

**CROOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
OF OCTOBER 16, 2024, REGULAR MEETING
Open Portion**

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on October 16, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the County Annex meeting room located at 320 NE Court Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

Board Members Present: Commissioner Seth Crawford, Commissioner Brian Barney, and Commissioner Susan Hermreck

Absentees: None

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: Legal Counsels Eric Blaine and John Eisler; Executive Administrative Assistant Sarah Puerner; Clerk Cheryl Seely; Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis; Interim Manager Will Van Vactor; Budget Manager Jamie Berger; Fairgrounds Manager Casey Daly; Assessor Jon Soliz; Airport Manager Kelly Coffelt; Administrative Assistant Breyanna Cupp; Finance Director Christina Haron; Library Director Sarah Beeler; Legal Assistant Alex Solterbeck; District Attorney Kari Hathorn; Accounting Manager Lisa Neuberger; Senior Planner Katie McDonald; Assessment Technician Elsie Ray; Assessment Technician Linda Pepper; Mental Health Technician Tara Fetterly; Sheriff Gautney; Lieutenant Andrew Rasmussen; Work Crew Coordinator Linda Neasham; Parole/Probation Deputy Chris Estes; Christina Dodini-Marquez; Crystal Bonotto; Chris Overman; Beth Jay; Cliff Kiser; Jennifer Adams-Mitchael; Erik Mitchael; Chelsea Herron; Dock Kerbow; Tawndry Byrd; Gary Watson; Rebekah Lambert; Steve Waring; Carol Benkosky; Rob Carter; Tom Rue; and members of the public.

REGULAR SESSION

The meeting was **called to order at 9:00 a.m.**

Public Comment: None

Consent Agenda:

1. OHA 2023-2025 Intergovernmental Agreement Amendment 12
2. Order 2024-45 In the matter of the appointments to the Vector Control District

MOTION to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #3: Swearing in of Parole and Probation Deputy:

Requester: John Gautney

Details: Sheriff John Gautney was present at the Regular Session for the swearing-in of Parole and Probation Deputy Kenneth Horton. Deputy Horton took a formal oath before the Board of Commissioners and an audience of community members and colleagues, affirming his commitment to his new responsibilities. This ceremony highlights the importance of the role and Deputy Horton's dedication to serving the community with integrity and diligence.

Discussion item #4: Update on Crook County Foundation and Holiday Partnership, including use of Carey Foster Hall:

Requester: Rebekah Lambert

Details: Executive Director Rebekah Lambert and President Steve Waring of the Crook County Foundation attended the Regular Session to provide an update to the Board of Commissioners on the Holiday Partnership's activities and to request the utilization of Carey Foster Hall. In 2023, the initiative successfully supported over 2,000 individuals, distributing food, gifts, personal items, and clothing. Specifically, the program delivered gifts to 584 children, 110 elders, and 43 adults with disabilities, while providing food assistance to nearly 650 households. The Holiday Partnership coordinates efforts among donors, volunteers, schools, businesses, service organizations, nonprofits, and other community groups to achieve these results. During the session, Ms. Lambert requested a donation of \$5,000 from the board to support the ongoing efforts of the Holiday Partnership.

MOTION to waive the fee for Carey Foster Hall. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

MOTION to donate \$5,000.00 to the Crook County Foundation from the community support fund for the Holiday Partnership. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #5: Vehicle Purchase Bid Approval:

Requester: Casey Daly

Details: Fairgrounds Manager Casey Daly attended the Regular Session to seek approval for the purchase of a new Ford truck. This truck will replace the Ford F350 Pickup, commonly referred to as the Fairgrounds Pickup, which has a blown motor. The cost to repair the motor was quoted at \$14,000. After reviewing the situation, the Interim County Manager and the Finance Director recommended that purchasing a new vehicle would be more economically viable. The proposed financial plan involves allocating \$20,000 from the 2023/2024 Budgeted Capital Equipment funds and up to \$40,000 from a \$2 million Fairgrounds grant to cover the cost of the new truck.

MOTION to purchase a truck to replace the F250 pickup from Kendall Ford in the amount of \$49,301.17. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #6: Septage Transition:

Requester: Jacquie Davis

Details: Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis attended the Regular Session to present options for transitioning septage services. The County's longtime Septage Provider, Bryan and Shanna Sproat of 2 Springs Ranch, has issued a termination notice effective December 24, 2024. The Sproats processed septage under DEQ WCPF permit No. 101422, and transferring this permit will require some time. Jacquie outlined three potential courses of action: **1) County-operated solution:** The landfill could assume responsibility for the septage processing. This option would involve significant costs due to the need for new equipment and additional staff to manage the operations. **2) Third-party lease:** A second company has expressed interest in taking over the lease

agreement. This entity is actively seeking property and has shown willingness to operate on County land, which could mitigate the need for the County to manage septage directly. **3) City partnership:** The County is exploring the feasibility of partnering with the city by transporting septage to city waste facilities. Jacquie has reached out to Casey Kaiser to assess this possibility, though confirmation from the city is still pending. Each option comes with its own set of implications for cost, management, and logistics, requiring careful consideration by the Board.

Discussion item #7: Order 2024-44 A Budget Resolution for Crook County Fiscal Year 2024-25:

Requester: Jamie Berger

Details: Budget Manager Jamie Berger attended the Regular Session to seek approval for a budget resolution for Crook County for the fiscal year 2024-25. The resolution aims to adjust budget appropriations for County funds, increasing revenue acceptance and modifying expenditure allocations for the fiscal year 2024-25. These adjustments are designed to enhance compliance with fund balance policies, specifically for the Sheriff's Office Fund (Fund 251). The proposed changes would bolster the fund's contingency, ensuring greater operational sustainability by allowing for more substantial carryover into future fiscal years.

Commissioner Crawford opened a public hearing. After receiving no public comments, the public hearing was closed.

MOTION to approve the Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2024-25, Order 2024-44. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #8: Understanding Measure 117: Potential Impacts if Approved:

Requester: Cheryl Seely

Details: County Clerk Cheryl Seely attended the Regular Session to explain Measure 117, which proposes the adoption of Ranked Choice Voting starting in 2028. If approved, this measure will implement ranked choice voting for determining winners in Primary and General Elections for several key offices, including President, Senator, Congressional Representatives, Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, and Attorney General. It's important to note that State Senators and State Representatives are excluded from this measure. Ranked choice voting allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference, which can significantly alter election outcomes. Cheryl highlighted that the financial implications of this measure are substantial, with costs expected to rise from 2027 onwards due to voter education, outreach, and necessary upgrades to tabulation equipment. Detailed cost estimates will be presented later. The session also covered other potential impacts of adopting this voting method.

Discussion item #9: "The Giving Plate" Program Overview and Letter of Support Approval:

Requester: Susan Hermreck

Details: Commissioner Susan Hermreck presented an overview of The Giving Plate's initiatives during the Regular Session, detailing their four key hunger-relief efforts: the Grocery Program, Kid's Korner, Kid's Korner Mobile Pantry, and Backpacks for Bend.

She noted that The Giving Plate now offers the Mobile Pantry every Saturday every month, making a substantial impact on food insecurity in Central Oregon. Commissioner Hermreck sought the board's endorsement for a letter of support to further sustain and promote the essential work of these programs.

MOTION to sign the letter of support for The Giving Plate. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

Interim Manager Report: None

Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Crawford reported having a productive discussion with Senator Wyden regarding upcoming concerns with FEMA and flood plain regulations, which threaten to halt development on certain properties—an issue he referred to as another instance of federal overreach. He suggested that, considering the current issues in Florida, it might be prudent to slow down and carefully consider the implications of these policies.

Public Comment: None

At 12:01 p.m. the Board of Commissioners convened into Executive Session under the following statute(s): ORS 192.660(2)(e) For the purpose of conducting deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions; ORS 192.660(2)(a) To consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent; and ORS 192.660(2)(h) Consulting with Counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board of Commissioners convened back into Open Session, inviting members of the public into the meeting room.

Commissioner Crawford stated for the record that at the start of the 2a executive session, Will Van Vactor presented a letter to the Board of Commissioners. In the letter, he disclosed that he had applied for the County Manager position and would step back from any further participation in the recruitment process. He suggested that John Eisler, Assistant County Counsel, be appointed to oversee the recruitment activities moving forward.

MOTION to remove Will Van Vactor from the County Manager recruitment and to assign Assistant County Counsel John Eisler to lead and coordinate the recruitment with GMP Consultants from this point forward. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

MOTION for staff to proceed as directed in the Executive Session. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

MOTION to direct staff to proceed as directed in the Executive Session. Motion seconded. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was **adjourned at 12:36 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Puerner / Breyanna Cupp