



BENTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes Friday, June 10, 2022

Members Attending: **Christina Rehkla**, Visit Corvallis Executive Director; **Jessica Hougen**, Benton County Historical Society Executive Director; **Jimbo Ivy**, Corvallis Parks & Recreation Theater Supervisor; **Bob Richardson**, Senior Land Use Planner OSU; **Jill Van Buren**, Courthouse Preservation Committee representative; **Roz Kenney**, Preservations Works; **Chris Wesfall**, Oregon Judicial Department, Trial Court Administrator; **Scott McClure**, representing the Historic Resources Commission; **Peter Betjemann**, OSU, Director of Arts and Education, College of Liberal Arts

Advisory Staff Attending: Commissioner **Pat Malone** BOC Liaison; **Lynne McKee**, Benton County Natural Areas, Parks and Events Director; **Nick Kurth**, Benton County JSIP Manager; **Erica Ceder**, DLR Group; **Paul Wallsinger**, Benton County Facilities Manager; Elizabeth 'Lizz' Gustin, Benton County Natural Areas, Parks and Events Admin Specialist HCAC Recorder

Introductions - Jill Van Buren walked those in attendance through the courthouse. This was an amazing tour and provided great background for understanding the history of the courthouse.

Previous Meeting Minutes Review –McKee began with the review and approval of March minutes Rehkla made motion to approve with Van Buren seconding the motion – all approved no oppose. April minutes review and approval Betjemann motioned to approve with Rehkla seconding the motion – all approved no oppose. May minutes review and approval Kurth made motion to approve with McClure seconding the motion – all approved no oppose.

Adaptive Review Study – McKee- states a google doc drive link was sent out Tuesday via email. Reviewing some examples of reused spaces from other counties appears a tax office seems to be the majority. Kurth- stated was not certain if the discussion had been made on using as private vs a county government space. McKee- advised that all ideas are invited and would like to have them presented to the table for discussion.

Ideas/Comments - Cedar- stated the preservation plan for BOC first preference is to keep as a public use. Richardson- asked if the community needs were discussed. Cedar - Feasibility document is based on the BOC direction for public uses preliminary look at demands was on 1 – events rental, remit office 2 – Culture for performing arts 3 – government offices. Richardson- suggested something similar to the Gilbert House maybe not using the entire building with

Betjemann- seconding this idea. Richardson would like to brainstorm further on the performance arts avenue. Rehklau- states Corvallis is to be family friendly but there is little to no place to send a family when they are looking for "inside fun". Hougen- thought an inside family attraction would be a great addition but also advised the thought of how this gets funded should be taken in consideration. Rehklau- also suggested lodging as a good use. Westfall – so fascinated by the space here, Oregon is in the shift from a formal judicial system and moving towards a community justice system especially in the coming times of the restorative justice grant program. Using the spaces as a multi-use of family justice needs such as a drug court treatment, family treatment center as these needs will be prevalent with the future changes of laws and retributive justice. McKee- clarified this would be multiple nonprofits within this space? How would you utilize that? Westfall- yes multiple use such as mediation, private or non-profit whichever this way instead of sending them out to the community separate places they would house here all together. Maybe doing the Drug court all on a Wednesday using some space as it is currently designed for. McClure- commented on this idea of being a really good one "a defacto town square" Westfall- there are currently programs now in this neighborhood using this space would place it more in the fore front of community usefulness. Betjeman – expressed concern for external need as a rec public need maybe a structure outside McClure – agrees the space should be used as multi-functional Richardson – wanted to reiterate we were not here to settle on one thing or the other as the space is definitely big enough to accommodate a multi-use format. Who is this for, would it serve a niche population or is it open to the public use? Wesfall- being a restorative justice this would be a center for research and best practice, largely a judicial focus but not exclusively state/county. Richardson- What things are important? The number of people who would use or the revenue that would be generated? Malone – we would want to generate the foot traffic for community involvement instead of a drive by "look there it is" Kurth- if the type stays would the same seismic upgrade not be needed? Ceder- this is immediately required unless using the existing structure as is, or life safety such as 911 dispatch, hosp, then may not be necessary. Kurth- suggests start saving for the seismic upgrade as that alone will cost 15-20 million if not keeping same functionality. Hougen- keeping the historic side may drive the foot traffic Wallsinger- Why save it? Besides the emotional sides of it, looking at those figures 15-20 million in upgrades is it worth the actual saving. Have we looked at tearing down and starting afresh on the land? Malone – we do want the people to come down here Rehklau – this is the most iconic visual for Corvallis but no tourists come inside, they tend to stick to 2nd street. Does agree with Wesfall's ideas, marketing helps with tourists so a mix use would be wonderful, unfortunately state funding funnels to outdoor adventure vs cute community with iconic buildings. Wesfall – For the record the public are more than welcome to come inside they just need to go through security and that turns a lot people away. Roz – what about a restaurant brings traffic, kinda sexy to eat in a courthouse.

Kurth- beyond big hits we do not have political support currently is there not intent to tear down the old jail? This whole area is about to be restructured way different then 4th thru 5th street Ceder- Historic value embodied carbon sustainability, environmental benefits, a dig up on carbon offset. Wesfall – Lynne McKee and Rick Craig chief financial has submitted to the senator Wilders office for funding, uncertain if this is a lump amount or broken down in smaller amounts = \$550,000.00 - \$200,000.00 towards seismic study with \$300,000.00- \$350,000.00 for pre design

Project Plan Timeline – McKee one year to recommend type, Jan/Feb written report to BOC. Public engagement to happen in the fall

Adjournment-McKee- let's build back to end date, assistance in the writing, prepare to plan hard as we do not want to crash at the end. Would like the timeline planned on the next meeting discussion as there is only a few minutes left in this meeting. Public engagement is set for fall after kids go to school and before the holidays. Would like to have a finalized set of ideas come Sept/Oct. the virtual meetings are open to the community. Will send for a doodle pool on monthly meetings. Great discussions and enjoyable ideas 1205 meeting adjourned.