

**CROOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES
OF MAY 14, 2025, WORK SESSION
Open Portion**

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of Commissioners met in a regularly scheduled Work Session on May 14, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Administration Conference room located at 203 NE Court Street, Prineville, Oregon 97754.

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

Absentees:

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: County Counsel Eric Blaine; Community Development Director John Eisler; Executive Assistant and Communications Officer Sarah Puerner; County Manager Will Van Vactor; Executive Assistant Breyanna Cupp; Road Superintendent Brad Haynes; Fairgrounds Manager Casey Daly; District Attorney Kari Hathorn; Legal Assistant Alex Solterbeck; Health and Human Services Director Katie Plumb; Office Manager Rebecca Keegan; Natural Resources Manager Tim Deboodt; Assessor Jon Soliz; Assessment Technician Elsie Ray; Permit Technician Senior Ashley Leslie; Administrative Division Manager Stephanie Wilson; Appraiser Stephanie West; HR Director Meghan McKee; Administrative Services Manager Katrina Weitman; Administrative Assistant Mona Glade; Finance Director; Christina Haron; Linda Pepper; Tory Kurtz; Erin David; Kimberly Peacher; Ernie Echeveste; JC; Vashti; Mary Schnetzky; Triangle; and members of the public.

WORK SESSION

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

Public Comment: None

Discussion item #1: OSU Extension Open Campus and Juntos Program Update:

Requester: Rebecca Keegan

Details: Jennifer Boyle and David Gutierrez attended the Work Session to brief the Board on OSU Open Campus and the Juntos program; slides will be emailed due to a technical issue. David described Juntos' series of family-night workshops covering college/post-secondary options, financial aid (FAFSA/Oregon Promise), scholarships, and graduation readiness, along with student clubs, summer college-prep activities, and facilitated campus visits (annual OSU Corvallis trip, with plans to expand to UO and PSU). He and Jennifer reported active outreach at Crook County High School and Middle School and noted 2024 support for 56 students, including 28 FAFSA/Oregon Promise filings and 47 scholarship applications. Jennifer emphasized expanding vocational and Career & Technical Education pathways—over half of supported students pursue trades—with a new statewide CTE specialist, exploration of partnerships such as Baker Technical Institute and UTI, and continued coordination with COCC to support transfer planning and avoid excess non-transferable credits. David closed with anonymized senior highlights on post-secondary destinations, majors, and significant scholarship awards.

Discussion item #2: Department of Defense Grant for Military Overlay Zone

Introduction:

Requester: John Eisler

Details: Community Development Director John Eisler attended the Work Session and briefed the Board on the Department of Defense–funded Military Training Route (MTR) Overlay Zone project, joined by consultant Ann Beier and Federal partners including Lt. Col. Baker (Oregon Air National Guard/Kingsley Field) and Kimberly Peacher, Community Planning & Liaison Officer with the DoD’s Northwest Training Range Complex. Staff outlined updates to the Comprehensive Plan, maps, and code to establish a “no-surprises” early-coordination process—requiring pre-application notification and consultation for development within special-use airspace and existing military flight training routes (primarily in eastern Crook County)—to address potential encroachments such as wind/solar facilities, transmission lines, tall communications structures, and private airstrips. The overlay functions like a floodplain overlay (adds notice/consultation; does not prohibit uses) and will be paired with updates to renewable-energy provisions to align with State notification requirements. A background on the grant and project goals was provided, along with a presentation on protecting special-use airspace and MTRs; Lt. Col. Baker also summarized Kingsley Field operations and training, including the regional/national value of Oregon’s airspace. The Planning Commission held a public hearing in late April and unanimously recommended adoption; Board hearings are anticipated in Summer 2025.

Discussion item #3: Transportation Safety Action Plan:

Requester: John Eisler

Details: Community Development Director John Eisler attended the Work Session to provide an update to the Board on the Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP), which aligns with USDOT’s SS4A program and uses the Safe System Approach, crash analysis, and community input to set a public commitment and measurable safety targets that strengthen future funding bids. 2018–2022 data show ~850 crashes (~170/year), 15 fatalities, and 81 serious injuries, with key factors including speeding (40%), unbelted occupants (28%), impaired driving (21%), and lane-departure/fixed-object collisions (~70%). Will emphasized that documenting issues in the TSAP prioritizes fixes and improves eligibility for State/Federal support, including coordination with ODOT. Erin David (Parametrix) noted the commitment should be issued by a high-ranking body and include a date—either a reduction target (e.g., 50%) or focus on specific crash types—with no penalties for not meeting targets; staff favored “strive toward zero” language. Next steps: bring a commitment resolution to a future Board meeting, confirm task force membership, develop an SS4A-eligible project list for the 2026 cycle, and establish performance metrics with public reporting.

During discussion of the Transportation Safety Action Plan, Will emphasized that the plan provides a formal mechanism to identify and document specific safety issues so they can be prioritized and addressed. He noted that including issues in the plan

positions the County to pursue Federal and State funding tied to those identified needs. Will added that the plan moves the County from talking about problems to committing to fix them, and he invited Erin to correct or clarify if needed. Commissioner Crawford was referred to in the context of focusing on concrete safety concerns and securing external funding support.

Discussion item #4: Approve Final Draft of Crook County Landfill's Solid Waste Management Plan:

Requester: Jacquie Davis

Details: Landfill Manager Jacquie Davis attended the Work Session requesting Board approval of the final draft of Crook County Landfills Solid Waste Management Plan prepared by JRMA. Staff noted the plan has been in development for over a year; Kevin previously presented, no public comments were received, and remaining questions from Will were resolved in a follow-up call. In response to Commissioner Barney, Davis confirmed the plan addresses the new recyclables program, including a potential recycling facility/center with concept drawings that could proceed if funding is secured, and it outlines program guidelines and expectations going forward. The Board directed staff to place the plan on a future consent agenda; there are no time constraints, and the Board thanked Jackie for her work.

Discussion item #5: Consider Replacing City Representative on Natural Resources Advisory Committee:

Requester: Tim Deboodt

Details: Natural Resources Manager Tim Deboodt attended the Work Session to brief the Board on replacing the City of Prineville representative on the Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC), outlining the committee's history and current bylaws (9–11 members; no designated city seat). City representative Casey Kaiser, whose term runs through December 31, 2025, asked that Councilor Shane Howard be appointed to serve the remainder of his term; however, Commissioners noted this would be a “swap,” not a vacancy fill. Consistent with standard procedure, the Board advised that if Casey no longer wishes to serve, he should resign and the County would advertise the vacancy, conduct the 30-day notice, have NRAC review applications and recommend a candidate, and then the Board would appoint—preserving staggered terms and process equity. The Board encouraged Shane (and others) to apply if a vacancy is created and noted a separate future discussion could consider bylaw changes to formalize a city seat and/or partnership. No action taken.

Discussion item #6: Initial Discussion for Chip Seal Road Project:

Requester: Brad Haynes

Details: Road Superintendent Brad Haynes attended the Work Session to discuss the 2025 chip seal project and requested approval to purchase chip seal oil from Albina Asphalt via the Deschutes County contract (Crook County was named on the RFP) for a total of \$554,310—\$491,645 for oil (about \$700/ton delivered; roughly \$30/ton higher than the prior year) and an estimated \$62,665 for the distributor (\$350/hour, six-hour minimums). The work was set to cover approximately 22 miles on Juniper Canyon Road (Highway 380 to the county boat ramp road) and the upper and lower Davis Loop, including a double chip on the Juniper Canyon hill; this corridor was last chip sealed

about 10 years ago. The Road Department noted they chip seals 20+ miles annually to maintain a pavement condition index (PCI) above 70, with a goal of 80; the purchase was budgeted but required a budget adjustment due to price increases. Rock previously contracted was being delivered to the Hilltop pit, an additional roller was to be rented, temporary flagging services were engaged, and public outreach included a reader board on Juniper Canyon and a short social media slideshow. Work was planned for June 2–18, weather permitting, with further discussion and Board action slated for the following week.

Discussion item #7: Review and consider approval of letter to Oregon Department of Justice, authorizing the Crook County District Attorney to submit an application for the Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Intervention program:

Requester: Eric Blaine

Details: County Counsel Eric Blaine attended the Work Session and briefed the Board on a request from the District Attorney’s Office to submit the 2025–2027 Oregon Department of Justice Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Intervention (CAMI) grant and asked the Board to review and consider a designation letter to DOJ authorizing District Attorney Carrie Hawthorne to apply on behalf of Crook County. Blaine noted the County’s long participation in CAMI (2019–2021 award: over \$94,000; 2021–2023 award: over \$130,000) and that applications are due May 19. CAMI funds support medical care and forensic examinations for suspected child-abuse victims, both to provide immediate assistance and to develop evidence for potential prosecutions. A draft letter was reviewed by Finance with no concerns. The Board was asked to approve issuance of the designation letter; any formal action would occur outside the work session.

MOTION to approve the letter designating Kari Hathorn Crook County District Attorney having authority to submit an application for the 2025-2027 child abuse multidisciplinary intervention program grant, and commissioners sign outside of the meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Crawford. No discussion. Commissioner Hermreck votes Aye, Commissioner Crawford votes Aye, Commissioner Barney votes Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Manager Report:

Will Van Vactor thanked the Commissioners and the full Budget Committee for their work at Monday’s session, noting the process went smoothly and culminated in approval of the proposed budget. Appreciation was extended to department heads for strong submissions and to the budget team—especially Jamie and Christina—for assembling the document. Commissioners reciprocated thanks, including recognition of the accounting manager’s first-year efforts. The approved budget will be returned to the Board for formal adoption on June 11th.

Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Crawford thanked Will for developing and distributing a public meeting rules checklist to all departments, noting it as a first step toward standardizing notices, recordings, and practices across boards and committees. Will reported that OGEC offers

a strong best-practices training and is committed to ensuring all boards operate under the same rules, with the checklist to be tailored to Crook County. The Board discussed exploring consistent Zoom use, audio/video recording, and timely posting for all advisory bodies; no decisions were made at this time.

Will noted OGEC's checklist is a strong starting point for anyone supporting boards or committees and emphasized consistent use. He recommended tailoring the checklist to Crook County's preferred best practices and any county-specific rules, committing to ensure all boards and committees operate from the same rule set. He added that using the checklist uniformly will help identify issues in real time for updates and improvements.

Commissioner Hermreck reported that she and Will planned to travel to Salem for the next County College session to continue commissioner training and peer learning. She emphasized the value of networking with commissioners from across Oregon and noted that she consistently returns with insights that affirm Crook County's strong standing compared to challenges facing some other counties. Recent sessions included educational site visits, such as correctional facilities and the Oregon State Hospital, which, were informative and underscored the importance of continued learning. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate and the benefits of ongoing training for both new and experienced officials.

Commissioner Barney announced that the Crook County Justice Center was recognized by the Daily Journal of Commerce (DJC) with a top politics award, with an awards ceremony scheduled for June 12 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland. He noted the recognition is directed primarily to the project team—Kirby Nagelhout Construction, Pinnacle Architecture, and KMB—and all contributors involved in building the Justice Center. He thanked staff, acknowledged Sarah for issuing a press release, and recognized county personnel, including John, for their roles. Commissioner Barney also remarked on last Friday's law enforcement flag memorial held in front of the Justice Center, describing it as a beautiful ceremony at a fitting venue.

At 10:02AM 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

8. ORS 192.660(2)(e) For the purpose of conducting deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

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 direct staff to correspond with the counterparty as discussed in executive session and if the counterparty agrees to authorize signing of the lease outside of the meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Crawford. No discussion. Commissioner Crawford votes Aye, Commissioner Barney votes Aye, Commissioner Hermreck votes Aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Puerner / Breyanna Cupp