

State of the County Address – January 2018

Thomas Huxley – 2017 Curry County Commissioner Chair

Curry County Administrator Position:

In June 2017 on a two to one vote Commissioners passed Ordinance No. 17-01 creating the position of County Administrator effectively changing the organizational structure of the county. Of the thirty-six counties in Oregon, nineteen are general law counties. Curry became the eleventh general law county with an appointed Administrator. The position of Interim Administrator was filled in September. Plans are currently underway to move the individual into the permanent Administrator position.

All department heads now report directly to the Administrator where they had previously reported to three commissioners. Many decisions that had required approval by the board in a publically noticed meeting are now made by the Administrator.

Road Fund Loans – In 2017 the Oregon State Legislature passed House Bill 3435 allowing three counties including Curry to loan restricted Road Fund reserves to any taxing district located within the county; another county; or any taxing district located in another county. The Board of Commissioners recently directed staff to bring back a draft Ordinance with language to include investment requirements placed on political subdivisions in Oregon under Chapter 294 – County and Municipal Financial Administration.

The lending standards proposed will include standards from the Oregon Local Government Intermediate Fund Investment Guidelines. The process in this subject has just begun and public input is encouraged. The proposal at this time (pending Board approval) is to initially place the Ordinance before the voters in a Ballot Measure later this year.

Update - Geographic Information system (GIS) Mapping Application: As reported in the County Address last year, on November 30, 2016 Curry County entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Lane County to stand up a working Enterprise GIS system. The entire project was outsourced including Lane County hosting the mapping application and completed in early 2017.

This eliminated future software, maintenance and licensing costs to the county which over the previous twelve years had exceeded \$50,000. The county currently pays \$150 per month to Lane County for hosting the application which includes hardware replacement, software licensing and technical support.

The mapping application can be accessed at the link below.

<http://lcmaps.lanecounty.org/LaneCountyMaps/CurryCountyApp/index.html>

Update - Government Channel Video Broadcast of Public Meetings in 2017: Contrary to fallacious libelous statements published in the Curry Coastal Pilot Editorial January 6, 2018, all Curry County Board of Commissioner Meetings are televised in High Definition (HD) video and broadcast live to cable subscribers. Video of the commissioner meetings may also be watched live (during the meeting) on many home computers and other wireless electronic devices capable of streaming video. Curry County Civic TV live streaming video of commissioner meetings may be accessed at the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWs5LGw47-ceVCiRgTrZPIQ/live>

Video of previous meetings may be watched anytime (video on demand) by going to the county website on the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Schedule. Video is usually posted approximately two days following the meeting.

To get a glimpse and some history behind the biased misrepresentations and outright attacks published in the Curry Coastal Pilot click on this link. <https://youtu.be/PzD5eduMEWk>

IT Technical Support Services Budget Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/2017 Summary: July 2016 was the first full month Curry County on a temporary basis contracted with a local company to provide IT services. A formal agreement to continue this arrangement was effective January 1, 2017. The county IT budget approved for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/2017 totaled \$291,000 and included \$175,000 for Personal Services (labor). Preliminary year end results for FY 2016/2017 show the department approximately \$55,000 under budget.

Based on Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/2017 results the approved budget for FY 2017/2018 was reduced by approximately thirty-five percent to \$214,000.

New County Website Scheduled to go Live in February: Contrary to some county official's belief that the cost for the website was \$13,500 per year; the total cost for the new website was and remains \$13,500 payable over four years with no interest. The cost includes five years of unlimited technical support, unlimited storage capacity and a website redesign in year five at no additional charge.

The process of adding tens of thousands of additional public records on the Surveyor's web pages to better serve the public is currently underway with completion expected in the next couple of weeks. These records will be available to the public for download at no charge.

Once the process of adding the Surveyor records is complete, the website developer will complete work with the Parks Department to implement an automated campground reservation booking system for the public with credit card options available. There are additional charges for these services.

Begin Budget Process – Compile Anticipated Revenue FY 2018/2019:

The formal budget process for 2018 begins February 12 with department head meetings. Formal workshops begin mid-March with more detailed discussions (based on workshop discussions) throughout April. The proposed budget is scheduled to be presented to the Budget Committee May 7. Formal Budget Committee meetings will begin Monday, May 14.

One major topic of discussion will likely once again be 'To Use' or 'Not to Use' any Road Fund reserves for law enforcement road patrol. Another topic of discussion will likely be the extent of department cuts for two scenarios:

- A. If Road Fund reserves are used.
- B. If Road Fund reserves are not used.

Other discussion topics which will no doubt be discussed are:

- C. Consider a possible ballot measure to the voters for some type of revenue increase.
- D. Discuss the existing escalating labor and benefit costs.

The following facts are provided for review and consideration prior to the budget process commencing. The public is encouraged to become involved and aware of the budget consequences.

- Over the last twenty years, at least ten Tax Measures were put to the voters. Most were to fund law enforcement. The last was on May 19, 2015. All Tax Measures failed.
- Nearly one third (32.6%) of the citizens in Curry County are 65 and older. Source: US Census Bureau estimates – July 1, 2016. Many are living on Social Security benefits.
- Social Security Cost of Living Allowance (COLA's) from 2010 to 2018 (9 years) totaled 10.8%.
- Step Increases (5% of payroll) and COLA's for eligible Sheriff Deputies (Local Teamsters Union) for the fiscal years 2010/11 to 2017/18 (8 years) totaled 49.5%. Source: County Payroll Orders.
- The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) collective bargaining agreement was settled after the 2017/18 budget was approved. Non-budgeted increase: Approximately \$65,000.
- Outside counsel for negotiating two collective bargaining agreements totaled about \$30,000 and was also not budgeted. Both SEIU and the Teamsters are up for re-negotiation this year.
- Oregon Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) employer contribution rates increased from about \$700,000 to \$850,000 for the FY 2017/18. The same \$150,000 (4% of payroll) will apply next year as the PERS contribution rates are effective for two year periods (2017/18 and 2018/19).
- PERS advisory rates are now out for 2019/20 and 2020/21 and estimated to average twenty percent (20%) of gross payroll. This is a five percent increase (to payroll) over the prior two year period. These contributions are required by Oregon statute and in addition to any other increases. Coupled with Social Security (FICA) contributions, the total will be about twenty-eight percent (28%) of payroll.
- Paid holidays, vacation and sick leave for new full time employees total 36 days.
- Health, dental and optical insurance premiums recently increased to over \$1,250/month. The county currently contributes \$1,000/month for non-representative employees and officials; \$1,100/month for SEIU members and the total premium for Teamsters members. Total county contributions are estimated at about \$1,400,000 per year.