



MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Minutes

Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Commissioners' Boardroom  
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Suite 5231  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Attendance:

**Commissioners:** Danielle Bethell, Colm Willis and Kevin Cameron.

**Board's Office:** Trevor Lane, Jon Heynen, Chris Eppley, Alvin Klausen, Toni Whitler, and Matt Lawyer.

**Legal Counsel:** Steve Elzinga.

**District Attorney's Office:** Brendan Murphy, Pami Guerra.

**Sheriff's Office:** Jason Bernards, and Nick Hunter.

**Community and Economic Development:** Chip Bury, and Kelli Weese.

**Public Works:** Ryan Crowther, Jacob Warren, Shane Ottosen, Carl Lund, Brian May, Brian Nicholas, Austin Barnes, and Brandon Reich.

**Finance:** Jessica Paler.

**Health and Human Services:** Ryan Matthews, Susan McLaughlin, and Wendy Zieker.

**Citizen:** Kathy Rogers.

Commissioner Colm Willis called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

Informational

**1. Impaired Driving Grant Application**

-Commander Jason Bernards

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (DUII) grant through Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) using federal funds.
- Goal is to fund a dedicated DUII enforcement position:
  - Address high percent of fatal crashes with impaired drivers in last five years.
- Position existed but was eliminated in 2018 due to staffing and other issues.
- 80% grant funded and 20% county match.
- Funds available October 2026:
  - Plan starting January 2027 to align with anticipated full patrol staffing.
- Position would:
  - Take over time intensive DUII investigations after an arrest:
    - Intoxilyzer.
    - Warrants for blood draws.
    - Arranging safe rides home.
  - Free up patrol deputies to respond to calls for service and emergencies.
- Senate Bill 48:
  - DUII is generally no longer a jailable offense for most first-time cases.
  - Felony DUIs are treated differently:
    - Three in 10 years.

**Board Direction:**

- Meet with commissioner who is not supportive:
  - Answer detailed questions and provide additional justification for the position.
- Proceed toward application preparation:
  - Resolve concerns before bringing a formal action item to the board.

**2. Purchase Order with AXON for Vehicle Camera Replacement**

-Commander Jason Bernards and Lieutenant Matt Wikinson

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Five-year purchase order with Axon for car video systems, covering seven systems.
- Total contract amount approximately \$93,692.55:
  - With an annual payment of about \$18,738.
- Existing car camera system (WatchGuard) is at end of life:
  - Hardware failures and recording issues.
  - Many units have already been pulled.
- Axon contract cost is higher than past annual costs but provides:
  - Full support and cloud-based video management "360 Axon" ecosystem.
  - Work with potential future body camera program and other sources:
    - Drones and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) if allowed.
- Axon provides body cameras and some drone solutions:
  - This contract is only for in-car cameras.
- Body camera program will require Request for Proposal (RFP):
  - Multiple vendor consideration.
- Using Axon for car cameras does not commit county to Axon for body worn cameras.
- Contract allows supplier to cancel on 60 days' written notice.

**Board Direction:**

- Legal/Contracts:
  - Apply updated county purchase order terms to this Axon purchase order.
  - Confirm adequate exit provisions for county:
    - Include ability to pivot other vendor without significant financial harm.
- Sheriff's Office:
  - Provide annual cost figures for WatchGuard versus Axon for cost comparison.
- Bring this back for board approval after legal review is complete.

**3. Contract Amendment #1 with Garten for Battery Sorting**

-Andrew Johnson

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Amendment to contract with Garten Services for battery sorting and packaging.
- Extends current agreement for six months to its maximum term:
  - Through June 30, 2027.
- Adds \$60,000 for a revised not to exceed total of \$160,000.
- Increase is due to higher volumes:
  - About 15 tons annually in 2022 to about 41 tons of batteries in recent years.
  - Including more lithium batteries from household tools, lawn equipment, etc.
- Proper sorting/packaging reduces fire risk during shipping and recycling.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward on consent.
- Public Works:
  - Proceed with amendment for an additional \$60,000-and six-month extension.
  - Updated packet to clearly reflect \$60,000 increase and revised contract total.

#### **4. Consider Resolution to Apply Local Government Grant Program to Support Bear Creek Campground Rebuild**

-Ryan Crowther, and Kevin Thompson

##### **Summary of Presentation:**

- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant:
  - For Bear Creek Campground rebuild.
- About \$1.2 million in Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Revitalization (PIER) grant funds awarded and used for design.
- New grant of up to \$1 million would:
  - Requires 50% match.
  - Can be met entirely with existing PIER grant at no additional county cost.
  - Allow expanded improvements beyond current budget:
    - Paving internal roads.
    - Paving instead of gravel.
    - Adding picnic structures.
    - Other park amenities.
- Grant requirement:
  - Park must remain in public recreational use for 25 years.
  - Has Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund requirement for perpetual recreational use:
    - 25-year requirement is not a practical new constraint.
- Application due end of March:
  - Board must adopt an order authorizing application as part of submittal.

##### **Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward on consent.

#### **5. Contract with Sigmund Excavation & Construction for Salmon Falls Park Improvements**

-Kevin Thompson

##### **Summary of Presentation:**

- Competitive bid results:
  - Approximately 17–18 responsive bidders.
  - Sigmund Excavation is the lowest at \$147,857.50.
- Scope of work includes:
  - Paving entrance road to the park.
  - Paving constructed portion of parking lot.
  - American Disabilities Act (ADA) parking pad and restroom circulation.
  - Adding an ADA path to a small picnic area.
- Strong bid prices allow paving of current parking lot area:
  - Originally been expected to remain gravel.
- Public Works operations has already:
  - Built the gravel base for the lot.
  - Installed the vault restroom:
    - Key schedule milestone to open for summer.
- Contract requires completion within 30 days of notice to proceed.
- Goal is to complete work in time for the summer season.

##### **Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward on consent.
- Public Works:
  - Coordinate to start as soon as feasible.
  - Including possible walk-on scheduling to next board agenda if needed.
  - Provide photos or video of Salmon Falls Park to the board.

## **6. Battle Creek Road at Wiltsey Street Roundabout**

-Ryan Crowther

### **Summary of Presentation:**

- Follow up on an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with ODOT.
- Prior board action:
  - County contributed \$557,203 toward design change to a roundabout.
  - Subject to final concurrence once design and cost were confirmed.
- ODOT has:
  - Completed additional design work.
  - Confirmed roundabout can be constructed within original estimate:
    - No additional county funds required.
- Confirmed design meets county needs and safety/operations objectives.
- Brought back solely to confirm board remains supportive of roundabout change.

### **Board Direction:**

- Direction to Public Works staff:
  - Communicate to ODOT to proceed with roundabout under the existing IGA.
- No new board action or agenda item required since there is no change to agreement.

## **7. Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) Scenario Plan Edits & Submission to Department of Land Conservation and Development**

-Austin Barnes and Carl Lund

### **Summary of Presentation:**

- Edits to joint Marion County–Salem–Keizer CFEC scenario plan:
  - Outlines transportation and land use strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over 25 years.
- Key concerns:
  - Language referencing a local fuel tax and potential chariots payroll tax:
    - Not discussed with the board in prior meetings.
  - Increased residential density in East Salem compared to current densities.
  - Perception of commitment to densifying communities in East Salem without infrastructure investment:
    - Roads, schools, services, groceries, and healthcare.
  - Philosophical objection to CFEC as state driven policy that may harm East Salem residents and reduce local control.
- Staff and counsel reported:
  - Draft edits remove references to fuel tax and local payroll tax.
  - Only binding quantitative target is that 2% of new housing be within 0.5 mile of Cherriot's core transit network.
  - Vacant lands analysis:
    - About 2% of buildable lands are already within half mile area.
    - 2% target is theoretically feasible without rezoning or forced density.
  - If targets not met, there is no punitive enforcement:
    - County must revisit plan and adopt new or adjusted measures.
- Map/density discussion:
  - Significantly higher "preferred" densities in in Marion County's jurisdiction compared to current densities.
  - Explore changing densities back to current levels in county-controlled areas.
  - Concern about term "preferred scenario":
    - Implying endorsement and potential misuse by state agencies.
- Process/coordination:
  - Salem and Keizer able to accept Marion County's changes in county portions:
    - Including tax language and CFEC specific policies.
  - Options:
    - Joint submission with Salem/Keizer incorporating county changes.

- Separate Marion County submission.
  - No submission.
- Consequences of not submitting:
  - Potential eligibility loss for certain urban transportation funding through Metropolitan (MPO)/ Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS):
    - Projects like Center Street, State Street, Delaney Bridge, etc.
  - Possible federal pathways to bypass states but this is speculative.

**Board Direction:**

- Not moving forward at this time.
- Legal Counsel:
  - Explore changing density map to match current density not higher “preferred” densities.
- Planning/Transportation:
  - Modify local fuel and payroll tax for Cherrlots in county portions language.
  - Investigate if term “preferred scenario” must be used or other wording is fine:
    - If not, clarify practical meaning and limits of that terminology.
  - Confirm if Salem and Keizer will join joint submission with revised sections:
    - Parking standards language, tax references, etc.
- Commissioner Bethell to meet with Steve Elzinga to evaluate legal and policy risks.
  - Will bring back to staff after commissioner has reviewed:
    - By end of the month.

**8. Consider Proclamation for March 2026 Gambling Awareness Month**

-Susan McLaughlin and Wendy Zieker

- Proposed board proclamation mirrors state and national proclamations:
  - Similar to prior years.
- Will present proclamation.
- Give presentation on:
  - Local programs.
  - Community outreach.
  - Prevention work and youth focused resilience/connectedness initiatives.
- Youth art contest and calendar program:
  - Middle school art submissions.
  - Top entries used for an English/Spanish calendar.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward for board session on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

**9. 2026 STOP Violence Against Women Act Competitive Grant**

-Pami Guerra

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Request to approve grant that is a one-year extension of the 2023–2025 award.
- Extension offered by state to avoid forcing full competitive reapplication this cycle.
- Grant funds support a bilingual program coordinator in Victim Assistance office.
- Conducts outreach, coordination, and direct services to domestic violence victims.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward on consent.

**10. Tourism Grant Program Establishment**

-Tami Cirerol

**Summary of Presentation:**

- New Travel/Tourism Grant Program is ready to go live.
- Bring program structure to board session in two weeks for formal adoption:
  - Open the grant application window in April.
- Commissioners raised concern about accountability:
  - Ensure grantees do what they propose.
  - Enforceable mechanisms if goals are not met.
- Draft template contract has biannual reporting requirements with invoices:
  - Payments may be withheld and issues elevated to board if scope not met.

**Board Direction:**

- Work with Legal to draft accountability/enforcement language, including:
  - Requirement to submit periodic performance reports.
  - Ability to withhold payment if grantee does not execute approved plan.
- Ensure this language is highlighted in:
  - Public facing grant program information.
  - Application materials.
  - Final contracts.
- No need to return to management update before bringing program to board session.

**11. Chemeketa/KROC General Education Development (GED) Support for Youth**  
-Chip Bury

**Summary of Presentation:**

- \$75,000 to support GED program at Kroc Center:
  - In coordination with Chemeketa.
  - To be used as matching funds for a larger U.S. Department of Labor grant.
- Program aimed at youth GED completion and workforce readiness:
  - County previously supported program from another source.
  - Through Marion County (MC) 4-H giving around \$50,000.
- Current request is proposed from lottery/economic development funds:
  - Alignment with workforce development.
  - Limited available balance in existing MC4-H budget line this fiscal year.
- Need to discuss goals for OSU Extension and MC4-H:
  - Including youth development vs. extension services vs. capital needs.
- Strategy and not reacting to annual budget requests and ad hoc grants.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward.
- Direction to Community Services:
  - Proceed with MC4-H Budget Committee meeting on April 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Schedule a work session after budget meeting.

**12. Contract with Power System West, LLC for the Public Works Generator Radiator Replacement**

-Tamra Goettsch

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Large generator serving Building 1 at Public Works has a leaking radiator:
  - Generator is still operational but requires repair.
- Recommended solution:
  - Disassemble and repair the radiator on site.
  - Provide temporary backup generator during repairs.
- Radiator cost alone is approximately \$85,000:
  - Total project cost is higher when labor and rental equipment included.
  - Capital project shared between Public Works and the county capital fund.
- Repair is more cost effective than replacing the entire generator at this time.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward on consent.

**13. Notification of Binding of County Insurance Policies**

-Tamra Goettsch

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Renewal/binding of several insurance policies effective March 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - Excess General Liability:
    - Two-year pricing guarantee.
    - 0% change from prior year.
    - Substantial savings versus previous carrier.
  - Excess Workers' Compensation:
    - Two-year policy.
    - Self-insured retention remains \$750,000 across all class codes:
      - Including law enforcement.
    - Premium increased about 21% due to market conditions.
  - Marine policy for ferries:
    - Premium increased about 13% due to a paid and a pending claim.
    - County retained coverage in a tight market.
  - Medical malpractice for contracted HHS providers:
    - Decreased about 10% due to accurate risk information and no claims.
  - Medical malpractice for sheriff/juvenile contracted physician:
    - Large premium increase due to significant claim activity and payouts.
    - Current premium is about \$158,677:
      - Up sharply from prior years.
- Plan for corrections medical malpractice:
  - Contract for current corrections physician ends June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Will not be renewed.
  - Will cancel medical malpractice policy when contract ends.
  - Only 25% of premium is "minimum earned,":
    - County will request a refund for the unearned portion.
  - Future coverage will depend on model selected by Sheriff/Juvenile:
    - Contracted physician vs. outside provider with their own insurance.
- Risk team has authority under county rules to bind coverage.
- Board approval is required for invoices over \$100,000, not for policies themselves.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward for board session on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

**14. Petty Cash Fund Requests for Parking Fees & Other Small Purchases****a. Health and Human Services – Rural Services Team****b. Health and Human Services – Addiction Treatment Services Team**

-Sherry Downs and Jessica Paler

**Summary of Presentation:**

- a. Health and Human Services – Rural Services Team:
  - Request to establish petty cash for HHS Rural Services Team - Woodburn.
  - Reimburse parking and similar expenses for meetings and trainings.
  - Salem removed free street parking downtown:
    - Increasing the burden on employees traveling from outlying locations.
  - Process:
    - Staff pay for parking at kiosks, obtain receipt or photo evidence.
    - Submit to local petty cash custodian for reimbursement.
    - Petty cash fund reconciled monthly.
    - Replenishment handled through accounts payable and treasury.

- b. Health and Human Services – Addiction Treatment Services Team:
  - o Similar petty cash request for HHS Addiction Treatment Services.
  - o Same reimbursement purpose and process as Rural Services Team.
- Employees should not bear costs for work expenses and forced into expenses:
  - o P-cards was also mentioned as a possible alternative in some situations.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward.
- Matt Lawyer:
  - o Policies to state employees should not personally bear work related expenses.
  - o P-cards or reimbursement mechanisms must be made available.

**15. Meeting Material Updates**

-Gary White

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Follow up on prior request to reduce paper waste from printed meeting packets.
- New process:
  - o Reduce standard number of printed copies from 20 to 10.
  - o Five copies for commissioners and key staff.
  - o Five on the side for attendees who did not print their own.
  - o Others to download in meeting invite and read digitally or print a copy.
- Technical implementation:
  - o Packets stored on OneDrive.
  - o Meeting invite contains direct link to packet.
  - o GovDelivery to email agendas and notices to subscribers:
    - Not full packets.
  - o Self-service subscription form is now on the county website:
    - Board of Commissioners → Meetings → News → Subscribe to Public Notices.
    - Allows public to opt in/out without staff manually managing lists.
  - o Analytics allow staff to see engagement.
- Confidential/proprietary materials:
  - o Board packets include confidential information that are not shared via links.
- Public access:
  - o Management update packets are not yet posted as public documents.
  - o Members of public attending in person can obtain printed materials.
- Potential further reduction to five after short transition period and evaluation.

**Board Direction:**

- Approved to move forward.

**16. Legislative Update**

-Alvin Klausen

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Session scheduled to end in five days.
- Many Marion County priorities did not advance:
  - o Woodburn Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) bill to expedite expansion died in committee.
  - o Bill to require a public vote for the Cherriots mass transit tax increase died.
- Some bills of interest have passed both chambers and await Governor’s signature.
- Transportation funding and regulatory issues remain in flux.
- Battery Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation:
  - o Battery recycling.
  - o Bill moved to Ways and Means late in session.

- Keizer Fire District and Marion County Fire District #1 joint project federal earmark:
  - Request could be competitive with other county earmarks.
- River Road railroad clearance project:
  - In prior meeting asked staff to obtain contact at the railroad/federal level.
  - Gustavo, from Senator Jeff Merkley's office has given information and offered to help facilitate a meeting.
- Woodburn UGB one time expansion:
  - Statewide bill.
  - Correcting previous one-time expansion mechanism.
  - May cover Woodburn's request even though Woodburn specific bill failed.
- SB 1599:
  - Moving a transportation related tax question to a May ballot.
  - This passed.

**Board Direction:**

- Keizer Fire District and Marion County Fire District:
  - Do not send a support letter for that earmark, due to potential competition with county prioritized federal requests.
- River Road railroad clearance project:
  - Request this be federal partners led, with local partners as technical leads.
- Estate Tax proposal:
  - Status bill reportedly raising exemption threshold but increasing top rate.
  - Staff will research and follow up.

**17. Board Session**

- **March 4, 2026 - Agenda**
- **March 11, 2026 - Preview Agenda**
- **March 18, 2026**
- **March 25, 2026**

-Commissioner Colm Willis

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Overview or board session.

**Board Direction:**

- Good with update.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS and UPDATE

**Commissioner Danielle Bethell**

- N/A

**Commissioner Kevin Cameron**

- Bureau is redoing Western Oregon Resource Management Plan:
  - O&C Counties will be representing Marion County.
  - Board will need to sign formal agreement of this.
- Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS) Transportation Improvement Plan:
  - Out for public comment.
  - Jon Heynen to send it out to the public to encourage engagement.
  - Open House on March 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - Public Hearing May 26<sup>th</sup>.
- North Santiam Drought Contingency Plan:
  - Plan does not reflect dam drawdowns.

**Commissioner Colm Willis**

- N/A

Other

**Veterans and First Responders Memorial**

-Jon Heynen

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Letter forwarded from Chip Bury in Community Services.
- Commissioner Kevin Cameron has already reviewed:
  - Remove any references to specific funding amounts or funding sources.
  - Keep letter focused on support for project rather than financial commitments.
- Revised letter presented to the board.

**Board Direction:**

- Agree to sign letter of support, with revised, non-financial language.

**Fire Reset Self-Attestation**

-Matt Lawyer

**Summary of Presentation:**

- Happens annually.
- 22 individuals have not done it yet.
- Reminder email or letter has been sent.

**Board Direction:**

- Agree to send a letter from the board's office

**Adjourned** – time: 11:18 a.m.

**Minutes by:** Mary Vityukova

**Reviewed by:** Gary L. White