# WHITE RIVER HEALTH DISTRICT
# DESCHUTES RIM HEALTH CLINIC
# BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING
# NOVEMBER 7, 2024 MEETING MINUTES

1605 GEORGE JACKSON RD.
PO BOX 219, MAUPIN OR 97037
www.deschutesrimhealthclinic.org

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sue Knapp, Allison Bechtol, Ashley Biesenthal, Shiela Murphy, David Farris
**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**:
**DRHC**: Lindsay Roper
**GUESTS**: Phil Brady, County Commissioner, many additional community members

## I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by the Chair, David Farris.

## II. PUBLIC COMMENT: This is the time when the public may ask questions on topics not on the agenda

David Farris opened the floor to the public for comment.

Lee Balentine, the prior dentist at the clinic for about 38 years, stated that the dental practice was the initial entry into this clinic. He ran a successful practice for years. He recommends expanding our dental practice as much as possible to capture this much needed income.

Sharon Balentine: shared her disappointment in the failure of the option levy and thanked the Board for holding this meeting.

Karletta Carrithers: prior Board member (12years). She is attending to lend her support.

## III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discuss Election Results and Next Steps:

- David shared that he and Commissioner Phil Brady attended a meeting this past week in which Bright Sky solar representatives were present. As the conversation unfolded, they discussed their potential willingness to contribute to community betterment projects and stated they might be willing to donate a significant amount of money to the clinic. There is no guarantee at this time. Commissioner Brady is hoping to meet with other solar companies and solicit them for support. David is hopeful that we can generate enough support from these companies, as well as other local donors, to keep us up and running. Again, no guarantees. If we can raise 150K or more, it would allow us to hire a mid-level and maybe support staff and therefore increase our revenue to a sustainable level.
- David shared that he is new to the Board and is in the process of retiring so he is still getting up to speed on all thing's clinic related. Familiarizing himself with the clinic financials is a high priority for him. Last month, he revised a financial summary Sue had put together for everyone's benefit and broke out fixed costs and operational costs so if we needed to close the clinic, we could easily see what bills would be outstanding. He is interested in seeing things like accounts receivable and days on accounts receivable. The question he wants to answer is what our average monthly collection is. What is our cash flow.
- Sue spoke up and talked through the pro-forma budget she has put together that tracks exactly what we bring in and what our expenses are as they occur by month. We were notified by the county that the District will receive $155K as our tax allotment for the 2024-2025 tax year. If we parcel this out evenly over the coming year, it will give us about 13K per month. If we can increase revenue, even slightly, through medical/dental income or some other means and keep all other costs status quo, she feels that we can squeak by. David was encouraged to hear these numbers.

- David asked about if anyone has ever done a "needs assessment"? This would help us tailor our services to our community needs. This will be put on the "to do" list.
- Sue shared that she believes what happened with the levy, is what happened at the national level. Many people are struggling with the economy and making ends meet. They simply didn't want to pay additional taxes. Which is understandable. She suggests trying to put the levy on the May 2025 ballot but at a lower ask...maybe .25/1,000 rather than .50/1,000. Allison thinks we need to look at the number/budget before we make a change in the "ask". What is the dollar amount we need?
- David asked a roundtable question: Why do we think the levy didn't pass – messaging?
    - It wasn't clear that this was a continuation of the existing option tax (for lack of better words) not a request for a new, additional tax dollars. Technically, it would be a reinstatement of what property owners had been paying in 24-25. Thus, it would be considered a "new" tax in FY 25-26, if passed. Our message was not clear.
    - We should have more meetings or other ways to reach the community to explain our situation.
    - Nothing in the voter guide. No information. No letters in favor etc, except for a one-pager accompanying the ballot that presented language for all the ballot measures. The county is responsible for the information presented in the voter guide; we could talk to them.
- David asked if there are changes, we need to be making that might make for a better outcome?
    - Hold community meetings. Attend other kinds of meetings within the community. Figure out a way to get the naysayers to attend.
    - Get key members of the community to FB posts, do videos etc in support
    - Create a marketing plan (long range)
    - David is open to getting emails and texts if people have questions/concerns.
- Grants: It was suggested to pursue grants for operations etc. Sue stated she will be working on one with the Oregon Community Foundation, and there are several other potential grants to pursue.
- David asked the Board: How convinced are you that we should put this levy on the ballot in May. All Board members are in favor!
- Other thoughts:
    - Do more all along to bring the community into the process. Help them understand the issues.
    - Hold brainstorming session(s) with key people from community to help us
    - Create a campaign: Pay the clinic the same amount you would have paid in taxes, if levy had passed. Contributing is easy. The Foundation website has information on how to donate.
    - Need talking points/messaging about what our next steps are. David will work on this.
    - Will continue services at the current level and if we get additional support, maybe increase services.
    - Try to bring in more patents: use any opportunities to let the community know that there is availability in the schedule. Lindsay is posting and reaching out to patients to remind them of their appointments to reduce the number of 'no-shows'.
    - Ashley volunteered to hold a flu vaccine clinic. She also suggested targeting sports physicals at the beginning of the school year (if we have a provider).
    - David:Q. Is transportation the biggest issue? A. it's a big issue
    - Shelby offered her services as well 1-2 days per week. Maybe outside blood draws/labs
    - Daivd asked that we email suggestions on messaging to him. Supportive of connecting with community groups, holding community brainstorming session(s). He will write an article for S. Wasco Times.
    - Sue reminded us that for May elections: paperwork will need to be filed with County in March.

- Suggestion: include questions from naysayers in the information being sent to the public.
- Sue reminded us of "capacity" issues…while we now have 5 Board members, we only have one staff person so need volunteers to help execute all our ideas.
- A Board work session may be held next week. This would be a public meeting and require prior notification.

Closing comments: Tell you friends, we are not going away! We are working to be better about messaging and being inclusive.

Side note: David knows of a PA , a new grad, who might be interested in a position with us. Of course, adding a mid-level is contingent on obtaining additional funding. We currently cannot afford to hire. Housing is always a concern. Let David know if you think of any "in kind" type of donations that would be helpful…like housing

**IV. ADJOURNMENT OF SPECIAL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING:** David Farris, Board Chair, adjourned November 7 2024, Special Board Meeting at 6:11 pm

ATTESTATION:

David Farris, Board Chair

Attest: Allison J Bechtol

Allison Bechtol, Board Secretary