

County Commissioners
Colm Willis, Chair
Kevin Cameron
Danielle Bethell



Chief Administrative Officer
Jan Fritz

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION

Economic Development Program Update
Minutes

Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Commissioners' Boardroom
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Suite 5231
Salem, Oregon 97301

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Danielle Bethell, Kevin Cameron and Colm Willis.

Board Office: Alvin Klausen, Jonathan Sanford, Trevor Lane, and Matt Lawyer.

Legal Counsel: Jennifer Rogers.

Community and Economic Development: Kelli Weese, Chip Bury, Ashley Jackson and Sarah Coutley.

Commissioner Colm Willis called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

-Commissioner Colm Willis

2. Chamber Small Business Support Program

-Sarah Coutley

Summary of Discussion:

Chamber Small Business Support Program for the 2026 grant cycle. Three chambers are participating in a full-year grant cycle and submitted mid-year reports:

North Santiam.

Jefferson.

Woodburn

Salem and Keizer chambers did not apply by original deadline. They applied later and are operating under half-year grants of \$5,000 each. Reports are expected at year-end. Silverton repeatedly discussed but did not apply, and Stayton submitted then withdrew its late application due to internal issues. Stayton indicated possible interest in applying in the future year if program remains open.

Commissioner Bethell asked that representatives from the Woodburn chamber bring examples of the business workshop materials they provide to local businesses when they attend. Ms. Coutley requested confirmation to schedule year-end chamber reports.

Commissioner Bethell indicated if all three commissioners are expected to attend, scheduling would likely need to occur in January due to calendar constraints. Ms. Coutley asked if Board wished to open a 2027 chamber grant cycle with applications in the fall. Commissioners support continuing program at \$10,000 per year per chamber. Confirmed funds are budgeted.

Direction & Follow-Up:

- Open 2027 grant cycle with \$10,000 annual awards per chamber:
 - Applications to be received in the fall.
- Commissioners agreed that year-end chamber reports should be scheduled:
 - Recognize scheduling in January likely if all commissioners are to be present.
- Ms. Coutley agreed to ask Woodburn chamber representatives to bring examples of workshop materials when they next attend.

Tasks:

- **Task:** Open 2027 grant cycle at annual award level of \$10,000 per chamber. Accept applications in fall, consistent with prior practice.

Assigned To: Sarah Coutley.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

- **Task:** Schedule year-end reports for participating chambers, with timing likely in January to accommodate commissioner availability.

Assigned To: Sarah Coutley.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

- **Task:** Request that Woodburn chamber representatives bring examples of business workshop sessions and materials they provide to businesses.

Assigned To: Sarah Coutley.

Deadline/Timeline: Next meeting they attend.

3. Emergency Economic Opportunity Program (EEOP) Application: Father (Fr).

Gary Zerr Community Center

-Chip Bury

Summary of Discussion:

Application in the amount of \$25,804 for a gas range, dishwasher, and refrigerator to support monthly community dinners. A similar amount is also promised by the Keizer Rotary, effectively matching requested funds. Following a prior Board question about eligibility, staff and legal review was done. It was determined lottery funds may support services or give financial assistance to a non-profit business located or to be located in Oregon. This request fits within lottery fund guidelines.

Commissioners discussed community-wide nature of the dinners. Attendance is open to community and variety of organizations, churches, and groups host and participate. Dinners are described as a major recurring community event, with frequent participation by seniors and others in the community. No explicit motion, vote, or final directive was recorded in the transcript under this item.

Direction & Follow-Up:

- Approved.

4. No-Cost Extension of Siegmund Construction

-Chip Bury

Summary of Discussion:

Request for no-cost extension to contract with Siegmund Construction for the Detroit Marina project. Updates the contract's outdated completion dates. Current contract specifies substantial completion by May 1, 2026, and final completion by December 31,

2026. Legal counsel reviewed the proposal. Confirmed changing only dates and not dollar amount would not limit county's ability to procure or conduct additional work or enter into new contracts for remaining construction activities under existing contract provisions. Commissioners discussed practical options, noting that selecting a different company would require a full procurement process. Costs have increased since Sigmund was retained, making a lower-cost alternative unlikely. Commissioners confirmed there would be no additional cost associated with extension. Support proceeding with no-cost amendment to update completion dates.

Direction & Follow-Up:

- Support proceeding with no-cost contract amendment with Sigmund Construction for Detroit Marina project. Update substantial and final completion dates, with no change in contract amount.

Tasks:

- **Task:** Process a no-cost amendment to Sigmund Construction contract for Detroit Marina project, revising completion dates only. Leave contract dollar amount unchanged, consistent with legal counsel's guidance.

Assigned To: Chip Bury.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

5. Discussion

-All

Summary of Discussion:

Commissioner Kevin Cameron provided an informational update on a recent Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS) meeting. Regarding an amendment to bring Aumsville into the existing agreement. SKATS staff prepared draft amendment that would not require returning to governor's office. Motion introduced by school district representative to add school district as signatory. Amendment was defeated on 6-2 vote, with Cherriots and school district voting in favor and all other members, including Salem, voting against.

Amendment to bring Aumsville in will proceed for legal and council review by participating jurisdictions. Some entities using delegated signing authority and others, including Marion County, require signatures from all three commissioners. Questions were raised about why county uses three commissioner signatures while some jurisdictions delegate authority. Commissioner Cameron clarified Marion County's practice of using board orders to delegate authority or collective signatures for certain contracts. His understanding is that the school district representative claimed appointment to role, but school board has not taken direct action on agreement. Raise questions about representative's authority. No Board action was taken in response to this concern.

Direction & Follow-Up:

- No direction or follow-up given.

6. Other — All

Summary of Discussion:

Commissioner Danielle Bethell stated she requested drafting of thank-you letters to partners who submitted letters on behalf of county in connection with a lawsuit.

Request that Commissioner Willis sign letters can be sent. Commissioner Willis indicated agreement, and no further discussion on this item occurred in the transcript.

Direction & Follow-Up

- Commissioners agreed that thank-you letters to partners who provided support letters related to the lawsuit will be finalized, signed, and sent.

Tasks:

- **Task:** Sign thank-you letters to partners that submitted letters on behalf of county in connection with the lawsuit.
 - **Assigned To:** Colm Willis
 - **Deadline/Timeline:** Not specified
- **Task:** Send the signed thank-you letters to the identified partners.
 - **Assigned To:** Jonathan Sanford
 - **Deadline/Timeline:** Not specified

**7. Next Steps — All
Summary of Discussion**

No additional substantive business.

Adjourned – time: 1:45 p.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Reviewed by: Gary L. White