

**Board of Commissioners Meeting
November 5, 2025
Upper Conference Room, Bartholomew Building
Heppner, Oregon**

Present In Person Chair David Sykes, Commissioner Gus Peterson, Matthew Jensen, Valerie Ballard, Justin Nelson, Kevin Ince, Eric Imes, Chelsey Gover-Price, Brian Snyder; non-staff: Nancy Arnson, Gerry Arnson

Present Via Zoom John Bowles, Tylynn Cimmiyotti, Sabrina Bailey-Cave, Sandi Pointer, Rose Kylo, Robin Canaday, Mike Gorman, Julia Finch, Sarah Rea; non-staff: Griffin Beach, Kevin Payne, Ryan Doil, Matthew Thomas, Walt Burt, Karen Pettigrew, Natalia Wight, Andrea Di Salvo, Matt McCaw

Absent Commissioner Jeff Wenholz

Call to Order

9:09 a.m.

Public Comment

Nancy Arnson, representing the Black Mountain Water District, spoke to the Board regarding the special district's conveyance request.

Consideration and Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Peterson motioned to adopt the agenda with removal of items 4a (Finance Department Report), 4c (Weed Department Report), and 6a and 6b (Public Hearings). Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: 2 in favor, 1 absent (Wenholz). Motion carried.

Department Reports

The Public Works report was presented by Eric Imes

The Administrator's report was presented by Matthew Jensen

Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes: October 15, 2025
- b. Grant Agreement: Heppner Daycare Capital Grant
- c. Invoice approval for DLR Group
- d. Invoice Approval for Western Star Dump Truck
- e. Invoice Approval for Caterpillar Grader
- f. Invoice Approval for Umatilla County Sheriff's Office Jail Bed Contract
- g. Out of State Travel Request

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: 2 in favor, 1 absent (Wenholz), motion carried.

Business Items

Tyler Tech EERP Implementation Update

Kevin Ince, Finance Director; Ryan Doil, Berry Dunn

After it was realized that the vendor previously chosen for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software could not meet the needs of the County, Tyler Technologies was selected for their Enterprise ERP software services in July. The project kicked off in October with plans for implementation for the Finance Department expected in the Fall of 2026 followed by Human Resources and Payroll in early 2027.

Ongoing sessions are planned with key staff, such as the Finance, Human Resources, and IT department directors to ensure that the system meets the County's needs.

Lower Willow Creek Groundwater Recharge Project Update

Matthew Thomas, GSI Water Solutions

The Groundwater Recharge Feasibility study, funded by an Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) grant, Morrow County, and Gilliam County, examined the use of Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) to extend the irrigation season along Willow Creek. The MAR technique would divert surface water in the winter and spring and inject that water into wells for underground storage to be used during the summer dry season.

If the feasibility study progresses, stage 2 would involve data collection such as flow analysis, water sampling, geographical analysis, and determining storage capacity, as well as engineering design for a more accurate cost estimate before determining administrative ownership and the permitting process.

R-2025-13 Budget Adjustment Request for Road Department Communications Project

Kevin Ince, Finance Director; Eric Imes, Public Works Director

An error was found in the title of the Resolution provided to the Board for review naming the Sheriff's Office as the recipient of funds and will be corrected to the Road Department as recipient.

The Road department uses a radio communication system, and it was recently discovered that maintenance on the Black Mountain radio tower has not been performed since 2001 and much of the equipment is significantly outdated. There has also been an identified need for an additional tower which would greatly improve communication around Buttermilk Canyon and Butter Creek. An ongoing maintenance plan is proposed with Day Wireless who will perform maintenance work annually.

Funding for this project would come from the Finley Butte license fees road fund. This fund has a surplus of approximately \$269,000 and primarily funds road equipment and the transfer stations.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve Resolution R-2025-13, correcting the title to read "In the matter of transferring appropriations in the General Fund for the Road Department. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: 2 in favor, 1 absent (Wenholz), motion carried.

Discuss Relocation of the Oregon/Idaho State Border

Matt McCaw, Greater Idaho

In 2022, Morrow County voters passed ballot measure 25-88, requiring the Board of Commissioners to meet and discuss the possible relocation of the Oregon/Idaho state border. Matt McCaw, Executive Director of the Greater Idaho movement presented. This was informational only and no action was taken.

Fair Board Member Appointment Recommendation

Tylynn Cimmiyotti, Fair Manager

The Morrow County Fair Board consists of seven seats, five of which are currently filled. Jaylene Papineau and Tiffany Bradley, both of Morrow County, have expressed interest in participating on the Fair Board.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve Jaylene Papineau and Tiffany Bradley as Fair Board members for the terms beginning November 2025 through November 2028. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: 2 in favor, 1 absent (Wenholz), motion carried.

R-2025-17 Consideration for Use of CREZ Funds for Sheriff's Office Rifle Upgrades

Brian Snyder, Undersheriff

The Sheriff's Office is seeking approval to use Columbia River Enterprise Zone (CREZ) funding already awarded to the department, to upgrade rifles. The rifles currently used by the Sheriff's Office are of varying brands and models, and many are over twenty years old.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to adopt resolution R-2025-17 transferring appropriations from operating contingency and authorizing the expenditure of Sheriff's Office CREZ funds in the General Fund. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: 2 in favor, 1 absent (Wenholz), motion carried.

R-2025-18 Approving Property Tax Exemption Granted by CREZ III

David Sykes, Interim CREZ Manager

Lamb Weston is seeking a long-term tax exemption as they modernize and expand their potato processing facility in Boardman. This tax exemption has already been approved by the CREZ III Board, but it must also be approved by the Morrow County Board of Commissioners, Port of Morrow Board, and City of Boardman as the project will be within their areas of influence.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve Resolution R-2025-18, approving property tax exemption status granted by Columbia River Enterprise Zone III. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: 2 in favor, 1 absent (Wenholz), motion carried.

Correspondence

None

Commissioner Reports

Brief reports on Commissioner activity were provided.

Recess

10:42 a.m.

Resume

10:46 a.m.

Executive Session

The Board met in executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e), which allows the Commission to meet in executive session to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

Return to Open Session

11:20 a.m.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to authorize the County Administrator to negotiate possible land transaction with the City of Boardman and Port of Morrow based on the discussion in Executive Session. Chair Sykes seconded. Vote: 2 in favor, 1 absent (Wenholz), motion carried.

Adjourn

11:21 a.m.