

**Minutes of the Multnomah County  
Board of Commissioners  
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Board Room 100, Portland, Oregon  
Wednesday, May 7, 2014**

Acting Chair Marissa Madrigal called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m. with Vice-Chair Diane McKeel and Commissioners Liesl Wendt, Loretta Smith and Judy Shiprack present.

Also attending were Marina Baker, Assistant Board Clerk, Travis Graves, Director, and Kelli Gallipi, Coordinator, Employee Recognition Events – Human Resources.

**SE.1 Multnomah County Public Service Recognition Week - Employee Awards Ceremony. Presenters: Chair Marissa Madrigal and the Board of Commissioners with Travis Graves and Kelli Gallipi, HR. (1 hour)**

Chair Madrigal welcomed everyone and made the introductions. She said it takes thousands of employees to deliver the diverse array of services Multnomah County provides. She emphasized that every job is essential and every employee makes a positive impact on our community every day. She added that she takes great pride in our diverse, dynamic workforce, and hopes every employee in every department feels appreciated and recognized for their important contributions to our organization and our community.

Chair Madrigal said that today, in celebration of National Public Service Recognition Week, the Board will recognize employees for their achievements. For this formal recognition program, nominations are solicited from employees and the public in the areas of: Diversity and Cultural Competency; Employee Innovation; Outstanding Team Achievement; Superior Public Service to Internal and External Customers; and Sustainability.

This year, more than 100 nominations were received. The Employee Awards Selection Committee had an extremely difficult time selecting the award recipients and spent countless hours working on the implementation of these awards. The nominations were objectively evaluated based on how they demonstrate a commitment to public service, respect for diversity, and exceptional or innovative ways of conducting business.

Chair Madrigal presented the first award, which is the Employee Innovation Award, saying it recognizes employee innovations to improve work processes, which result in monetary savings or significant operational efficiencies for the County. The Elections Division sends out a vast amount of mail. Last year, the US Postal Service developed a new barcoding standard for bulk mail and established a deadline of January 2014 to become compliant. As the mail ballot specialist, Dena Abeyta was charged with deciphering the new requirements and bringing the division into compliance. When

Dena found there were no experts in the postal service to map the way, she became the expert. Through perseverance and clever detective work, Dena brought the Division into compliance in time for the May 2013 Election, a full eight months ahead of the Federal deadline. In fact, Multnomah County was the first Oregon elections office to become compliant. In January, Dena was promoted to Elections Project Manager, but she continues to help innovate mail ballot processes for the division and routinely shares her expertise with elections offices in other counties. The Board recognized and congratulated Dena Abeyta.

Vice-Chair McKeel presented the next award, the Diversity and Cultural Competency Award, which recognizes employees and teams that promote inclusiveness and champion diversity in the community or within our organization. She said today they would recognize the Sheriff's Department Detective Keith Bickford and Program Specialist Teresa Rios-Campos for the remarkable strides they've made in building trust between the community of Wood Village and local law enforcement. Many families in Wood Village live as victims of crime and human trafficking, afraid to seek help because of their immigration status. The County has worked hard to improve health, education and other important issues in this community, but building trust between the residents and law enforcement proved difficult. By showing genuine empathy and respect for the community as they developed presentations, answered questions, and documented and translated residents' stories to ensure they receive effective legal representation, Keith and Teresa have bridged that gap. On October 6, 2013, the two led an Immigration Clinic in conjunction with numerous county and community partners, serving more than 40 people who were and are victims of human trafficking and crimes. They brought in food and 20 immigration attorneys, interpreters and welcoming smiles for all who attended. The event was very successful in strengthening relationships in the community. Keith Bickford and Teresa Rios-Campos were recognized and congratulated.

Vice-Chair McKeel said she was also happy to present the Superior Public Service to External Customers Award. The purpose of this award is to recognize individual employees for outstanding service to the citizens of Multnomah County. When Library Administrator Kylie Park noticed many children spending entire summer days at the Rockwood Library without eating, she decided to take matters into her own hands. Accessing a number of community resources, Kylie brought a free, hot summer meals program to the Rockwood branch. Engaging library staff and community volunteers, Kylie made a significant and lasting impact on children and families in her community. In addition to feeding hungry children, the program encouraged many families to engage in other library services before and after lunch, and the staff saw an increase in their Summer Reading Program. In all, 2,125 meals were served at Rockwood Library last summer – all thanks to Kylie's compassion and her commitment to exceptional customer service. Kylie Park was recognized and congratulated.

Commissioner Shiprack presented the Sustainability Award, which salutes employees and teams who apply creative thinking to address the root causes of environmental, social or economic inequities that lead to disproportionate impacts on the most

vulnerable communities within Multnomah County – inequities that, if left unaddressed, will increase the need for our safety net services. She said the first recipient of the 2014 Multnomah County Sustainability Award is the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office Sustainable Jails Team, whose mission is to provide excellent stewardship of public funds by saving money, conserving natural resources and reducing recidivism. Last year, the team expanded its focus to address the human cost of jails by pursuing programming and partnerships that connect inmates with nature. In 2013, the Sheriff's Office launched the Inverness Jail Inmate Garden. Inmates raised more than 800 pounds of fresh produce for local food banks during the first growing season. More than 40 inmates also completed the Seed to Supper gardening and healthful eating curriculum. The Sustainable Jails Team was recognized and congratulated.

Commissioner Shiprack said she was also happy to present the next recipient of the 2014 Multnomah County Sustainability Award, who is Roy Iwai of the Department of Community Services Water Quality Program. Roy's leadership on ecological restoration within the department and the partnerships he has nurtured outside the county have led to many impressive successes. Roy has leveraged federal, state and regional funding to support the county's restoration work, maximizing the impact of our limited capital budget. He's also been a leader in applying an equity lens to his work, looking at how the county prioritizes projects to maximize impacts on disenfranchised communities, how these communities are involved in decision making, and how the county and its partners engage the entire community in restoration efforts to ensure our messages are culturally appropriate. Roy Iwai was recognized and congratulated.

Commissioner Wendt presented the Superior Public Service to Internal Customers Award. Which promotes and recognizes individuals for outstanding customer service to fellow county employees. There were two winners in this category. First, Les Spitler, a contract specialist with the Department of County Assets, was recognized. Multnomah County operates programs and services in more than 100 locations, ranging from new construction to century-old buildings. Keeping these facilities operational requires a wide range of maintenance and repair contracts. A few years ago, there were only a hand full of service contracts in place, but in less than two years, Les Spitler has put together more than 120 service contracts in support of county operations. He's also completed many capital improvement contracts. The work Les performs touches every employee and citizen of Multnomah County. From keeping buildings clean to performing major renovations and completing new construction, Les plays a role in all of it. He has saved the county thousands of dollars by soliciting bids from various vendors and awarding contracts to the most qualified competitive bidder, and he's earned the confidence of his colleagues at the county as well as the vendors with whom he works. Les Spitler was recognized and congratulated.

Second, Commissioner Wendt presented the Award to Elizabeth McHugh. Between June 2012 and August 2013, the Department of County Human Services faced an onslaught of changes to the administrative rules that govern their work with individuals impacted by developmental disabilities. Little or no direction was provided on how to implement the mandated changes, though substantial penalties would be incurred if the

Department did not comply. More than 30 staff and 1,300 families were impacted by the chaos. As Senior Program Specialist and Children's Crisis lead, Beth McHugh played a critical role in leading her team through this extreme system reform. Beth provided group and individual coaching, accompanied staff on home visits to explain the changes to clients, implemented new forms, provided training on new assessments and more. Because of her diligent efforts and assistance, the department was able to successfully implement one of the biggest systems changes in Oregon for children impacted by developmental disabilities. Beth McHugh was recognized and congratulated.

Commissioner Smith presented the Outstanding Team Achievement Award, which recognizes members of work teams that add significant value to the organization and reflect efforts made above and beyond normal work duties or performance expectations. While many projects performed by the FPM Carpenter and Lock Shop teams are time sensitive, one recent project stands out as an example of the group's unwavering commitment to their crafts and their dedication to effective public service. In response to an increase in inmate suicide attempts at the Multnomah County Detention Center, the team was charged with resolving flaws in the existing cell window covers and doors. Inmates had found ways to compromise the systems, posing an extremely serious Fire-Life-Safety concern. Within days of the project being declared an emergency, the team's eight carpenters and two locksmiths performed inspections, assessed the problems, procured materials and began completing the necessary repairs. Through an outstanding team effort which required long work hours, the project was completed sooner than anticipated and under budget. Since then, there have been no suicide attempts utilizing the cell window covers and no cell doors have been compromised. The FPM Carpenter and Lock Teams was recognized and congratulated.

Commissioner Smith said the next award represents a new category – the Committee's Choice Award. Over the years, the Awards Committees have encountered many nominations that stand out as remarkable but don't fit any predetermined categories. To recognize these nominations, County personnel rules were updated, giving the Awards Committee the option of recognizing a nomination that captures the essence of this award program – a nomination that inspires everyone to take pride in our service to the community.

The very first recipient of the Multnomah County Committee's Choice Award is Library Outreach Specialist Alicia Byrd. Byrd works with the Books2U program, which encourages reluctant young readers to embrace reading by hosting book talks and providing free books for classrooms. During the summer, the program distributes free books at parks, free lunch sites, housing units and community events. In 2011, Byrd realized that if Books2U provided books for adults as well as children, those adults would become good reading role models for their kids. She also noticed the library's used bookstore, Title Wave, discarded a vast number of used books, so she worked with the store's supervisor, along with Friends of the Library, to begin distributing adult books at free lunch sites. It was a huge success. Byrd expanded the program to include a number of community events and partnered with Street Books to provide children's

and adult books to unhoused populations. Her latest success is Books on Bus, a Portland Public Schools literacy outreach program that places books on school buses so children can read on their way to and from school. The students are supposed to return the books, but that doesn't always happen – and that's OK! Byrd provides the program with unwanted books from the library's used bookstore to spread the joy of reading. Alicia Byrd was recognized and congratulated.

Chair Madrigal said the last several months being the Multnomah County Chair have been one of the greatest privileges of her life. To be able to name the Chair's Excellence Award for county employees is very special to her. She said that in deciding this award, she had to think of all the people that came together across departments, and step outside their scope of services and jointly provide services to the County. She said she was impressed by the tenacity and commitment of staff during the four days of the Snow-Pocalypse 2014. The team worked through the storm and made sure jails were staffed, roads were cleared, call centers remained open, and essential staff had a way to get to work. While shutting down our buildings as the storm came in, a van from prison pulled up to Mead Building and let out a man in sweats and a T-shirt. Everything was closing down. This person had no place to sleep, no warm clothes. He opened up the facility, knew there was a closet where there were clothes, then he helped get the man to a shelter. Matt Brady

Dedication to the mission no matter what your role or title is and taking care of the community and when we see someone suffering we do something about it. I couldn't be prouder of our community and people. The Team was recognized and congratulated.

Chair Madrigal thanked everyone for coming and invited them to stay for photos of the winners followed by refreshments in Room 112.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Submitted by:

Lynda J. Grow, Board Clerk and  
Marina Baker, Assistant Board Clerk  
Board of County Commissioners  
Multnomah County, Oregon