

**JOINT CONVENTION OF THE CITIES  
OF  
COOS BAY AND NORTH BEND**

**July 24, 2002**

The minutes of the proceedings of a joint meeting of the City Councils of the Cities of Coos Bay and North Bend held on July 24, 2002 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon.

**Those Present**

Those present were Mayor Joe Benetti and Councilors Jon Eck, Roger Gould, Anna Marie Larson, Jeff McKeown, and Cindi Miller. Councilor Kevin Stufflebean was absent. Attending from the City of North Bend were Mayor John Briggs and Councilors Frank Amatisto, Larry Garboden, Charles Graham, Howard Graham, Janet Rubin, and Rick Wetherell.

Staff present were Coos Bay City Manager Bill Grile, Finance Director/City Recorder Janell Howard, City Attorney Nathan McClintock, Police Chief Chuck Knight, Fire Chief Stan Gibson, and Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs. North Bend staff present were Interim Administrator Jan Willis, Interim Recorder Angie Kellar, City Attorney Mike Stebbins, Police Chief Steve Scibelli, and Finance Director Juana Bell.

Mayor Benetti opened the meeting explained citizen comments will only be accepted on the items on the agenda and citizens desiring to address the councils are required to sign in. The order of the agenda was changed to place public comments first.

**Public Comments**

Beverly Saukko, Coos Bay, stated she attended the joint meeting to show support for both Coos Bay and North Bend councils. Stacey Babb, North Bend, stated both she and her husband support consolidation. Tim Bishop, Coos County, stated his support for the process of bringing the consolidation issue to the voters. John Whitty, Coos Bay, reported his involvement in drafting the petition and proposed charter and read a portion ORS Chapter 222 regarding the councils' responsibility at this meeting. He explained the focus is on the petition, not the economic feasibility statement, and noted the statement is filed with the petition but is not part of the petition. The issue is not whether the councils like it or not.

Julianna Seldon, North Bend, commented she would like to hear more about the positives and negatives of consolidation and voters should have the opportunity to have the issue on the ballot. Mrs. Seldon also commented Coos Bay leadership has started rumors regarding the loss of jobs and services. Bob Hale, Coos Bay, commented he has lived in the area for 54 years and supports consolidation. He urged the councils and citizens to work together rather than fight each other and gave Southwestern Oregon Community College and Bay Area Hospital as examples of working together. Mr. Hale noted that if the cities had consolidated in the 60s, the bay area would have a regional post office and Highway 42 would have been completed sooner rather than taking 25 years to build. Les Lemke, North Bend, commented the consolidation petition originated from

## City Council Minutes – July 24, 2002

the IBO and then the Chamber of Commerce got on board. He commented the issue is being rushed and he does not support consolidation. Ray Ronk, North Bend, stated he has lived in the Coos Bay-North Bend area for more than 54 years. The people have signed the petition and they have a right to vote on consolidation.

Shaay Gallagher-Starr, North Bend, thanked both councils for their hard work and commended North Bend council for not rushing through consolidation. She expressed concern about the feasibility statement, whether the consolidation costs are accurate, and how consolidation would affect the North Bend waterfront plan. Andy Nasburg, Coos Bay, stated working together is how we as a community accomplished building Highway 42. Brady Scott, North Bend, commented he attended North Bend High School, but that doesn't matter, what matters is the future of the community. He explained the proposed budget is an estimate and the new council will prepare the actual operating budget for the new city. Mr. Scott commented everything he learned in economics in high school and college points out that we will gain efficiencies of scale with consolidation.

Ken Adams, Coos Bay, commented if anyone is interested in what happened when Empire was consolidated, to contact him. Doug Fletcher, North Bend, stated he has lived 28 years in the county and owns property in North Bend and Coos Bay. He encouraged the council to let the issue go for a vote. Dan Smith, North Bend, stated he has lived in the area for 31 years and when he signed the petition it was with the intention that it would go for a vote. He further stated the citizens are intelligent people, let them make the decision. Ron Opitz commented he is currently a resident of Eugene, but will be moving to the bay area, and simple economics tells us that a consolidated city would save money. He expressed hope that the issue would be resolved by the people's vote, not the emotion of the city council. Glenn Holcombe, Coos Bay, stated he works in North Bend and came from an area with six contiguous cities. The bay area is ripe for consolidation and it is time to put this to a vote for the citizens to decide.

Susan Ottemiller, North Bend, stated she works in Coos Bay and change is inevitable. The number of unemployed in the bay area is increasing and the challenge to those opposing consolidation is to consider if the community will be better off in five years. Mary Schierman, North Bend, commented taking the vote away from the voters is not allowing people to work in the system. Ken Duvall, North Bend, commented the North Bend council is not trying to take away the vote, they want more time to look at the issue. Bill Smith, North Bend, commented he served as councilor and mayor for North Bend and does not mind sharing North Bend's good fortune with less fortunate neighbors. North Bend has Pony Village Mall, a covered swimming pool, and an airport.

Gary Rifkin, Coos Bay, defied anyone not in the planning department to draw a line between the two cities; perhaps consolidation is not the answer. John Whitty, Coos Bay, stated there is a misconception that tonight's decision automatically puts consolidation on the ballot. He pointed out that the Charter Commission can take up to 60 days to adopt a charter and if they take that long, the issue will be on the May 2004 ballot. Teresa Rick, Coos Bay, commented she has lived most of her life in North Bend and by the fact of meeting together this evening, they are proving that we can work together and discuss issues. Ms. Rick further commented there are many other things the two cities could work together on without consolidation.

## City Council Minutes – July 24, 2002

Mark Daily, Coos Bay, commented the budget is not the issue, but what would help all of us. Corporate America looks at the census to locate a business and they are going to miss Coos Bay and North Bend. Dick Wagner, North Bend, commented a city must be of a certain size to attract business and in cities of less than 10,000 population they spend \$880 per capita; cities of 10,000 to 24,999 population they spend \$1250 per capita; and cities of 25,000 to 49,999 they spend \$1050 per capita. Brady Scott, North Bend, stated the things that are being debated here should be debated at the ballot. Lori Collins, North Bend, commented there is not enough time to get everything out in the next three months. Pat Choat Pierce commented the petition states the tax rate is predicted by the budget and she expressed concern there is not enough time to adequately prepare for a November election. There being no further comments, the public hearing was closed.

### **Review of the Petition for Creation of a City Through Consolidation and Determine if it is in Proper Form and Contains the Required Number of Qualified Signatures**

Nate McClintock, Coos Bay City Attorney, explained the petition was approved by the Secretary of State and one of the requirements is that the petition must state the name of the city. At this time the task before the councils is to determine whether the petition is in proper form. Mike Stebbins, North Bend City Attorney, explained the councils must determine if required number of signatures have been received and that the new city would be in compliance with ORS 195, 196, and 197. He further commented ORS 222.225 requires that the economic feasibility statement be included with the petition and it is his interpretation that the council needs to approve the economic feasibility study.

Councilor Jeff McKeown commented the word is feasible, not precise, and the new city council will go through the budget process and adopt a detailed budget. He further commented it is not the role of the councils to decide on consolidation. Councilor Larry Garboden commented part of being in proper form is that the budget is feasible. Councilor Gould reviewed ORS 225.225 regarding the feasibility statement, and commented councils' role is to determine if the petition's form was proper. Mayor Benetti asked what can be done to move forward; what would it take to satisfy the North Bend council. Councilor Frank Amatisto commented the discussion is not about getting it on the May 2004 ballot, but the rush to get the issue on the November 2002 ballot. Mayor Benetti suggested approving the petition to form, appoint members to the Charter Commission, and then come back in 60 days. If the councils meet together after the August 6<sup>th</sup> deadline, it will go to a vote in May 2004. Councilor Janet Rubin commented a more realistic budget is needed. There was further discussion and consensus was to prepare an appropriate budget and have it reviewed by the League of Oregon Cities.

### **Approval of the Petition and Determine if the Incorporation of the Consolidated City Proposed in the Petition Complies with the Goals Adopted Under ORS Chapters 195, 196 and 197**

City of Coos Bay – Councilor Jeff McKeown moved to approve the petition and that it was in proper form. Councilor Cindi Miller seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Councilor Roger Gould moved to approve the petition and that the petitions contain the required

**City Council Minutes – July 24, 2002**

number of qualified signatures. Councilor Cindi Miller seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Councilor Roger Gould moved to accept the petition and that the incorporation of the consolidated city as proposed would comply with the LCDC guidelines as specifically stated in ORS Chapters 195, 196, and 197. Councilor Cindi Miller seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

City of North Bend – Councilor Wetherell moved to approve the petition and that is was in proper form. Councilor Charles Graham seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Councilor Rick Wetherell moved to approve the petition and that the petition contains the required number of qualified signatures. Councilor Frank Amatisto seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Councilor Rick Wetherell moved to accept the petition and that the incorporation of the consolidated city as proposed would comply with the LCDC guidelines as specifically stated in ORS Chapters 195, 196, and 197. Councilor Larry Garboden seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Appointments to the Charter Commission**

City of Coos Bay – Mayor Benetti moved to appoint Councilor Roger Gould and Coos Bay citizen Jerry Lesan to the Charter Commission. Councilor Cindi Miller seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

City of North Bend – Councilor Wetherell moved to appoint Councilor Charles Graham and North Bend citizen Pat Choat Pierce to the Charter Commission. Councilor Howard Graham seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the joint convention of the Cities of Coos Bay and North Bend, the meeting was adjourned.

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Joe Benetti, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Joyce Jansen, Deputy Recorder