discussion occurred.

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Smith recommended that the Board of Commissioners award the guard rail bid to Columbia River Contractors, Inc., Schedule B at the cost of \$18,540.

{{{Commissioner Hege moved to accept the staff recommendation that the Seven Mile Hill Road Guard Rail Bid, Schedule B, be awarded to Columbia River Contractors, Inc. for the cost of \$18,540.00. Commissioner Runyon seconded the motion; it was then passed unanimously.}}}

The Board recessed at 1:44 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 1:53 p.m.

Other Business:

The Board considered the refilling of the Public Health Nutrition Program Assistant and the Senior Planner Positions.

*****It was the consensus of the Board of Commissioners to post the Public Health Nutrition Program Assistant Position***.**

*****It was the consensus of the Board of Commissioners to post within house the Senior Planner Position***.**

The next applicant to be interviewed was Doug Crow.

At the beginning of the interview Doug Crow stated that Dan Ericksen is by far the best candidate for the County's appointment to the Columbia River Gorge Commission. Ericksen has always had a strong interest and worked well with the Gorge Commission. He is respected by the Commission. Ericksen would have a lot of credibility if appointed to the position. Crow stated there is currently a lack of leadership. You need to have someone that has sat in these chairs or has a law background.

Chair Holliday asked the prepared questions at this time.

In summary Doug Crow stated that he served on the Columbia River Gorge Commission as a Governor appointee for eight years. He represented the state. The County's representative would focus on the needs of the County. It is important to have someone standing and advocating for the County's interest. When he went on the Gorge Commission in 2000 it was slanted towards the first aspect of the act. It was not serving anybody that lived here. It took eight to ten years to make the regulations more reasonable, understandable and more flexible. Plan review is coming up; it would be helpful to have someone like Ericksen on the Commission since he knows what it is like on the ground to get the County to conform to the regulations.

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Crow stated as he drives up and down the gorge it has remained pretty much the same in appearance. That was the idea that the appearance would remain the same and that there would be opportunities within the urban areas; a chance for further economic development.

Crow stated that the County's appointee has to serve as a representative of the Board of Commissioners. Someone like Ericksen or himself knows the territory; there will be no learning curve. Over the last ten years Gorge Commission staff had quarterly meetings of County Planners in the gorge. With staff reductions he is not sure how consistent they have been with quarterly meetings and trainings.

Crow stated you need to be aware that you are setting a precedent that will impact other counties. It would be helpful for the Gorge Commissioner to collaborate with the County and the Commissioners. Crow wanted to have the freedom to say what he wanted to say when he served on the Gorge Commission. He never sought to be the Chair. Depending upon the circumstances he might be interested in serving as Chair. What he observed is that it does take some experience.

Crow mentioned the current makeup of the Gorge Commission. He noted that the state limit is eight years, while there is no term limit for the counties.

Crow stated as to the expansion of the city's urban growth boundary; he would do his best. The original material was not really persuasive. At the end of his term a minor expansion meant an acre. That was the testimony that they heard. Crow feels it depends on where the property is located. He feels an argument could be made as to its topography and geography.

A brief discussion occurred regarding the issue of a minor expansion.

Crow stated as to the issue of the expansion process; he feels it is important to get things going and for the Gorge Commission to take a position. If appointed he would work with the Board of Commissioners and Wasco County to try to get the process moved forward. He believes that there needs to be a process; you cannot ignore people.

Crow noted that he has always been interested in the economic aspect of the act. A lot of the Gorge Commissioners and staff had no interest in it. He feels there needs to be more engagement; someone on staff that focuses on economic development. If appointed he would meet regularly with the Board of Commissioners.

Crow informed the Board of the time commitment and the compensation that is paid to members of the Gorge Commission.

The last candidate to be interviewed for the day was Joan Silver.

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In summary Joan Silver stated that her experience with the scenic area comes with her involvement with the Oregon Investment Board; the economic development portion of the National Scenic Area Act. She lived in Grant County prior to moving to The Dalles. Silver has read the act. What she hears consistently is that we want the protection we just don't like the way it is being done. There is room for improvement. The Gorge Commission gives considerable attention to the first goal and minor attention to the second. The last couple of years the Executive Director has brought more of the economic development purposes before the Commission. The Gorge Commission as a body does not really appreciate the economic development purposes. That is evident by the financial constraints; no federal monies coming in since 2002 for the Commission and the Oregon Investment Board. Overall she thinks there has been good economic development without the money that Congress appropriated. A special area is being preserved. The County's representative needs to work closely with the County; they need to know the feelings of the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Department. Silver has maintained that you can't preserve what is around you if you do not have the economic base to keep it right. She has the ability to work with a group and to bring a perspective to a group in a manner that is not confrontational.

Silver stated that Wasco County is unique. We have a greater mix of uses going on; both urban and developed uses within the scenic area. The urban growth area issue is huge. The Gorge Commission needs to make the rules that work for the area; that needs to happen. Silver stated it does not appear to be balanced. The economic development aspect of the act is not given the weight that it should be. They have gone overboard in restrictions over the view points. There is room to have exception areas in some areas.

Silver suggested that the local paper print a column periodically on what is happening at the Gorge Commission. She thinks that the Gorge Commission appointee should be a very good communicator with a good sense of direction from the Board of Commissioners. Silver believes that Judy Davis has done a good job working for the County. She does not believe that people are totally aware of how much she does.

Silver feels that Dan Durow, The Dalles Community and Development Director, has a good description on what is a minor and major expansion. A minor expansion is one that does not have a major effect. A minor expansion does not impact those things that the act is preserving. She feels that a lot of time is spent on reviewing where they have been and not enough time looking at where they need to be. They need to balance the energies and the available staff to go forward. Economic growth in the area can only happen if there is land to make it happen. You have to bring some kind of format in front of them as an idea of how they might address the issue. The recognition by the Gorge Commission that it is their responsibility to define how they want the scenic area to look; they need to have appropriate rules to do that.

Chair Holliday asked if Silver had any questions of the Board.

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Silver wanted to stress that she would bring the perspective from the years on the Oregon Investment Board and the years of doing economic development. The Gorge Commission has been lopsided on who they listen to and how they vote. It is best to bring balance. That is what she would hope to do.

Bailey asked Silver a question pertaining to the Fossil Beds.

Silver stated that the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area is the only one in the United States that has no funding stream of its own. Every other preserved area has some ability to self fund by admissions or charges for hikes. We are the only ones that have no ability to have a revenue stream.

At the conclusion of the interview the Board, Bailey and Roberts discussed the Gorge Commission's applicants.

Bailey stated that Dan Ericksen and Doug Crow have the political means to be most effective. Joan Silver does not have the history or knowledge of Wasco County. As far as effectiveness, the tenure in the area and background will help influence.

Commissioner Hege stated it is hard to know. There are strong people on the Gorge Commission. The Friends of the Columbia River Gorge are so powerful. The Gorge Commission is making decisions on what the Friends is going to do. The Friends are focused on the protection of the gorge.

Commissioner Holliday stated if the Gorge Commission had unlimited funding it would make a huge difference if appeals were filed.

Some further discussion occurred.

Bailey noted that Dan Ericksen has put in his application for appointment by the Oregon State Governor to the Columbia River Gorge Commission. He is not sure how many candidates submitted their name for consideration.

Roberts asked what the Board of Commissioners is looking for in a candidate.

Commissioner Runyon stated he is focusing on the economic development side. We need to have someone that is advocating that strongly.

Roberts stated that the candidates are all sharp people. Jones' heart is in the right place. It would be good to get two appointees from Wasco County.

Commissioner Holliday stated she would not base her decision on Ericksen being appointed by the Governor. She suggested that they wait until tomorrow to start their ranking of the candidates.

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Commissioner Hege stated that Doug Crow is one brilliant guy. He was surprised that Crow was pitching Ericksen. Crow will be someone that can get in there and work within that structure.


Commissioner Hege has never seen it in the paper or been to a Board of Commissioners meeting when the County's Gorge Commission Representative has reported to the County. He is hoping that the Commission member has a connection with the Planning Department.

The Board adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

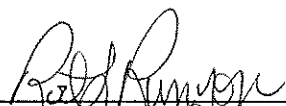
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OF COMMISSIONERS



Sherry Holliday, Chair of Commission



Scott C. Hege, County Commissioner



Rod L. Runyon, County Commissioner

WASCO COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE COMMISSION

DEBBY JONES

QUESTIONS	1	2	3	4	5
1. What is your experience with the National Scenic Area? What do you think Wasco County's role is within the framework of the NSA?					
2. The first purpose of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area is "to protect and provide for the enhancement of the scenic, cultural, recreational and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge". The second purpose is "to protect and support the economy of the Gorge by encouraging growth to occur in existing urban areas and by allowing future economic development in a manner that is consistent with protection of scenic, cultural, recreation and natural resources". How do you feel about these two goals and what is the relationship between the two?					
3. What do you feel are the parts of the National Scenic Act that have been successful?					

4. What do you perceive as the role of the Wasco County appointed Gorge Commission Position in relation to the Board of Commissioners and the County Planning Department?					
5. The Gorge Commission is presented with many volatile land use issues and is constantly challenged with balancing property rights and preservation of the Scenic, Natural, Cultural and Recreation Resources of the National Scenic Area. How would you achieve this balance as a Gorge Commissioner?					
6. What distinctive abilities, skills, experiences, or perspective would you be able to bring to the Gorge Commission?					
7. What do you feel are the unique interests of Wasco County and how would you represent them as a Gorge Commissioner?					

<p>8. We often hear that the Gorge Commission is not balanced and is one-sided toward protecting resources at the expense of supporting our economy. What are your thoughts on this statement? If you feel the Commission is properly balanced, how would you explain that to the citizens of Wasco County? If you do not feel it is balanced, how would you work to provide balance to the Gorge Commission?</p>					
<p>9. As an appointee of the Wasco County Commission, how would you plan to keep the Commissioners and the citizens of Wasco County informed about the activities and actions of the Gorge Commission?</p>					
<p>10. What are your thoughts regarding the expansion of urban areas within the Scenic Area? Do you have any opinions regarding what is a minor amendment?</p>					
<p>11. The City of The Dalles is applying for a UGB Expansion and to date the Gorge Commission has not even found a way to get the process started. How would you go about moving this issue forward?</p>					

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CONSENT AGENDA

1. Agreement for Equipment Demonstration on Agency Personnel between Bi Incorporated and Wasco County.
2. Amendment No. 1 to the Exacutrack at Service Agreement No 073106DY6 between Bi Incorporated and Wasco County Community Corrections.