

MID-COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, March 25, 2014, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Board Room, 1113 Kelly Avenue, The Dalles, Oregon

2014 Board of Directors:

Gilliam County: \*Mike Weimer, Steve Shaffer, Denise Ball  
Hood River County: \*Maui Meyer, Les Perkins.  
Sherman County: \*Michael Smith, Cliff Jett, Tom McCoy  
Wasco County: \*Rod Runyon, Scott Hege, Carolyn Wood  
Wheeler County: \*Anne Mitchell, Chris Perry, Jack Lorts  
(\*denotes Executive Committee Members)

---

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A Roll Call and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Michael Smith, Chair.

Present: Denise Ball, Michael Weimar, Steve Shaffer, Cliff Jett, Michael Smith, Tom McCoy, Carolyn Wood, Rod Runyon, Scott Hege, and Anne Mitchell.  
(Note, Shaffer arrived after Roll Call at 1:27 p.m.)

Absent: Ed Weathers, Les Perkins, Maui Meyer, Chris Perry, and Jack Lorts.

Staff: John Arens, Executive Director; Sarah Braumbaugh, Fiscal Director; Tine Meriwether, Executive Assistant.

Guests: Rodger Nichols, Haystack Broadcasting.

B. Approval of February 25, 2014 Minutes

The minutes were corrected under I. Call to Order, to delete Michael Smith as being absent.

Rod Runyon moved, seconded by Carolyn Wood, to approve the February 25, 2014 minutes as amended. The motion was approved unanimously.

**AYES: Ball, Weimar, Jett, Smith, McCoy, Wood, Runyon, Hege, Mitchell (9)**

**NAYS: None (0)**

**ABSENT: Shaffer, Weathers, Perkins, Meyer, Perry, Lorts, (6)**

**OPEN AGENDA**

There was no public comments.

## REPORTS/COMMUNICATIONS

A. Senior Advisory Council, Committee Chair Report.  
There was no report.

B. Wahtonka Community School.

John Arens reported on the Wahtonka Community School. He stated he wanted to get Board approval to allow the school use the portion of MCCOG's Transportation property as shown on the map in the Board packet. MCCOG has no identified need or use for the flag piece of property. An agreement with the School would be developed. This is not a long-term project and will only run about two years.

Carolyn Wood moved to allow the Wahtonka Community School to use the flag portion of the property for a raised bed garden space. The motion was seconded by Tom McCoy.

Discussion. The Board discussed water usage expense and fencing the property. Hege stated his concern that if the water was accidentally left on it could get expensive. Wood suggested the school install a separate water meter to monitor the use. Runyon asked if staff could ask the school if they intend to cover the cost of water to irrigate the garden.

Following discussion, the question was called and the motion was approved unanimously.

**AYES: Ball, Weimar, Jett, Smith, McCoy, Wood, Runyon, Hege, Mitchell (9)**

**NAYS: None (0)**

**ABSENT: Shaffer, Weathers, Perkins, Meyer, Perry, Lorts, (6)**

C. Building Codes Operating Plan

Staff noted the only change to the Operating Plan is the deletion of Grant County in the document. The revised plan is available on the MCCOG website.

D. Audit Request for Proposal

Sarah Brumbaugh, Fiscal Director, reported that staff has advertised in The Dalles Chronicle and the Hood River News, calling for Request for Proposals for Audit Services. The deadline to respond was March 10, 2014 by 5 p.m. The only respondent was Friend & Reagan, who will continue to provide audit services to MCCOG.

Steve Shaffer entered the meeting at 1:27 p.m.

E. New Hires:

a. Transportation Brokerage

i. Brokerage Intake Specialists and Field Manager

Arens reported that contracts are moving forward with PacificSource and GOBHI. New hires to handle the territory expansion include a Field Manager and two more Intake Specialists.

The Field Manager will help to manage the contractors in the Frontier communities - eastern portion of the state. The new FM will be performing bus inspections, driver trainings and other contractual requirements of transportation providers.

Chair Smith asked that MCCOG staff send him the Intake Specialist ad to pass along to a person of interest.

Arens discussed the new Ecolane Software in Transportation and the efficiency and cost savings it has provided. Ridership has increased 30 percent.

Board consensus was to move forward with the hiring prior to the fiscal year budget beginning July 1.

b. Building Codes

i. Building Official

Arens reported that he also wants MCCOG Board consensus to hire a full-time Building Official. The start date for the new BO is anticipated for late June (last week in June). Arens proposed a hiring committee be formed consisting of one MCCOG Board member, an HR person, local contractor, a staff member from the Pendleton office and himself to review applications and conduct the initial interviews. A secondary committee, consisting of staff members, would conduct second interviews with the top candidates.

Discussion. A discussion ensued regarding the need for a full-time BO versus a part-time person. Arens reported that he believes MCCOG needs a full-time person. Bob Futter currently spends up to 30 hours a week in plan review. Also, the expectation will be for the new Building Official to spend more time in staff development and management of the program with an office here as opposed to a remote office.

Denise Ball stated her concern for hiring a full-time person because the market is slow. She suggested hiring a part-time BO who could work into full-time later on. She asked if consideration had been made to hiring in-house. She also asked if MCCOG has reached out to other agencies for BO assistance. Scott Hege also expressed his concern for a full-time person and stated this is the time to cut costs and look at re-arranging staff and not increase fees. He stated he could not support a full-time hire. Ball agreed that this was a good time to re-organize the department. Steve Shaffer stated he agreed. Carolyn Wood asked if a ¾ time hire could work and then the job could grow into full-time.

In response, Arens said he had not looked at other agencies for assistance. He stated any qualified MCCOG employee could apply for the position who possessed the credentials needed to be the Building Official.

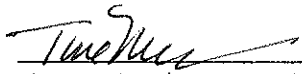
Rod Runyon stated he preferred a full-time hire so that person could be available for inspections. But, also favored a contract for services if the department is slow. Mike Weimar stated he preferred a full-time employee. Mike Smith stated he favored hiring a full-time professional to lead the department. And, he wanted it to be clear that we would not be cutting services. Cliff Jett stated he also favored a full-time hire from outside the department -- someone who could offer a new perspective on managing. He stated he believed it was better to recruit for a full-time Building Official in order to get quality applicants.

Following the discussion, it was the consensus of the MCCOG Board to move forward in recruiting for a full-time Building Official. Denise Ball and Scott Hege both volunteered to serve on the hiring committee. Either one could be available depending on the date of the interviews.

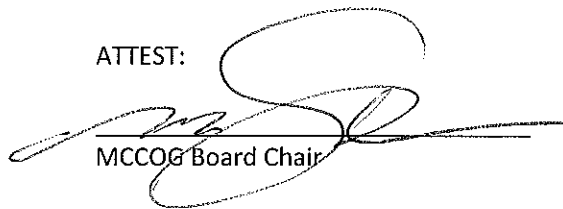
**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the MCCOG Board of Directors, the meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tine Meriwether, Executive Assistant

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MCCOG Board Chair