County Commissioners
Colm Willis, Chair
Kevin Cameron
Danielle Bethell

Chief Administrative Officer
Jan Fritz

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION

Business Services – Risk Management
Minutes

Thursday, October 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, Colm Willis and Kevin Cameron.
Boards Office: Jonathan Sanford, Chis Eppley, Toni Whitler, Matt Lawyer and Trevor Lane.
Legal Counsel: Sebastian Tapia.
Business Services: William White and Tamra Goettsch

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

1. Welcome & Introductions - Commissioner Colm Willis

2. Annual Report for FY26 - Willam White

Summary of Discussion:
Program's insurance and self-insurance structure, claims experience, and total cost of risk. A total cost of risk of approximately $4.6 million for the fiscal year ending June 30th, and an experience modification factor of 0.74. The factor reflects County's workers' compensation experience relative to comparable class codes. Commissioners asked how County's experience compares with other governments and whether it is tracked by department. The formal experience modifier is organization-wide, while other allocation calculations consider departmental claims and payroll, personnel, or vehicle measures.

Direction & Follow-Up
No Board direction or follow-up was identified under this agenda item.

3. Insurance Schedule - William White

Summary of Discussion:
Property premium of approximately $1,002,000. Excess general liability coverage of $9 million over a $1 million self-insured retention. Excess workers' compensation coverage with a $750,000 retention. The property schedule had been updated to remove certain rented properties with contents valued below applicable deductible. Commissioners raised concerns about liability for leased housing and whether leases receive legal review. Staff described existing lease-review process but did not confirm that Legal reviews every lease. Tamra Goettsch said issue would be reviewed considering County's newer partnerships. Commissioner Bethell noted that her name did not appear on the public-official bond list. Discussion did not resolve the discrepancy.

Direction & Follow-Up
Task: Review the lease-review process, including whether legal review is appropriate for the relevant leased properties.
Assigned To: Business Services/Risk Management. Tamra Goettsch indicated issue would be reviewed.
Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Clarify the public-official bond listing and the question raised about a commissioner not appearing on it.
Assigned To: Not specified.
Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

4. Temperature Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)
   a. Worker's Compensation (WC) Claims by Class Code
   b. WC Claims Repeated Claimants

-William White

Summary of Discussion:
Claims information discussed in connection with annual report and separate claims-report materials. Commissioners asked about a 2019 stress claim identified by initials. Discussion indicated it remained open, with approximately $73,000 in reserves and approximately $383,000 in total incurred. Staff could not confirm whether the claimant remained employed. Covered workers' compensation loss information by class code. Figures reflected differences in claim costs across job classifications. Examples were approximately $2.34 per $100 payroll for sheriffs, $3.34 for road construction/public works, and $0.06 for office clerical work. The formal experience modifier is calculated for organization rather than separately for each department.

Direction & Follow-Up
Task: Confirm claimant's employment status and provide an update on claim discussed.
Assigned To: William White.
Deadline/Timeline: At a subsequent update; no specific date stated.

5. Risk Programs Rules
   a. Summary of Proposed Changes
      i. Section 8. Auto Liability: Underinsured Language added to Uninsured.
      ii. Section 9. Auto Liability: PIP Stated Limits to Mandatory Minimums.
      iii. Section 10.4.3. Add Business Services Director Liability Claims Settlement Authority Equal to Risk Manager.
      iv. Section 11.2.5 Add Language to Clarify Workers' Compensation Coverage for Seach and Rescue Volunteers.
      v. Section 11.3.2. Add Business Services Director Workers' Compensation Claims Settlement Authority Equal to Risk Manager.
      vi. Section 14.1.8. Add Language to Clarify Exclusion from Coverage for Adult in Custody and Juvenile in Custody Injury Claims When on Work Crews

-William White

Summary of Discussion:

Proposed changes to the Risk Program Rules. The proposed changes were:

Section 8 - add underinsured motorist language alongside uninsured motorist coverage.
Section 9 - provide personal injury protection at the legally required minimums.
Section 10.4.3 - add Business Services Director as proxy with settlement authority equal to Risk Manager's.
Section 11.2.5 - clarify workers' compensation coverage for Search and Rescue volunteers.

Commissioners expressed agreement that Section 10.4.3 language was suitable.

For Section 11.2.5, proposed language would define coverage period for Search and Rescue activity in Oregon. Ending when volunteer signs out, rather than covering travel home or response from outside Oregon. Clarified that statutory coverage for cadets and reserves is addressed elsewhere. Commissioners discussed departments' responsibility to maintain volunteers' proof of auto insurance and value of randomly checking departmental compliance.

Addressed if temporary election workers employed through agency could drive County vehicles. Existing policy described as allowing County employees or volunteers to drive. Participants did not resolve how that policy applies to agency workers. William White said the matter would be checked.
William White described a proposed Section 14.1.8 exclusion for injury claims involving adults or juveniles in custody while on work crews. At the end of the discussion, the proposed rule changes were to proceed to a Board session for adoption through the consent process. Work session itself did not adopt them.

Direction & Follow-Up
Task: Advance the proposed Risk Program Rules changes to a Board session for consideration and adoption through the consent process.
Assigned To: William White, as presenter.
Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Conduct random checks of departments' compliance with maintaining required auto-insurance documentation and bring compliance concerns to the appropriate County leadership.
Assigned To: Risk Management.
Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Determine how agency-employed temporary election workers may lawfully and appropriately drive County vehicles and communicate the solution to Chris Eppley.
Assigned To: Legal Counsel, William White, and Tamra Goettsch.
Deadline/Timeline: By the end of the day, as requested during the meeting.

6. 585 Budget Reports by Service - William White

Summary of Discussion:
William White discussed rising costs in self-insurance funds. Including insurance premiums and claims, as factors affecting the budget. Tamra Goettsch explained that the fund budget covers multiple services and that amounts transferred to individual services vary with costs. Including claims and program expenses. Noted that reserves had declined to approximately $4.5 million.

Task: Prepare a spreadsheet showing the fund's starting balance, the costs leading to the current balance, and a forecast for the $1,500-per-claim charge; provide the information for a future budget or work-session discussion.
Assigned To: Business Services; Tamra Goettsch acknowledged the request.
Deadline/Timeline: For an upcoming budget meeting or future work session; no date specified.

7. Next Steps - All

Summary of Discussion:
Follow-ups on proposed Risk Program Rules, use of agency-employed temporary election workers to drive County vehicles, self-insurance fund, departmental insurance-document checks, lease review, and status of a workers' compensation claim.

Task: Advance proposed Risk Program Rules changes to a Board session for consideration through consent process.
Assigned To: Not specified.
Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Resolve if agency-employed temporary election workers may drive County vehicles and communicate solution to Chris Eppley.
Assigned To: Legal Counsel, William White, and Tamra Goettsch.
Deadline/Timeline: By the end of the day.

Task: Prepare spreadsheet showing self-insurance fund's starting balance, costs leading to the current balance, and a forecast for the $1,500-per-claim charge.
Assigned To: Tamra Goettsch acknowledged the request.
Deadline/Timeline: For an upcoming budget meeting. No date specified.

Task: Conduct random checks of departments' compliance with maintaining required auto-insurance documentation.
Assigned To: Risk Management.
Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Review lease arrangements considering the County's new partnerships.
Assigned To: Not specified.
Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Provide an update on the workers' compensation claim discussed during the meeting.
Assigned To: William White.
Deadline/Timeline: At a subsequent update; no specific date stated.

Adjourned – time: 2:38 p.m.
Minutes by: Mary Vityukova
Reviewed by: Gary L. White