

**CROOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
OF DECEMBER 4, 2024, REGULAR MEETING
Open Portion**

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Meeting on December 4, 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; County Manager Will Van Vactor; Executive Assistant Breyanna Cupp; Clerk Cheryl Seely; Assessor Jon Soliz; Airport Manager Kelly Coffelt; Fairgrounds Manager Casey Daly; Budget Manager Jamie Berger; Finance Director Christina Haron; Undersheriff Bill Elliott; Senior Planner Katie McDonald; Natural Resources Manager Tim Deboodt; Legal Assistant Alex Solterbeck; Systems Administrator Chelsea Watson; Operations Manager Katrina Weitman; Administrative Assistant Mona Glade; Assessment Technician Elsie Ray; Administrative Division Manager Stephanie Wilson; Sheriff Gautney; Lieutenant Andrew Rasmussen; Jim Brinkley; Erika Frickey; Mitch Madden; Allison Hilderbrand; Jill Bonanno; Renee Parrott; Karianne Aaron; Julie Martinez; Dennis Ralls; Amber Heiberger; Barbara Pennington; Stacy Bernard; Kimberly Bales; Erick Kufeldt; Shannon Alleman; Karen Bushnell; Alanna Spry; Tracy Stubblefield; Mark Rhoden; Linda Neasham; Justin Alderman; and members of the public.

REGULAR SESSION

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

Public Comment: None

Consent Agenda:

1. Order 2024-47 In the matter of the appointments to the Ag Extension Service District Advisory Board
2. Lease Extension with Kelso Land Surveying for County Survey Maps
3. Extensions to Code Compliance and Land Use Hearings Officer Contracts

MOTION to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #4: Recognize Employees with 10+ years of service to Crook County:

Requester: Breyanna Cupp

Details: Executive Assistant Breyanna Cupp attended the Regular Session to honor employees who have dedicated 10+ years of service to Crook County. Those reaching

milestone anniversaries of 10 years or more were awarded a milestone pin and certificate in recognition of their long-standing contributions. This event is carefully organized to appropriately celebrate these significant achievements. A photo was also taken at the steps of the old Courthouse to commemorate the occasion.

Discussion item #5: Ratification of HR Director Hire:

Requester: Will Van Vactor

Details: County Manager Will Van Vactor attended the Regular Session to request approval from the Board of Commissioners for the ratification of the HR Director hire. Meghan McKee has accepted the position and is scheduled to begin her role with the County on January 6th.

MOTION to approve the ratification of HR Director Meghan McKee and to appoint Will Van Vactor to sign the appropriate papers. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #6: Appointment of Equipment Operator/Mechanic and Equipment Operator Lead; Approval for additional Equipment Operator:

Requester: Amy Albert

Details: Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis attended the Regular Session to seek approval from the Board of Commissioners for promotions within the department and the addition of an equipment operator position. The Landfill recommends promoting two current operators who meet the qualifications to the positions of Equipment Operator/Mechanic and Equipment Operator Lead. Additionally, due to staffing shortages, the Landfill is requesting the creation of a new operator position. It's important to note that this request will not increase the Landfill's Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) count beyond what was approved for the fiscal year 24/25.

MOTION to approve promotion of Mark Rhoden to Equipment Operator Lead. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

MOTION to approve the appointment of Clive Bigelow as Equipment Operator. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

MOTION to approve the engagement of an additional Equipment Operator. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #7: Appointment of Road Department Mechanic:

Requester: Amy Albert

Details: County Manager Will Van Vactor attended the Regular Session to request that the Board of Commissioners appoint Landon Warner as a mechanic in the Road Department. After conducting an external search and a thorough interview process, the department has chosen to promote an internal candidate to this position, contingent upon the approval of the Board of Commissioners. This matter has already been approved by the Budget Manager.

MOTION to approve the appointment of Landon Warner as the third Road Department mechanic and authorize Will Van Vactor to sign the necessary papers. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #8: Proposal for New Retrofit of Water Tank on Existing 160,000-Mile Lowboy:

Requester: Brad Haynes

Details: County Manager Will Van Vactor attended the Regular Session to discuss with the Board of Commissioners the proposal for retrofitting a water tank on an existing lowboy. The Road Department has received three bids and recommends selecting OMCO for their superior quality control. Additionally, OMCO's bid includes all the options that the Road Department previously had, making it the preferred choice.

MOTION to accept the staff recommendation of the procurement as the best value to the County and authorize staff to act in furtherance of the procurement. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #9: Discussion of grant acceptance from CJC regarding MAT in the Crook County Jail:

Requester: Andrew Rasmussen

Details: Jail Commander Andrew Rasmussen attended the Regular Session to discuss the acceptance of a grant. The jail has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BestCare to provide Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) services at no cost to the county. The grant, which could provide up to \$236,400, will be utilized to purchase necessary medications, ensuring there are no supply issues. The MOU details the treatment plans, and no policy adjustments are required by the jail.

MOTION to authorize staff members to approve the CJC MAT grant award on behalf of Crook County subject to the final grant award document having no material differences compared to the sample grant award document that has been previously reviewed. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #10: Intent to Award: Selection of Base Bid for Aviation T-Hangar and Taxi Lane Project:

Requester: Kelly Coffelt

Details: Airport Manager Kelly Coffelt attended the Regular Session to propose awarding the contract for the aviation t-hangar and taxi lane project to 2KG Contractors. This project, which has been under discussion by the board and county staff for the past two years, is primarily funded by the FAA. Although initially rejected a year ago due to high costs, the airport has since secured an additional \$250,000 from the State of Oregon to support the project. After a thorough review of the bid documents, bonds, and the list of first-tier subcontractors, the Airport Manager recommends that Crook County issue an Intent to Award to 2KG Contractors, contingent on the confirmation of FAA grant funding, in the amount of \$1,148,885.00.

MOTION to approve the recommendation to award the Prineville Crook County Airport Aviation T-Hangar and Taxi Lane project #3-41-0051-023-2025 to 2KG Contractors Inc and authorization to sign out of court following the bid protest period. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hermreck. During Discussion, Commissioner Barney asked the Legal Department to follow up with the Bend School District and confirm that the apparent low bidder 2KG Contractors Inc will pass as reference. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #11: Public Hearing: Ordinance 347, An Ordinance Amending the Crook County Zoning Ordinance to Adopt a Zone Map Change for Map Tax Lot 1614110000700, and Declaring an Emergency, first reading:

Requester: Katie McDonald

Details: Senior Planner Katie McDonald attended the Regular Session to conduct a public hearing on a proposed ordinance for a zone map change, as recommended by the planning commission. No appeals have been filed, and no testimony was received regarding the change. The zone map amendment affects a property located in Powell Butte. This session marked the first reading of Ordinance 347, with further discussions and final decisions anticipated in upcoming sessions.

MOTION to read Ordinance 347 by title only. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Barney read the Ordinance by title only.

Commissioner Crawford opened the public hearing. With no comments received, the public hearing was closed.

The second reading will take place at the Regular Session on December 18th.

Discussion item #12: Letter to FEMA re PICM Option:

Requester: Will Van Vactor

Details: County Manager Will Van Vactor attended the Regular Session to present a proposed letter to FEMA concerning the BiOp issue. This letter, inspired by one previously sent by another county, details Crook County's concerns regarding FEMA's

legal authority to enforce the PICM options. It also confirms that Crook County intends to comply with applicable laws under the Endangered Species Act. After consultation with County Counsel, it is advised that the letter be issued directly from the Board of Commissioners.

MOTION to sign and send the FEMA National Insurance letter that has been crafted by Crook County. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Barney authorized Breyanna Cupp to use his signature stamp for the letter.

Discussion item #13: Consideration of specific procedure for filling a forthcoming vacancy on the Crook County Budget Committee:

Requester: Eric Blaine

Details: County Counsel Eric Blaine explained the process for filling a Budget Committee vacancy during the Regular Session. The application deadline is December 13th, and the County administration office handles the advertisement of vacancies. Interested public members submit applications, after which the existing committee reviews these and may interview candidates. Recommendations, either for further recruitment or specific appointments, are then forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for decision-making. Current members seeking reappointment undergo the same process but recuse themselves from relevant discussions. Following the application deadline, committee members and staff will meet to discuss and prepare final recommendations for the Board of Commissioners meeting on December 18th.

MOTION to invoke section 6 of Order 2022-52 and establish a process for the vacancy on the Crook County Budget Committee whereby the two citizen committee members and one staff member will meet publicly on December 16th or 17th to consider a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners on December 18th as to the board of commissioners should appoint to fill that vacancy. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #14: Calendar for FY26 Budget Process:

Requester: Jamie Berger

Details: Budget Manager Jamie Berger attended the Regular Session to introduce the FY26 budget process calendar, marking today as the official start. Historically, the kickoff occurred late February, but it has been moved up to allow additional time for departments to establish budget timelines. The goal is to set objectives by mid-January, rather than late February, to have clear goals established well before the budget meetings in May. Jamie noted a few minor corrections needed in the tentative calendar, such as a typo in the fiscal policies, which appears second on the calendar. She also mentioned that with a County Manager now in place, the involvement of a County Commissioner is not deemed necessary. Additionally, December 6th falls on a Friday, making it impractical to proceed this week due to insufficient preparation time.

MOTION to approve the calendar for FY26 budget process with the exception of removing Commissioner and change December 6th meeting to fall within the end of the month. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion item #15: Fee Waiver/Reduction from Justin Alderman:

Requester: John Eisler

Details: Assistant County Counsel John Eisler attended the Regular Session to discuss a fee waiver request by Justin Alderman from prinevillereview.com concerning a public records request related to the Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC). Alderman's refined request, following discussions with staff, includes emails with specific keywords, copies of document retention policies, and database logs for meetings. The staff estimates it would take 7 hours to process this request, costing approximately \$795. This figure is based on an initial keyword search yielding nearly 5000 emails needing IT and legal review. Alderman, who received a fee reduction last month for a different request and had minor past requests processed for free, has provided a justification for this fee reduction in his email correspondence. Commissioner Crawford is interested in collaborating with the Legal department to standardize the process for handling public records requests. While Commissioner Hermreck supports transparency, she also expressed concern about waiving fees for these requests, especially given that some community members are struggling to afford basic necessities like food. Commissioner Barney acknowledged the need to update the policies regarding public records requests and expressed agreement with Commissioner Hermreck's concerns about the implications of fee waiver requests.

MOTION to waive the fees of Justin Alderman's November 25, 2024, public records request for its items #3 copy of our public records retention policy and #5 of the database and file base logs of Crook County meetings webpage system and to charge our standard fees for the rest of the request. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Interim Manager Report:

Will Van Vactor noted that this is the first public meeting after being appointed as County Manager and wanted to thank everyone for the opportunity and is excited to work with the departments, staff, and community. He also encouraged those who have not yet met the new GIS Analyst, Ben Clark, to take a moment to introduce themselves.

Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Hermreck mentioned that she has a letter of support for the Board of Commissioners to review. This letter endorses the Secure Rural Schools initiative and is addressed to Cliff Bentz. It emphasizes the importance of this issue for our rural schools and mirrors a previous letter sent individually by Commissioner Hermreck. This time, the letter represents the collective stance of the Board of Commissioners.

MOTION to sign the letter and send to Cliff Bentz. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Crawford noted that citizen Calista Songstad raised the topic of Deschutes County College. He has discussed this with Will Van Vactor, and more information is expected to emerge soon. This initiative could offer an opportunity for citizens to gain deeper insights into the various county departments. Additionally, public meetings are currently a focal point, and efforts are underway to collaborate with committees on best practices to enhance transparency and engagement with the community.

Public Comment:

Justin Alderman expressed his appreciation to Crook County for reconsidering its procedures for public records requests. He highlighted the cost to taxpayers and emphasized that his request is intended to benefit them. Alderman raised concerns about what he perceives as Crook County's atypical approach to handling these requests, noting that there seems to be a significant resistance from the county towards them. He questioned how many records fee waivers have been granted and fees waived, pointing out that his findings indicate none have been issued so far. He stressed that requests made by the media are meant to serve the community's interests.

At 10:47 a.m. the Board of Commissioners convened into Executive Session under the following statute(s): ORS 192.660(2)(d) To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations.

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.

MOTION to authorize the negotiating team to present the County's proposal to the union as discussed in the Executive Session. Motion seconded by Commissioner Barney. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford voted Aye, Commissioner Barney voted Aye, and Commissioner Hermreck voted Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was **adjourned at 11:26 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Puerner / Breyanna Cupp