

Board of Commissioners Meeting
June 18, 2025
Don Adams Conference Room, Irrigon Government Center
Irrigon, Oregon

Present In Person Commissioner and Vice Chair Jeff Wenholz, Commissioner Gus Peterson, Matthew Jensen, Valerie Ballard, Kevin Ince, Lindsay Grogan, Tamra Mabbott, Brian Snyder, Patrick Keeley

Absent Chair David Sykes

Present Via Zoom Sabrina Bailey Cave, Christy Kenny, Raymi Cain, Vincent Guerrero, Bobbi Childers, John Bowles, Eric Imes, Robin Canaday, Yvonne Morter, Mike Gorman, Clint Shoemake, Amanda Kenderick, Tami Ewing, Sandi Pointer, Rose Kylo, Mindy Wilson, Edith Velasco; non-staff: Karen Pettigrew, Griffin Beach, Rachel King

In the absence of Chair Sykes, as Vice-Chair Commissioner Jeff Wenholz chaired the meeting.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

9:02 a.m.

Consideration and Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Peterson motioned to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval

Department Reports

The Parole & Probation report was presented by Brian Snyder

The Sheriff's Office report was presented by Brian Snyder

The Planning Department report was presented by Tamra Mabbott

The Administrator's report was presented by Matthew Jensen

Consent Agenda

Prior to today's meeting, Commissioner Wenholz found a couple of minor needed corrections to make in the minutes from May 21 which has since been revised.

- a. Minutes: May 21, 2025, Regular Meeting; May 27, 2025, Special Session
- b. County Defined Benefit Retirement Plan Supplemental Contribution.
- c. MOA Morrow County Sheriff Sergeants Association: Association Dues
- d. Agreement #185824-0 2025-2027 IGA for the Financing of Public Health Services
- e. Walla Walla County Detention Use Contract
- f. MOA AFSCME General: On Call Compensation
- g. MCHD Ambulance Service Invoice

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Wenholz seconded the motion. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Public Hearing

Budget Hearing for Fiscal Year 2026

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

The Public Hearing was called to order at 9:31 a.m.

Approved by the Budget Committee, the FY26 budget has changes to appropriations at the department level, per advice to another municipality by the Department of Revenue (DOR).

Commissioner Wenholz opened the hearing to public testimony, first in person and then online to which there were no comments.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve R-2025-06 adopting the budget, making appropriations, and categorizing and imposing taxes for the 2026 Fiscal Year. Commissioner Wenholz seconded the motion. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

FY2025 Supplemental Budget Hearing & Consideration for Adoption

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

This budget hearing captures unforeseen or unexpected circumstances which resulted in spending funds in excess of appropriations. The increase in personnel expenditures is relatively minor, reflecting changes in the State's unemployment tax rate, additional FTEs not originally budgeted for, and filling open positions at a higher grade than budgeted for.

Commissioner Wenholz opened the hearing to public testimony, first in person and then online to which there were no comments.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve resolution R-2025-07. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Business Items

Classification and Compensation Study Updates

Lindsay Grogan, HR Director; Rachel King, MGT Consulting Group

MGT Consulting Group was hired to conduct a classification and compensation study of Morrow County employees. The study includes surveys, job evaluations, and analyzing market data. So far, the study is approximately 60% complete and the final report will be used for future budget planning.

Public Health Emergency Plans Review and Adoption

Robin Canaday, Public Health Director

Oregon Health Authority (OHA) requires Public Health Emergency Plans to be updated every two years, providing a comprehensive plan for managing public health emergencies including but not limited to natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and bioterrorism events. The goal for this edition was to make it easier to read and follow for efficiency, reducing a substantial number of pages.

Commissioner Wenholz found a few errors and requested they be corrected. Removing “add reference here” which appeared more than once, and references to Coronavirus Pandemic specific aid on page 17 of the plan.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to adopt the Morrow County Public Health Emergency Plan with corrections made as requested. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Tree Removal on Miller Road

Eric Imes, Public Works Director

A landowner requested the County remove a row of trees on Miller Road, south of Kunze Road near Boardman. The road is a county right of way but not maintained. Per Oregon Revised Statute 368.031, the County is not responsible for maintenance of local access roads unless it is determined to be an emergency.

The trees in question are old and brittle, previously referenced in County documents in 1919, and starting to break apart. Eric Imes, Public Works Director, explained that the public use of the road justifies the proposed expense and the landowner is willing to clean up the trees if the County falls them on his property. Due to the size and fragility of the trees, Mr. Imes is recommending working with a tree specialist remove them rather than attempting to save money with an excavator.

The Board chose to take no action at this time and requested this item be brought back before the board with a Resolution for the removal.

Rejection of Invoice: Pea Ridge Embroidery

Kevin Ince, Finance Director

According to the County Procurement Policy, small procurement between \$5,000-\$10,000 requires obtaining multiple quotes and documentation. A purchase was made without following the policy and the invoice was disaggregated up to fall below that threshold. The individual responsible for the purchase was unaware that this violated policy and it was used as a teaching moment.

Due to the purchase not adhering to policy, staff are not authorized to pay the invoices without approval by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to pay the invoice in the amount of \$8,561. Commissioner Wenholz seconded the motion. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Out of Cycle Classification Request

Lindsay Grogan, HR Director

Due to upcoming staff departures, two departments are seeking out-of-cycle full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to provide an overlap of outgoing staff to provide adequate training for new hires. The overlap for the Fair Manager will cost \$5,205 and the overlap for the Justice Court Clerk will be \$7,146.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve Fair Manager overlap request of two months. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve the Justice Court Clerk request for a one-month overlap. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Amendment to Ambulance Response Time Map

Matthew Jensen, County Administrator

When approving the initial ambulance response time map, OHA requested adjusting the map to have a wider variety of response times. No further direction was provided, so members of the Ambulance Service Advisory Committee reviewed the map with County GIS Specialist, Stephen Wrecsics, and were able to adjust response times.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve amendment number 1 of the Morrow County Ambulance Service Ordinance. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Morrow County Title XI Appendix Request

Steven Davis, Transit Manager

Public Transit previously brought the Public Transit Title XI program to be Board on February 5 for updates required by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). At that time, the Board chose to table the item with questions regarding some updates and if Public Transportation required a separate policy from the County.

ODOT advised that there are specific language requirements that must be included for transit, and this is the product of collaboration between Public Transit and Human Resources.

There was debate over the use of a singular possessive instead of a plural possessive with “not exceed the vehicles” and it was decided the singular “not exceed the vehicle’s” was the correct wording.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve the Morrow County Public Transit Title XI Appendix as presented with the correction. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Draft Letter Re: House Bill 2725 (HB 2725)

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director

HB 2725, which limits port district involvement in strategic investment programs (SIP) which staff feel will negatively impact counties east of Bonneville Dam. This joint letter has been approved by Hood River County and will be reviewed by Gilliam, Wasco, and Umatilla counties today (June 18).

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve participation in a Joint Letter of Opposition to HB 2725. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Application for Congressionally Directed Spending Phase 2 Project

Matthew Jensen, County Administrator

Morrow County has so far received two Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) awards. One award is being used to identify and test wells, and the second award of \$1.32 million is shared with Umatilla County and staff would like to use those funds to help Irrigon develop additional well infrastructure.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve focus of CDS project application for exploration of an additional well and development of distribution infrastructure for the City of Irrigon in conjunction with mitigating nitrate-related public health issues for residents living in unincorporated areas. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: 2 aye, 1 absent.

Correspondence

None

Commissioner Reports

Brief reports on Commissioner activity were provided.

Adjourn

10:48 a.m.