



**HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, January 29, 2025 | 6:30 PM**

**4500 SW Research Way, Corvallis  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Kalapuya Building  
Or via Teams**

The meeting started 6:30.

**Those present at the meeting included:**

HRC Commissioners: Adrienne Fritze, Mariapaola Riggio, Autumn Peterson (chair), Bruce Anderson, Bob Honneffer  
Jay Sexton (Vice-chair) was absent.

Staff: Shannon Bush, HRC liaison; Morgan Driggs, Assistant Planner; Petra Schuetz, Planning Manager; Laurel Byer, Benton County Engineer

Public: Paul Dean, David Evans Associates

**A. Welcome & Introductions**

Everyone introduced themselves.

**B. Minutes Review and Approval – December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Minutes were amended to correct Commissioner Honneffer name and change his hours from one hour to 13 hours. Motion to approve amended minutes by Commissioner Honneffer and seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Minutes were then approved.

**C. “Hayden Road Covered Bridge project” presentation from Laurel Byer, PE and consultant Paul Dean**

Laurel Byer: The Hayden Road Covered Bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places. It has been weight limited, obviously length, height, and width restricted for a while, but weight limited to 12 tons by the state. They go through and they do inventories of all our bridges to see what their current condition is. Buses can't get over; trash can't go over. Log trucks can't go over. We received grant funding through the state to construct a new bridge. Initially what we had proposed was leaving the covered bridge in place and then going to the east around the bridge. There are several unique issues here that we didn't realize as we were first scoping out the project. A lot of environmental concerns when we looked at going to the east, what you see as a normal ditch on the side of the road actually is not.



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Paul Dean: It's a defined creek, or at least a creek that carries salmon at a time, which was which was unknown. So, if we move the road to go around the bridge, we have to make this creek up to the standards where the fish can navigate it. Right now, it's not, although it's still classified as salmon habitat. So, if we move the road, there's a bunch of work that must be done to make the stream fish passable. Any crossing for that stream would have to be fish friendly. The creek is also in the right of way. A huge culvert would have to be constructed, and we would have to refill that creek that goes down to the Alsea River because it's too steep to actually meet.

The engineers wanted to look at all the options, so they looked at moving the Creek to the other side of the road. They met with the property owners that live across the highway. This property has been in their family for 70 years, they've been out in the area for over 100 years, so the family's been out there for quite some time. The county would have to purchase the property. First of all, it would have to be appraised, the county would grant the property owners damages, and would be buying all trees along the road and then purchasing more. The property owners made it very clear that they were not interested. So that would mean the county would have to look into eminent domain costs for the property.

Another option is to decommission the bridge, take it apart. This is one of three covered bridges in the county, and the engineers want to save the bridge. So, the engineers thought, is there a spot that we could move it to that could still have good character and preserve a covered bridge? There are a couple of spots on county parks property that they county could look at. There's Clemens Park that actually needs a new pedestrian bridge within the park and McBee Campground, by the Alsea Falls recreational area. So, there's potential for a good place for the town of Alsea.

This presentation is to let the commissioners know about this project and just kind of get preliminary feedback before spending a lot of time and money putting together applications and going that direction.

A commissioner asked what parts of the bridge they would be trying to salvage. Paul said any decking that was still usable. But if it's not, then it would mostly be the guard rails and then the barn basically. And then they'd have to rebuild the bridge somewhere else, but still try to maintain that integrity and have the same sort of wood plank.

Commissioner Riggio recently wrote a paper on the construction and relocation of cultural heritage. This is not one of the most complicated cases that could take advantage of this approach. There've been entire temples that have been removed in another location. So rather than losing it, this is definitely a potential approach. It's feasible. The context is also part of the authenticity and the cultural value. So, by the contextualizing it somehow, we're losing part of the original value, but if this means we use it in a place where there may be even more users, more access to the public, then this can counterbalance the deconstruction and relocation.



Another commissioner pointed out that we have that in many parts of the county already. And they've seen a lot of cover bridges dealt with in this way. Yes, it's sad we lose the context, but perhaps where it gets newly installed, we can tell that story, have a nice plaque, add it to our driving book list or kind of address it later on.

Next, the HRC need to talk to the Alsea community because this will be big for them. The bridge should be kept as close to the Community as possible and both Clemans and McBee are close by.

Benton County could also use 3D scanning technology to scan the bridge and have it all documented. This might be a great opportunity to capture it digitally. We may not have the money to develop a set of plans, but we would have the scan in case anything happens to the bridge, it could be reconstructed. We could have some university students scan the bridge to train on the technology, and that would help us afford it.

**D. Van Buren Bridge**

Laurel will connect Commissioner Riggio with a contact at ODOT to give a copy of the model of the Van Buren Bridge to her husband, who is a professor teaching a class in virtual reality.

**E. Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant budget:** Benton County is not eligible to apply for a CLG grant again until February 2026. CLG grants run every other year and Benton County was awarded a grant in 2024.

The commission asked how much money is left in the budget. Shannon will follow up with an answer. There is enough money left for programming. Petra is proposing a true historic resources program budget during the county budget requests, but there's no guarantee it will get approved. We will know in May or June.

**F. Status update from Commission on Benton County Driving Tour Booklet edits**

Commissioner Peterson, Sexton, and Fritze met the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> of January to go through the booklet line by line. There are a multitude of issues. There is no bibliography, so the commissioners weren't sure where the contractor was getting his information from. There are a lot of text changes, and the commission would like to use historical photos instead of current photos, so it feels more historical. They created a Google Drive folder for working purposes so they can each work on it and divvy it up. The commission would like to increase the budget on this project.

Per Shannon, the drop-dead deadline for this, where everything has to be complete in order for people to get paid, is the June 30<sup>th</sup>, and it has to be well before June 30<sup>th</sup>. It has to go through finance. There's a whole series of processes that have to happen. Shannon suggested the group work on the text and getting things finalized, to have the text in and imagery, whatever it is that they want included given to Eric in a final format by March maybe end of March. So, they have April and May to work on it. It would probably be



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difficult for him to give us a budget estimate, like a cost estimate, until we have probably final or nearly final text for him to assess.

There needs to be more than just a mention of the native peoples before moving on to white settlers' houses and land. There needs to be a transition. The first step could be starting at the confluence and having a photo of the confluence. There should also be map blow ups of areas instead of just the overall map.

The commission decided they will have 30 days and will divide it out into sections for commissioners to work on.

A commissioner asked how to use an image legally. All that's needed is to include the source. Eric already has a photo library Inga shared with him. He just might need help deciding which one to use where. So before the commission works on finding photos, Commissioner Peterson will reach out to him. The commissioners will work through the sections they've each personally already worked on and convert the Google Doc and send it to Eric. The commissioners will divvy up the work between themselves outside of the meeting tonight.

#### **G. May 2025 Historic Preservation Month programming**

Shannon pulled up last year's budget to look at where money was spent on Historic Preservation Month programming. The trend seems to be that the HRC does not spend all of the money budgeted for each event and money gets moved around to different items. The City of Corvallis also supplements the budget.

Commissioner Riggio mentioned possibly needing some funds for transportation to do a diagnostic study on an existing historic structure in the county for a class she teaches in the spring.

There was a pool of people interested in creating tours. Commissioner Peterson said she would reach out to Doug about that. The process for creating a tour involves an audition of it to a panel that decides if it's good enough. Jay will likely conduct a tour of the Grange. Gemma was interested in hosting more tours. Sarah from the City of Corvallis has said the city is still interested in working with us for Historic Preservation Month.

It was suggested that the Corvallis and Albany HRCs join the upcoming Benton County HRC meetings to discuss and coordinate Historic Preservation Month. Shannon will invite them to the February, March, and April meetings. The HRC will come up with theme ideas by the February meeting and will look over last year's Historic Preservation Month programming to decide which to do again and who to reach out to. Shannon will email a pdf of last year's programming.

There was discussion of stretching out the programming so it doesn't happen all in 30 days. There was interest in having programming correspond to national heritage months such as Black History Month or Asian History Month and other cultural events. Commissioner Fritze



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mentioned doing Benton County Spectres again this year. A biking tour of Benton County Historic Places was suggested. Commissioner Anderson brought up traffic control as a possible issue and Shannon stated that people would sign liability waivers. Commissioner Peterson will speak to an avid biker in the area to ask for her help with ideas and coordinating a ride. Commissioner Riggio suggested offering a few events, such as Commissioner Peterson's historic windows event, to professionals in the area and advertising the events to people in the construction sector such as architects, engineers, and contractors. Also utilizing wood sciences and architecture students from the university to speak on case studies and host workshops.

Commissioner Fritze suggested creating a work group around marketing and utilizing Gemma's social media skills to advertise HRC events. She is also the chair of the Courthouse Preservation Committee now. Tours of the Courthouse were also suggested. Commissioner Anderson is developing a tour of the history of Corvallis real estate and the sales of historic buildings. Shannon suggested a tour of historic houses similar to Open House New York, where the public can walk through the house or even just around the property to look at the house. She also suggested touring restored properties with real estate agents and brokers to help them understand what it takes to restore a historic building. Commissioner Fritze suggested partnering with the Downtown Corvallis Organization because they have a huge list of contacts and could market for us. Igniting the citizenry is key to our preservation efforts.

#### **H. Items from the Public - None**

#### **I. Items from County Commissioner Liaison Nancy Wyse - None**

The liaison will now be the new County Commissioner, Gabe Sheperd.

#### **J. Items from Staff**

There is funding for an intern to clean up GIS data files. We're specifically seeking an intern from OSU or Linn Beton CC that has GIS skills so that they can help us with the actual database update. But Shannon is uncertain about requiring historic preservation skills, because when we did that last year, we actually didn't get any takers for this internship. So, they would focus more on GIS skills and if they have an interest in historic preservation, great, that'll give them a one up. What's the kind of grading matrix that we would use for assessing condition of a structure? Because we have to be very clear in how we're asking that intern to make that assessment. They'd be assessing all of that data before they even get to looking at the structure. So marrying all of these structures together, getting their addresses right for the fire districts pinpointed on Google, the coordinates. So there's a ton of work to get checking all those boxes before you even get to is that building considered habitable. We are required to have an up-to-date database for SHPO. The position will be



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posted next month. Shannon will give Commissioner Riggio a PD to pass along to colleagues and get the word out at OSU.

**K. Items from the HRC Commissioners**

Commissioner Fritze said "Spectres" is going to be rewritten and released in May. She's meeting with Jessica and Anya from the historic museum about turning it into a school curriculum.

Commissioner Honneffer brought up that Thompson's Mill does kind of a low-tech ability to tour the facility. They use the same program that hotels are using now. When we think about how we're going to capture some of these historic places, it's got to be really not very expensive to do that.

Oregon State sponsors historic sign in the sense that they construct the sign, erect the sign and maintain the sign, but you have to pay \$8000 up front. I thought if we were going to do it, it would be a county site and probably Fort Hoskins. I talked to Jesse. He's interested, but he doesn't know where he's going to come up with \$8000. The \$8000 price tag may not be worthwhile.

**L. Adjournment at 7:59pm**

**Next meeting: Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 PM**