
Agenda

**January 6, 2025
4:45 PM**

Committee Members:

Judy Juntunen Jill Van Buren Scott McClure
Adrienne Fritze Carol Chin Cornelia Levy-Bencheton David Dodson Roz Keeney

Staff Members:

Paul Wallsinger, Benton County Facilities Manager
Levon Atwood, Benton County Facilities Technician, Courthouse Maintenance
Amelia Butler, Facilities Administrative Specialist (Recorder)

- I. Introduction & Visitor Comments**
- II. Agenda Review**
- III. Administration:**
 - **Election of a New Committee Chair**
 - **Member Terms and Expirations**
 - **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
- IV. Old Business: Discuss Board of Commissioners Courthouse Reuse Recommendation Report**
- V. New Business**
- VI. Other Business & Questions**

Meeting Adjournment

Next Meeting Scheduled For: February 2025

Minutes

**January 9, 2025
4:45 PM**

Committee Members:

Judy Juntunen Scott McClure
Adrienne Fritze Carol Chin Cornelia Levy-Bencheton David Dodson Roz Keeney

Staff Members:

Paul Wallsinger, Benton County Facilities Manager
Levon Atwood, Benton County Facilities Technician, Courthouse Maintenance
Amelia Butler, Facilities Administrative Specialist (Recorder)

Absent:

Jill Van Buren

- I. **Introduction & Visitor Comments:** Meeting commenced at 4:52PM. There were no new introductions nor visitors present.
- II. **Agenda Review:** All agenda items were correct.
- III. **Administration:**
 - **Election of a New Committee Chair and Officers:**
 - Regarding the election of new committee officers, Paul recommended electing a chair and vice-chair. Adrienne inquired if the by-laws had specific guidelines for electing officials, to which Judy clarified that the by-laws mention only the chair and vice-chair and their roles.
 - Continued: Judy also referenced a clause in the by-laws allowing a non-CPC member to participate in a subcommittee for special projects or research outside the usual committee membership. Judy discussed her experiences as chair, detailing past projects such as the staircase enclosure, guard station installation, and the discovery and cataloging of original courthouse furniture.
 - The group then discussed the idea of a project, such as a historical book about the courthouse, though there was mention of a similar recent publication. Judy noted a past unfinished project involving historical photographs of the courthouse and suggested that if the committee wanted to complete such a project, it would need to narrow the focus to specific topics like oral histories or court histories.

- Adrienne asked if the committee could form subcommittees for these different projects, and Judy confirmed that this would be possible, and that the committee could use available funds for projects like the book.
- **Roz motioned to nominate Adrienne as chair and Carol as vice-chair, which was seconded by David. The committee voted unanimously to approve the nominations.**
- **Member Terms and Expirations:** Adrienne was reappointed for another term expiring in 2027. Amelia read out the expiration dates for the newly appointed members. Paul informed the group that the Board of Commissioners would pursue a new member for the absence created the passing of Pete Barnhisel in December 2024.
- **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** The minutes from the October 2024 meeting were approved after a motion by Adrienne and a second by David.

IV. **Old Business: Discuss Board of Commissioners Courthouse Reuse Recommendation Report, Future Courthouses Uses and the Progression of the New Courthouse project**

- Paul explained that Benton County Public Works Facilities currently manages the Courthouse, but once the new courthouse is completed, it will be transferred to the Benton County Natural Areas, Parks and Events (NAPE) department. Scott questioned whether NAPE would handle maintenance, to which Paul confirmed they would. Judy recalled the recommendations report presented to the BOC, and Paul clarified that these are merely suggestions at this stage and not finalized decisions. He expressed his belief that a mixed-use approach is likely to be adopted.
- Judy inquired about the expected completion date for the new courthouse, which is projected for the fall of 2027. Scott raised a question regarding whether a change to non-governmental operations would necessitate a seismic retrofit. David responded that he had researched the use classification for the courthouse, indicating that it largely depends on the proposed use. If someone were to lease the building for a specific purpose, they would need to coordinate with NAPE and the city of Corvallis. Roz asked if there was a timeline for the BOC's official decision regarding the building's future, and Adrienne inquired about NAPE's involvement, to which Paul affirmed.
- He also confirmed that Jesse Ott has been appointed as the NAPE director and played a key role in the BOC reuse report under discussion by the committee. Judy pointed out that the construction timeline for the new courthouse aligns with the committee's focus. The group deliberated on potential transitions related to the new courthouse's use and the associated timeframe. Paul elaborated on the various lease options the county could explore based on the activities of the courthouse occupants. The importance of establishing a timeline for their objectives in conjunction with the new courthouse project was emphasized. Additionally, the group examined a specific recommendation from the report advocating for the courthouse to be adapted for residential use and discussed its potential benefits.
- Judy expressed concerns that the requirement for seismic retrofitting is obstructing the future functionality of the courthouse and may have adversely influenced public perception regarding its potential alternative uses. David shared insights from his experience with other seismic upgrades, discussing various factors that could impact the courthouse in this context. Paul mentioned that he possesses studies related to the courthouse, indicating that while the retrofit is feasible, the associated costs are currently

prohibitive. He noted that the courthouse is grandfathered under the 2008 American Disability Act (ADA) regulations, and any modifications could necessitate compliance with the latest ADA standards, which could also incur significant expenses. Adrienne inquired whether any public surveys had been conducted regarding the courthouse's uses, to which the group confirmed that the report includes public feedback and survey results on potential reuses. Adrienne also asked if the committee was aware of which recommendations from the Board of Commissioners necessitate the seismic retrofit, and Paul suggested that it would be reasonable to assume that any recommendations beyond maintaining governmental operations would require it. Carol questioned when the last study was conducted and its cost; Paul responded that a report from the past decade estimated the cost at \$14 million, while the consulting firm DLR's study for the Justice System Improvement Project (JSIP) program indicated \$25 million, potentially reflecting the overall expenses of the entire JSIP project. Judy recalled that the initial study estimated costs at \$6 million. Paul concluded by stating that several factors could potentially reduce the costs, suggesting that they may not be as exorbitant as previously indicated.

- V. **New Business:** David suggested that the committee revisits their collective purpose at the next meeting and discuss the BOC Reuse Recommendation Report again, to which the group concurred. There was no other new business.

VI. **Other Business & Questions:**

- **Public Works Staff Roles:** Paul inquired about the committee's expectations for the PW staff. Judy responded that they appreciate Levon's expertise regarding the courthouse. Scott raised a question concerning the courthouse roof, to which Paul explained that the county had explored a potential replacement project last year, but it was deemed too expensive. Consequently, the county decided to repaint the roof, which will extend the courthouse's lifespan. Carol then asked about the original roofing material, which is tin. She also inquired about any leaks, and Paul confirmed that there have not been any significant issues. Roz questioned the origin of the original tiles, and Paul mentioned that he had undertaken a search to locate the original manufacturer. He discovered that while the tiles are no longer produced, they can be replicated. Levon shared that while cleaning out the basement vault, he came across some original centennial documents and plans for the initial cabinets. Judy suggested that these documents might be suitable for the historical museum, and Paul concurred, believing it would be a good idea to have them preserved there. The group then examined the documents.
- The group opted to dedicate a time at the beginning of future meetings for Public Works staff to provide updates about County operations that might be relevant to the committee.

Meeting Adjournment: 6:05 PM

Next Meeting Scheduled For: February 2025