



**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

360 SW Avery Avenue  
Corvallis, OR 97333-1192

(541) 766-6821

FAX (541) 766-6891

[www.co.benton.or.us/pw/index.html](http://www.co.benton.or.us/pw/index.html)

---

## MINUTES

### COURTHOUSE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

October 29, 2007

5:00 p.m.

BENTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
ROOM 114  
CORVALLIS, OREGON

Committee Members Present: Judge Robert Gardner, Pete Barnhisel, Nancy Hoffman, Judy Juntunen, Chair; Scott McClure, Daniel Read

Guests: Locke Williams, Presiding Judge, Cheryl Stone, Trial Court Administrator and Randy Swope, Technical Support Specialist

Staff Present: Jay Dixon, Commissioner, Chris Bielenberg, Facilities and Utilities Manager and Rose Lindgren, Recorder

Judy Juntunen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

I. Old Business:

A. Furniture Restoration (Chair coverings)

The antique chairs in the Centennial Room were recovered with a brown material that looks great. Everyone agreed that a wonderful job was done and it looks very authentic and the appearance of the chairs is a big improvement. Chris Bielenberg commented that Scott McClure turned some wooden leg extensions for the tables in the Centennial Room. These leg extensions were not noticeable at all and looked like they had always been on the tables. Great job Scott! The leg extensions are a big improvement, as people sitting at the tables can now get their knees under the tables. This is a much more comfortable situation for people using the tables.

## B. Update on Centennial Room Display Work

Judy Juntunen commented that nothing has been done in the Centennial Room. Judy gave a brief historical overview of the history of the Centennial Room. In 1988 on the occasion of the Courthouse Centennial Celebration the room's display cases were filled with historical items for the public to view. These original items were taken out of the display cases before UV light could do too much harm to them. The original items are stored at the Benton County Historical Museum. Judy reported that the Committee has \$2,000.00 to spend at their discretion on Preservation Projects annually. Judy recommended shades for the windows for UV light protection. Judy would like to borrow some items from the historical museum to be displayed in the cases in room 114. Judy would like Room 114 to be opened to the public with displays and original furniture.

Presiding Judge, Locke Williams was present at the meeting. Judge Williams commented that he was very proud of the work of the Courthouse Preservation Committee, which was started in 1978. The Judge stated that he thought the Committee should make it a priority to make plans for finishing the Centennial Room. The Judge commented that the display cases could be filled with historical documents and pictures and the Centennial Room should be completed for the public to see and enjoy the displays and original furnishings. Judy responded that she would like to go through the Agenda and then schedule another meeting to discuss plans for the Centennial Room. The Judge offered the assistance of the Court to assist in getting the Centennial Room ready. Judge Williams commented that this building is the oldest Courthouse in the State that is still used as a Courthouse. Judge Williams stated that he and his staff would like to discuss space use requests for the building and he emphasized that they plan to make changes reversible and to maintain the historical integrity of the building.

## II. New Business:

### A. State Court Work Requests

#### Technology Modifications (Monitor Installations)

Randy Swope, Technical Support Specialist, gave a PowerPoint Presentation regarding updating Courthouse technology. The Court has been working to identify new ways of using technology. The Court would like to install four flat screen monitors (Docket

Screens) in four locations in the Courthouse. The locations would be the three courtrooms and replacing the marquee at the base of the stairs just past the security gate. The monitors would be placed next to the doors above the courtroom name sign and below the existing light fixtures. Power would be obtained from the light fixtures. The suggestion was made to frame the monitors to mimic existing molding in the courthouse and to hide any wires or other apparatus. The system would be wireless and no data cables are needed. The access point would be a transmitter. The hardware necessary to run the system would be located in an existing employee's office. The goals of the Court are to update technology, provide information to the public quickly and accurately and to maintain the historic look and feel of the Courthouse. The Court plans to complete the project by January 1, 2008. Pete Barnhisel stated that he thought this was a great idea and would give the Courthouse a modern feel. Judy stated that she particularly like the idea of the frames for the monitors that would match existing courthouse moldings and obscure wires. Judy stated that she thought this was a good solution for updating technology for the Courthouse. Judy would like the Committee to be informed if anything major comes up in the process of installation. The project is contingent upon conducting trial run for wireless connection.

## Space Use

### 1) Change of Use Robing Room

Judy reported that she would like to know the status of changes to the robing room and contents of the room. Judge Williams informed the committee that the robing room has been made into an office. The Judge reported that it was his decision to do this. Judy requested that the furnishings in the room be preserved. Some pictures were taken down as they were in the way of a file cabinet. Some big pictures are still on the wall. A desk and bookshelves are still in the room. Some furnishings have been moved into an adjacent room. The fainting couch is still in the rooms. The suggestion was made that after the Centennial Room, Room 114, is finished it should be dedicated to Judge Mengler. Nancy Hoffman, the daughter of Judge Mengler, explained to the people at the meeting the importance of the Courthouse to her father. Nancy also distributed some stories written by her father at her request. The stories are about the

history of the flag being displayed, the Courthouse clock and the Carillon. These stories have never been published and have been held in Nancy's possession. Committee members agreed that it was a grand idea to dedicate the future completed Centennial Room to Judge Mengler.

## 2) Free Standing Cubicles

Cheryl Stone, Trial Court Administrator, reported that the Court has 26 full time employees with only 24 places to sit people. The Court is going to purchase some free standing systems for employee work stations. These stations are not permanent. The Court is trying to use the space allocated to them. There is a break room but it is next to a courtroom and is unable to be used because of noise considerations. Storage space is needed and the Court got some storage space across the street, which will help the situation.

## Building Aesthetics ~ Juror Enhancements

Judge Williams reported that the Court has monies available from the State for jury enhancements. Every two weeks 800 jurors are summoned. Part of juror orientation is to watch a video. The Court wants to install a large 42" flat panel in courtroom one by the bench as a starting point instead of having the jurors watch a little tiny TV on a cart. The Court would also like to enhance the acoustics in the courthouse rooms. The Court is going to have an acoustics expert come in to assess the situation and make suggestions. Judy commented that she would like Chris Bielenberg to be present when the audio expert is assessing the Courthouse. The Court also would like to provide wireless access to jurors so they can work on their computers while they are waiting. The Court may set up a station for two or more jurors. Another item the Court would like to do is to put up photographs of past judges with a brief history under the photos. The Court would like to display these photos in a more public area. The Court would work with the historical society to get more information. The Court will provide funds to help pay for replication costs of photos.

Judge Rob Gardner announced that he thought this was a great Courthouse and he considered the improvements of the Centennial Room a priority.

Peter Barnhisel made a motion to approve the installation of monitors at Courtrooms and the miscellaneous space use changes

including free standing cubicals and relocation of photos from the Robing Room. The jury enhancement projects will need to come back to the committee after consulting with an acoustic professional and County staff with recommendations on equipment upgrades and additions. Judge Rob Gardner seconded the motion and the Committee voted unanimously to approve the motion. The Committee stated that the free standing cubicles were not an issue. The Committee announced that they would take a look at the artifacts from the Robing Room and put them in safe storage. The Committee agreed that Bob and Chris would work with staff on the aesthetic improvements connected with the technological improvements. Nancy inquired about what would be done about the Robing Room. Judy will work with Chris regarding the Robing Room. Judy will do research on the photos and stated that the Committee will make the Centennial Room a priority. By-laws will be prepared and sent out ahead of time to Committee members before the next meeting. A handout for a set of guidelines for changes and modifications to the Courthouse was distributed to Committee members. These guidelines were developed in 1986 and the Committee agreed that with a few minor changes they are still relevant today.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

The next meeting will be January 7, 2008