



MARION COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BOC/CAO Issues Coordination

February 12, 2025
1:30 pm to 2:30 pm
Courthouse Square
Commissioners Boardroom
Salem, Oregon

Meeting Minutes

AGENDA

1. Welcome

Danielle Bethell, Chair

Chair Bethell called the meeting to order at 1:32PM

Chair Bethell, Commissioner Willis, CAO Fritz, Sr. Policy Analyst Lawyer, Public Works Director Nicholas, County Legal Counsel Elzinga were present

2. Chief Administrative Officer Updates on County Operations

Brian Nicholas

Brian Nicholas shared an update on a bridge replacement project on Mill Creek Road, which has been delayed due to procedural issues with the contracting process and will need to go to the Contracting Review Board.

Brian also discussed the Canyon Alert system that Public Works is constructing in the Santiam Canyon to warn the North Fork and Detroit areas of emergencies and when to evacuate. Some concerns have been raised about the impact on endangered species, including bald eagles. Legal review needs to take place to overcome this hurdle.

3. Other

All

Commissioner Bethell discussed concerns regarding the cost of the Marion County Public Safety Radio project for other agencies to participate. Many of the small agencies that would want to participate in this project have very constrained budgets and aren't necessarily discussing the matter with their elected boards. Commissioner Bethell stated that the other agencies need to determine the maximum amount they can afford and let us know so we can see if we can accommodate them in the project.

Commissioner Bethell also discussed having Marion County sponsor the 120th Association of Oregon Counties conference.

Discussion also occurred regarding the Aurora Airport issue and the City of Aurora that is attempting to incorporate the airport into the City Boundaries. The Commissioners want to review the airport business plan. The Commissioners want to write an aggressive objection to state legislation allowing Aurora to annex the Aurora Airport.

The Board of Commissioners moved to waive all conflicts of interest for legal counsel to represent himself against legal action and for Jan to sign the conflict waiver.

Discussion occurred about the federal government potentially clawing back grants provided to the County due to Oregon's status as a sanctuary state. Additionally, conversation happened regarding the structure of certain County functions that could potentially be contracted out, like victim's assistance and child support enforcement.

The Commissioners also expressed concern regarding lack of authority by Commissioners to control a budget for their administrative functions. It was argued that Commissioners have budget and spending authority on the same scale as program managers.

The Commissioners also discussed County departmental structure, particularly the roles of the public works and health departments in pushing out public communications. Commissioner Bethell discussed wanting these functions to fall back to the Board's Office for the Commissioners to control and approve the flow of public facing information. Commissioner Bethell also would like to see the Emergency Management function of the County to be brought under the Board's Office as opposed to it being in a separate department. Additionally, there was discussion about the new housing division director reporting to Katrina in HHS.

There was also discussion about the County's credit card policy and the need for clear guidelines to avoid ethics issues. Finally, it was discussed that the Commissioners want access to a County vehicle for official business use.

4. Adjourn

Chair Bethell adjourned the meeting at 2:56PM.