

**APPROVED BY ORDER # 8-07-689**  
**MINUTES OF THE**  
**LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MEETING OF AUGUST 22, 2007**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bill Hall convened the adjourned session of the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners. Present at the meeting were Commissioner Don Lindly, County Counsel Wayne Belmont, and Recorder Liz Sample. Also present were George Boehlert, Chair of the Oregon Coast Aquarium Board of Directors; Assistant County Counsel Rob Bovett; Rick Kissock, Executive Director, Lincoln County Fair and Rodeo; Terry Dillman, *News-Times*; Kiera Morgan, KNPT radio; Rebecah Morris, Director, Central Oregon Coast Association; and Dale Schmidt, President, Oregon Coast Aquarium.

**ROLL CALL - ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM**

Commissioner Thompson was excused for out-of-county business.

**RECOGNITION/PROCLAMATION**

**ADOPTION OF CONSENT CALENDAR**

Chair Hall introduced the Consent Calendar items. Commissioner Lindly highlighted the appointment of Lincoln City Police Chief Steven Bechard to the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council, and made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar in its entirety. Chair Hall seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR  
OF AUGUST 22, 2007**

**CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS**

*Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting*

8-07-685      BOC Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2007

8-07-686      BOC Meeting Minutes of August 15, 2007

*Commission Appointments & Resignations*

8-07-687      Appointment of Chief Steven Bechard to the Lincoln County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council

*License Applications or Renewals*

Tax Foreclosure, Right-of-Way, Sales and Deeds

General Budget Resolutions

Acting as Governing Body of County Wide Service Districts

Documents and Recording Matters in the Commissioners Journal

Recordation of:

8-07-688 Intergovernmental Agreement # 24031 between the Oregon Department of Transportation Public Transit Division and Lincoln County Transportation Service District for STF program

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Public hearing on petition by property owners to voluntarily annex their properties into the Bayshore Special Road District**

Assistant County Counsel Rob Bovett discussed the petition by property owners who own property adjacent to the Bayshore Special Road District to voluntarily annex their properties into the district. The petition is endorsed by the board of directors for the Bayshore Special Road District. Barring any unforeseen comments, Mr. Bovett recommended the Board approve the petition at next week's Board meeting. Chair Hall opened the public hearing and invited public comment, of which there was none. He closed the public hearing. The Board gave consensus to move forward with the petition for approval at next week's Board meeting.

**DECISION/ACTION**

**DISCUSSION/INFORMATION**

**Potential increase of placing county room tax on November 2007 ballot**

Commissioner Lindly discussed the County's transient room tax, which is a locally imposed tax by cities (vote of the city council) and counties (vote of the people) on local lodging facilities. He provided a history of the room tax in Lincoln County, which was approved by the voters for the first time in 1978. If the city tax is less than what the county room tax is, the city's jurisdiction has the authority to collect that tax. The County collects room tax on facilities in county limits or on those lodging facilities in city limits of cities that don't have an imposed room tax.

Commissioner explained that in 1978, the voters approved a 5% lodging tax. In 1991, the County decided to designate a percentage of the tax to economic development and tourism promotion. The citizens of the county approved a 1% increase of the tax. The initial increase of the 1% was given in

full to the Central Oregon Coast Association, but was eventually split between it and the Economic Development Alliance of Lincoln County, and has been since. In the 1997, 1999, and 2001 legislative sessions, there were proposals by the Oregon Lodging Association to change the rules for transient room taxes in the state. It was approved in 2001, but Governor Kitzhaber vetoed the bill. In 2003, Governor Kulongoski indicated his support of the bill, and it passed. The bill imposed an additional 1% on statewide transient room tax that would be dedicated for tourism promotion. Under House Bill 2267, the rules changed on what the money could be used for. The primary purpose of the new tax is to support a tourism-related facility or promotion. The bill also recognized that this puts a burden on local government in that it adds additional requirements for law enforcement, human services, transportation, etc. The legislature allowed up to 30% of the additional 1% room tax collected to be used in any way the local government decides.

The County is presently at 6%, the City of Newport is at 9.5%, and the City of Lincoln City is at 8%. Currently, there are two requests for increasing the transient room tax: one from the Oregon Coast Aquarium, and the other from individual Lincoln County Fair Board members (not the Fair Board as a whole body). Commissioner Lindly stated that both projects meet the criteria for receiving a percentage of the new tax. He reiterated that counties have to go to the voters for an increase in room tax, but there are limited opportunities in which the County does not have to meet certain criteria concerning voter turnout. Chair Hall added that the proposed tax will continue to be a reasonable rate, still lower than other counties. It is the first proposed increase to the tax in 16 years. It will also put the County on par with the local cities' room tax rates, while putting the increased tax to positive uses in the county.

Dale Schmidt, President, Oregon Coast Aquarium, and George Boehlert, Chair of the Aquarium Board of Directors, discussed statistics associated with the Aquarium. Mr. Schmidt expressed regret that Al Gleason couldn't be present for this meeting. The Aquarium continually polls its visitors, and found that 92% of the visitors come from outside Lincoln County. He described the economic impact on the county (\$42 million annually according to a study of the Aquarium) and local cities of the number of visitors to the Aquarium. Mr. Schmidt added his thanks for Commissioner Thompson's support of education on the local fishing industry. Mr. Boehlert discussed changes over the years to the Aquarium and how its success depends on partnerships with local agencies. He requested support of the proposed room tax increase. There was discussion regarding how local governments support similar organizations in the state. Currently the Aquarium receives room tax support from the City of Newport only.

Rick Kissock, Executive Director of the Lincoln County Fair and Rodeo, discussed the need for redeveloping the fairgrounds for increased usage by the community. He recommended development of a covered arena that could be used year-round. He stated that the Fair Board is behind the concept. Chair Hall requested additional information on other arenas in the state. Commissioner Lindly commented on the need for a new exhibit hall on the fairgrounds that could be a multipurpose facility.

Rebecah Morris, Director of the Central Oregon Coast Association (COCA), stated that COCA is the organization that promotes tourism for the unincorporated areas of Lincoln County. She encouraged the commissioners to hold additional public meetings to determine how the proposed money will be spent, and commented on the money allocated to the Oregon Coast Visitors' Association.

Chair Hall stated that he received a letter from J. Gregg Mindt, the President and CEO of the Oregon Lodging Association, expressing concerns about the proposed room tax increase. This topic will be placed on the Board's agenda for action next week, and public input is welcome at that time. Commissioner Lindly stated that if the Board reviews the possibility of a new facility on the fairgrounds, consideration of using the facility as an emergency shelter could be made. He added that the room tax revenue started as \$203,000 to the County General Fund in its first year, and this past year the County received over \$1 million.

## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AS GOVERNING BODY OF COUNTYWIDE SERVICE DISTRICTS**

### **REPORTS**

Commissioner Lindly announced numerous events occurring in the county on September 14, including the groundbreaking of Oregon Coast Community College's new campus in South Beach, a rededication ceremony at Children's Advocacy Center, and a "virtual" groundbreaking of the new shelter for My Sisters' Place. A groundbreaking ceremony for the Newport Head Start center is still underway, but the date has yet to be determined.

### **CONSTITUENT INPUT**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m. These meeting minutes were read and approved this 29<sup>th</sup> day of August 2007.

## **LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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**BILL HALL, Chair**

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**TERRY N. THOMPSON, Commissioner**

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**DON LINDLY, Commissioner**