



MARION COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BOC/CAO Issues Coordination

January 27, 2026
3:00pm to 4:00pm
Courthouse Square
Commissioners Boardroom
Salem, Oregon

Meeting Minutes

AGENDA

1. Welcome

Chair Willis

Chair Willis called the meeting to order at 3:03pm

Chair Willis, Commissioner Cameron, Commissioner Bethell, DCAO Eppley, County Ops Manager Lawyer, DA Clarkson, CDDA Murphy, Administrative Services Manager Osborne, and MA2 Lena Prine were present

2. District Attorney's Office program Overview

Paige Clarkson

- a.** DA Clarkson provided an overview of the Divisions within the DA's Office including Adult Prosecution, Medical Examiner, Child Support Enforcement, Victim's Assistance, and Juvenile Enforcement. She explained that drug prosecutions are increasing with the passage of HB4002. CDDA Murphy described the correlation between the increase in drug prosecutions and the decrease in overdose deaths.

The DA also explained that her Office has focused significantly on firearms and gang related crimes. These tend to be difficult cases to prosecute since witnesses are often uncooperative.

The DA also explained that the Defense Attorney crisis appears to be resolving itself with the number of unrepresented cases being reduced to zero as soon as the end of this week. She stated that the OPDC leadership change, judges in our district, and hard work by the DDAs in the DA's Office are largely responsible for this reduction.

The DA also discussed recruitment and retention in her Office. A large number of our current attorneys are very young with BAR numbers in the 2020s. CDDA Murphy claimed that our best hires tend to be from our law clerk pool.

In discussing the FY 2026-27 budget, Administrative Services Manager Osborne explained that the budget submission was generally flat this year. DA Clarkson

discussed that grant funding is becoming more difficult to find and less stable as many grants are becoming more geared toward community-based advocates instead of systems-based entities like the County. There was also discussion about the Medical Examiner Division and Commissioner Willis would like an explanation of what is included in the "accidental death" category of mandatory investigations for the ME.

3. Other

All

- a.** There were no other items discussed.

4. Adjourn

- a.** Chair Willis adjourned the meeting at 4:12pm