

Court Boice, Curry County Commissioner

2017 Year in Review -- Work and Accomplishments -- Partial List...

I presented an 18 point plan to address the issues Curry County faced in 2017

This plan was submitted January 31st to the Curry Board of Commissioners and Curry Citizens as promised. No other specific plans or solutions for County issues were offered by the other two commissioners in 2017 and none to date for 2018.

2017 Year in Review as your County Commissioner.

1. **Voluntary \$20,000 Pay Cut** – Commissioner Boice, in order to help balance the budget took a \$20,000.00 pay cut in 2017. Also, to date has paid close to \$1,300 out of his personal funds to supplement limited County Travel Funds and restrictions. Commissioner Boice works 50 to 70 hours per week.
2. **Sheriff's Annual Pay Amendment** – After three tries, Commissioner Boice was able to get passed by the 2017 Curry County Board of Commissioners a pay adjustment for our County Sheriff. The results are instead of Sheriff John Ward being the lowest paid Sheriff in Oregon, now just one of the lowest paid.
3. **Curry County Administrative Officer** – Commissioner Boice was able to get to know John Hitt through his attendance with the South Coast Business Development Corporation meetings. Mr. Hitt was a successful Executive Director there and was considering retirement. Court asked him more than once if he would consider applying for the Curry position. He agreed and was hired. He has been a good and solid addition. Court would characterize their relationship as respectful and productive.
4. **Future Proposal Under Consideration - County 4-day Employee work week** – On the basis that Curry County is small County and with very limited resources, Commissioner Boice researched with many Dept. heads and staff and is preliminarily convinced (Mon. - Thurs. -- 10 hour days) would save the County significant dollars. (Most offices could have one person available on Friday's in order for public access?) Court is still gathering data -- plans on offering the Board of Commissioners and County Administrator a report and Workshop recommendation soon. The planning and Road Departments presently do a 4 day work week.
5. **All Care Grant Funding** – Commissioner Boice called no less than 5 meetings to address All Care Funding, related time and effort toward building community consensus on viable individual Curry Housing Projects – recommendations to the BOC best projects in distributing the \$98,000.00. After all the meetings and effort the Curry County Board of Commissioners returned the All Care Grant Funding. **Court voted in opposition of returning these funds.**

6. **Curry County Head Start Program, 1.6 mm Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) -**
Commissioner Boice set up no less than 5 related meetings to help clear up questions left by previous Curry County Board of Commissioners. At this time Commissioner Boice is opposed to returning these valuable funds and the County walking away.
7. **Building relationships with all County Elected Officials and Department Heads**
Commissioner Boice spent significant time getting to know, understand issues of all County Officials in seeking solutions for improving Curry County and solving problems.
8. **Consumption Tax Advisory Committee -- (C.T.A.C.)** Commissioner Boice attempted twice to form Consumption Tax Advisory Committee, however could not get support from the other County Commissioners, the 3rd try finally got approved by the Board with the help of County Administrator Hitt. Commissioner Boice is strongly opposed to raising property taxes, however, feels it is critical for the county to look for all possible alternate ways to raise revenues without increasing property taxes. All Alternatives need to be explored as revenues from timber sales are shrinking every year and have reached a point of critical mass. Ultimately the voters will decide, but the gathering of information and offering a plan so informed decisions can be made by voters is of critical importance to the county, failing to do so means county commissioners are not doing their job.

Curry County Parks Advisory Committee

Commissioner Boice in 2017 tried 3 times through the board of commissioners to establish a Curry County Parks advisory committee; however as of this date that effort has failed to get approval from the other two commissioners. Commissioner Boice has worked toward and believes our County should take ownership of some of the USFS local parks. It is his view that Curry Parks can manage better and offer improved services to our visitors and would be a small compensation resulting from the Chetco Bar Fire losses.

9. **Marijuana growth, production and expansion**

Medical Marijuana is regulated by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Recreational Marijuana is regulated by The Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC). Southwest Oregon is one of the largest marijuana growing areas in the nation. Commissioner Boice has been working with the 5 Southwest Counties – Coos, Douglas, Josephine, and Jackson and of course Curry. Meeting with most of the county commissioners of these 5 counties to give a level playing field for growers with a uniform 5-County Resource Tax. Commissioner Boice worked heavily with Josephine County Commissioner Dan DeYoung and Association of Oregon Counties Legal Counsel Rob Bovett. Commercial and now industrial growing in Southwest Oregon has reached almost explosive levels with apparent “Cartel” influence and impact. Oregon growers are producing more marijuana than the state can consume, so it is clear much of the marijuana produced in Oregon leaves the state un-taxed and on to the black market. This plan, if passed by the Oregon Legislature short session (February ‘18’) would make it legal to tax the property where the plants are grown – (by the square foot). It would also help identify illegal and

unlicensed growers getting them in to compliance! This issue has required out of county travel to all the other 5 counties and the State Capitol.

10. Southwest Oregon County Commissioners Meetings

Commissioner Boice worked throughout the year on Drug Enforcement issues with Bob Main, Coos County Commissioner and other neighboring County Commissioners and Representatives on Marijuana growing issues, Public Safety and Drug Enforcement awareness.

11. Initiated Curry County Board of Commissioners Workshops

Throughout the year Commissioner Boice scheduled for the Board of Commissioners miscellaneous workshops including Oregon Department of Transportation, Industrial and commercial Marijuana Growing in the Southwest Oregon; including reviewing unintended consequences and related issues.

12. Public Land Management Issues were Huge in 2017

Commissioner Boice worked with all Southwest Oregon Counties – Coos, Douglas, Josephine, Jackson and of course Curry on Public Lands Management Policy Changes brought to the forefront by the Chetco Bar Mega Fire. Commissioner Boice spent untold hours this summer trying to bring sense to the USFS handling of a small lightening caused fire becoming the largest Forest Fire in the nation this year and threatened to burn Brookings, choking unhealthy smoke and reduced tourism were products of a Mega Fire that did not need to happen. The Forest Service may have wrongly applied Minimal Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to save money and compromising our property and forests. “The new (USFS) fire-management policy directed managers to minimize fire-suppression costs and damage consistent with land and resource objectives”. This is an ongoing issue that has seen little cooperation from the other Curry Commissioners.

13. City Council and Local Port Meetings

Commissioner Boice attended several City Council and Port District meetings throughout the county and in each City in the county. Several meetings occurred with the Brookings City Manager, local firefighters, and first responders.

14. 'Fire Awareness Meeting'

Commissioner Boice with the assistance of Representative Brock Smith called a Curry 'Fire Awareness meeting' one week before the discovery of the Chetco Bar Fire. He wrote local 'Letters to Editors', also asking citizens for help with small local and rural fire departments in finding additional volunteers. The Fire Awareness meeting was well attended and again all initiated prior to the Chetco Bar Fire.

15. Association of Oregon Counties

Commissioner Boice was elected to the Board of Directors, the Associated Oregon Counties where much work is done and a good understanding of issues affecting Oregon County

Governments is learned. In 2017 Commissioner Boice attended 14 meetings all over Western Oregon to network and learns how other counties have addressed important issues, which avoids reinventing the wheel with every similar problem the county encounters. Commissioner Boice attended the Association of Oregon County College for County Commissioners, legislative days at the State Capitol as well as other special meetings addressing our current issues. Commissioner Boice usually stays at Motel 6 and shares a room to keep costs down as most many meetings require an overnight stay.

16. Association of O & C Counties

Commissioner Boice was e Elected to the Board of Directors of the Association of O & C Counties, Oregon & California Railroad attending 7 meetings traveling around Western Oregon to do so. The O & C Railroad Revested Lands are approximately 2,600,000 acres located in eighteen counties of western Oregon. Since 1916, the 18 counties where the O&C lands are located have received payments from the United States government as compensation for the loss of timber and tax revenue, beginning as a 50% share of timber revenue on those lands but changing over the years as timber production decreased. The governments of several of the counties have of course dependent on the O&C land revenue as an important source of income for schools and county services. Those funds to the County have been severely cut during the past 15 years. Being a board member assures that Curry County will be represented and Commissioner Boice embraces the challenge as he's deeply concerned with how O & C timberlands are managed. This again requires out of county travel.

17. Sudden Oak Death Task Force (SOD)

Commissioner Boice worked extensively with State Rep. Brock Smith and U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley on SOD issues. Court has only missed one meeting out of 6 working meetings held all over Western Oregon in working to solve this Curry County and South West Oregon forest disease from spreading an issue critical to our forests health.

18. Gorse Action Group (G.A.G.)

Commissioner Boice attended 3 meetings on Gorse irradiation and other invasive species issues affecting Curry County. This required out of county travel to mostly Coos County.

19. Meetings (Boards, Associations -- all level of Governments)

Commissioner Boice has attended numerous meetings including, but not limited to:

Coos Curry Douglas Business Development Corporation

Oregon Coast Community Action

Southwest Oregon Transportation Commission

Southern Oregon Workers Investment Board

Retired Badges

South Coast Business Development Counsel and work on 2017 Legislative issues requiring travel to Salem. This included working with Representative Brock Smith on HB 3435 which passed unanimously and signed into law. It gives Curry County the option of loaning to Taxing Districts

funding for projects from Road Fund Reserves. These loans are very well

20. Court House Window Financing

Commissioner Boice has worked with Curry Facilities Director Eric Hanson and Representatives of Oregon Business Council for debt reduction or new loan term adjustments.

21. Curry Fair Board, Other Meetings

Commissioner Boice has attended many Curry Health Network, Curry Medical, and Curry General Hospital meetings. Commissioner Boice attended Fair Board meetings and worked with Fair Manager Ron Crook, Road Master Robbins, and Gold Beach Fire Chief Tyson Krieger to get debris blocking the North Ocean Road Exit cleared in time for 2017 Fair opening.

Court also was em-cee at County Fair Manager Ron Crook's retirement event after Ron served 50 years as County Fair Manager, an amazing career -- work for betterment of Curry County -- Well Done Ron!

22. Triton 32 Exercise

Commissioner Boice attended the Emergency Management Test and 2 days of training at Cape Blanco Airport in better understanding Disaster Readiness as we should.

23. Rogue River Gravel Bar Closures

Commissioner Boice worked with Sheriff John Ward to advert the arbitrary U.S. Forest Service decisions to close these historical public river access locations.

24. Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative

Commissioner Boice attended 3 different meetings and a fourth via conference call working most recently on their support for reasonable burned timber salvage from the Chetco Bar Mega Fire -- this is an ongoing effort.

25. Title III -- Funding

Commissioner Boice worked extensively with Douglas County Staff (pro bono), Counsel Huttli, and O&C Counties Exec. Director Rocky McVay to secure Title III Funding.

26. Emergency Management Workshop

Commissioner Boice set up and invited Coos County Emergency Management Reps along with Coos Sheriff Zanni to a Curry Emergency Management Workshop.

27. Curry Public Transit

Commissioner Boice worked with Kathy Barnhardt on Public Transit issues.

28. Oregon State Parks

Commissioner Boice had two meetings each with Dennis Comfort and Larry Becker of Oregon

State Parks.

29. **Chetco Bar Fire**

Commissioner Boice met with Governor Brown 3 times, Senator Merkley twice and Senator Wyden and their staffs on numerous occasions during the catastrophic Chetco Bar Fire.

Traveled to Brookings almost every day from Aug 17th through mid-September -- Attending over 70 meetings (August 17th and through 2017) included, but not limited to B.A.E.R., U.S.F.S., B.L.M., S.W.O.C.C., F.E.M.A., C.M.A.T., and N.I.M.O., C.W.P., City of Brookings, Oregon Dept. of Forestry, Public Information Officers, Curry County Sheriff's Dept., Oregon State Police, Brookings Police Department, Coos-Curry Forest Protective Association, Oregon State Fire Marshall, Brookings Fire Department, all (5) Incident Commanders, and National Guard – numerous Community Meetings, all Daily Briefings, Press Conferences, many local and regional fire related radio interviews. Met with new USFS Chief Tony Tooke and his top aid Erin O'Connor as well.

30. **Burned Area Tours**

Commissioner Boice Led 4 groups into the Chetco Bar Fire and Gardner Ridge areas where homes were lost due to the fire.

31. **Burned Timber Salvage**

Commissioner Boice is pushing hard for reasonable and maximum burned timber harvest amounts, challenging the US Forest Service and battling the extreme green activists positions.

32. **Road Closures**

Commissioner Boice has successfully battled the USFS and Federal Government "Overreach" throughout Curry County on public road closings within the Chetco Bar fire footprint. Court believes this is a huge challenge and a conflict that also must be overcome in keeping public access to USFS land open for his Curry Citizens. Our roads are the crucial hub for Law Enforcement, Timber Salvage, Recreation, Forest Projects and Future Fire Suppression access.

33. **Wild Horse Fire Abatement**

Commissioner Boice and his wife Britt have spent 4 extensive months in substantial research. They believe this approach should be considered as a very valuable tool to help eliminate huge amounts of horrible and volatile ground fuels. Court is open to all remedies if it means keeping our forest resources and citizens safe.

34. **Curry Wildfire Prevention Committee**

Commissioner Boice Founded this grassroots group and chaired it for 6 months, meeting almost every Monday night to address USFS Management issues and to seek answers, giving residence a means to voice their concerns. Dedicated to preventing future Mega-Fires and working essentially with everyone to help the people who lost property, the City of Brookings, and Curry

County recover from the shadows of the Chetco Bar and previous devastating mega fires.
Attendance reached over 70 people.

35. Private Property Compensation

Commissioner Boice is working and challenging the U.S.F.S. to find relief for the 7 families who lost their homes and property exchanges for Private Landowner destruction due to the fire. Court believes this fire was completely preventable. The USFS did not manage this fire well!

36. Fire Wise Communities

Commissioner Boice has helped with progress in Fire Wise Communities solutions, along with Curry County Emergency Management Coordinator and Coos-Curry Forest Protective Association from late June '17' to present.