

Morrow County Board of Commissioners Meeting
March 4, 2026
Upper Conference Room, Bartholomew Building
Heppner, Oregon

Present In Person Chair David Sykes, Commissioner Jeff Wenholz, Commissioner Gus Peterson, Matthew Jensen, Valerie Ballard, Justin Nelson, Jaylene Papineau, Vince Guerrero, Steven Davis, Rory Rowlette, Greg Close, Kevin Ince, Eric Imes

Present Via Zoom Deona Siex, Raymi Cain, Sabrina Bailey-Cave, Sarah Rea, Chelsey Gover-Price, Robin Canaday, Latosha Hedman, Angel Stanger, Deona Siex, Michelle Kestler, Erin Anderson, Yvonne Morter, Tylynn Cimiotti, Diana McElroy, Sandi Pointer; non-staff: Bob Blackmore, Erika Morton, Jessica Rose, Julie Jensen, Torrie Griggs, Andrea Di Salvo, Aili Schreiner, Karen Pettigrew, Matt McCaw

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

9:05 a.m.

Public Comment

No Comment

Consideration and Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Peterson motioned to accept the agenda as presented, with the removal of 6a. Remote Work Exception Request. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Department Reports

State Cultural Trust/Morrow County Cultural Coalition

Jaylene Papineau, Treasurer

Aili Schreiner with the Oregon Cultural Trust joined via Zoom and spoke to the Board about the Morrow County Cultural Coalition and how it and other groups are supported by the Oregon Cultural Trust.

The Local Public Safety Coordinating Council update was presented by Jessica Rose

The Public Works report was presented by Eric Imes

The County Clerk report was presented by Bobbi Childers

The County Administrator report was presented by Matthew Jensen

Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes: January 7, 2026
- b. Consideration of OHA IGA 185824 Amendment 5
- c. Contract for Application of Liquid Asphalt Emulsion
- d. Approval of Parks Equipment Purchase Grant Agreement ATV26-02

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

Business Items

Consideration to Adopt Drought Declaration

Gus Peterson, Commissioner

Due to lack of precipitation and a low snowpack, there is a significant concern specifically from irrigators that 2026 will have difficult drought conditions. All of Morrow County is currently classified as dry to moderate drought.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to approve Resolution R-2026-05, declaring drought conditions. Commissioner Peterson seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Request to Set Aside General funds for Morrow County Public Transit Vehicle

Steven Davis, Transit Manager

In the last year, Morrow County Public Transit (MCPT) ridership has exceeded expectations. Prior to Transit Manager, Steven Davis's arrival, three vehicles were purchased at the same time. The goal for the funds is to procure a new 14-passenger bus through Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) funding with a County match and to stagger vehicle replacements going forward.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve the set-aside of County funds for the potential purchase of one 14-passenger transit vehicle, contingent upon discretionary funding not being awarded through ODOT in the 2027 funding cycle. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Job Description Title Change – Facility Manager

Matthew Jensen, County Administrator

The organizational structure of the County has department directors>managers>supervisors. The Facility Maintenance Supervisor performs a similar role to managers and is requesting a title change. The title change would have no effect on compensation but would better align the job title with duties.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve changing the position title of Facility Maintenance Supervisor to Facility Manager and authorize staff to make necessary adjustments. Commissioner Wenholz seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Resolution R-2026-06 Community Assistance Grant Program

Matthew Jensen, County Administrator

The goal of the Community Assistance Grant Program is to make funding from the County more transparent and manageable. Currently, informal letters are submitted to the Budget Committee to review, and the Committee has requested more structure.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve Resolution 2026-06 with the removal of “municipality funding” from the resolution language. Commissioner Wenholtz seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Adopt Capital Improvement Plan

Matthew Jensen, County Administrator

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) has been brought down to \$79 million from \$91 million, and removing the Circuit Courthouse brings the projects down to approximately \$50 million over the next five years. The projects have been prioritized based on how soon they can be completed.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to approve Resolution R-2026-07, adopting Morrow County Capital Improvement Plan. Commissioner Wenholtz seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Oregon Idaho Border Discussion

Matt McCaw, Greater Idaho

Morrow County voters voted to require the Board of Commissioners to discuss the Oregon/Idaho border three times per year. No action was taken.

Recess

10:51 a.m.

Resume

10:58 a.m.

Correspondence

No Correspondence

Commissioner Reports

Brief reports on Commissioner activity were provided.

Executive Session

11:08 a.m.

ORS 192.660(2)(i), which allows the Commission to meet in executive session to review and evaluate the employment-related performance of the chief executive officer of any public body, a public officer, employee or staff member who does not request an open hearing.

Return to Open Session

12:48 p.m.

Commissioner Peterson motioned for the Chair to work with legal counsel to prepare a letter of reprimand as discussed in executive session to be potentially approved at the next meeting. Commissioner Wenholtz seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval.

Adjourn
12:49 p.m.