



Board of Commissioners

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

APRIL 15, 2025

Present: Nancy Wyse, Chair; Pat Malone, Vice Chair; Gabe Shepherd, Commissioner; Vance Croney, County Counsel; Rachel McEneny, County Administrator; Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator

Elected

Officials: Ryan Joslin, District Attorney; Jef Van Arsdall, Sheriff

Staff:

Erika Milo, Board Recorder; Rachel Bulder, Maura Kwiatkowski, Board Staff; Anne Thwaits, Public Information Officer; Sean McGuire, Sustainability; Toby Lewis, Petra Schuetz, Community Development; Gary Stockhoff, Public Works; Sara Harstein, April Holland, Rocío Muñoz, Staci Yutzie, Health Services; Debbie Sessions, Financial Services; Undersheriff Don Rogers, Dawn Dale, Benton County Sheriff's Office

Guests: Ari Basil-Wagner, Frances "Franco" Stevens, The Curve Foundation; John Harris, Horsepower Productions; Bill Gamache; Steve Harder; Amy Young, Partnership for Community Health

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Wyse called the meeting to order at 9 AM and introductions were made.

2. Review and Approve Agenda

The following item was added to the agenda under 10. Other:

10.1 Budget Committee Vacancy – Gabe Shepherd, Commissioner

3. Announcements

Malone advised of a National Public Radio report indicating Representative Sarah Finger McDonald planned to add the Adair Village wastewater plant to the infrastructure legislation.

4. Proclamation

- 4.1 Proclaiming April 21 through 27, 2025 as Lesbian Visibility Week, Proclamation No. P2025-009 – Ari Basil Wagner, Frances “Franco” Stevens, The Curve Foundation

Basil-Wagner introduced Stevens, founder of The Curve Foundation and the creator/publisher of *Curve Magazine*, the world's first and most popular lesbian magazine when none existed.

Basil-Wagner read the proclamation aloud.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt Proclamation No. P2025-009, proclaiming April 21 through 27, 2025 as Lesbian Visibility Week in Benton County. Shepherd seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

Wyse invited Basil-Wagner and Stevens to the County's June Pride Celebration.

5. Comments from the Public

Bill Gamache, Resident, reported having called the Road Department several times about getting Foster Road in South Benton County graded, where 31 houses are located. There are five roads – Eureka, Bundy, Bruce, Williams, and McFarland Roads – with only 36 houses combined – that are more regularly graded. Gamache felt the County should maintain a road that is more heavily traveled versus roads with fewer houses, but that does not seem to be the case. Gamache hoped someone would suggest the Road Department grade Foster Road.

Gamache reported having several times seen the road grader parked on Kyle Road, which is off Alpine Road, which is two miles from McFarland Road. Gamache reported having seen the grader drive up McFarland Road to Lakeside, grade the road, and go right back by Foster Road and leave it full of chuckholes. Foster Road has been graded once in 12 months, and one small load of gravel was dumped on it in 12 months.

Gamache felt the County budget could accommodate grading the road and a few more loads of gravel several times each year to maintain the road. There are several places in the road where mud comes up through the gravel.

Wyse will follow up with Public Works and acknowledged the County has many roads that are in undesirable condition.

Steve Harder, Executive Director of Dial-A-Bus. Harder wanted to inform the Board of some things Dial-A-Bus (DAB) is doing and with the support of the Public Works Department. Because of DAB's nonprofit status, the organization is able to provide

more services than County contract dollars provide for. With the assistance of Public Works Director Gary Stockhoff and some flexibility in the County contract, DAB is able to leverage private donations and grants, as well as other revenue sources, to provide more services to vulnerable communities, the disabled, and the elderly communities of Benton County. This allows DAB to privately provide services outside the scope of the contract so there is no interference with funding that comes with a number of restrictions. DAB is able to do so with privately purchased vehicles and privately paid for staff, dispatch, and accompanying infrastructure. DAB provides service for some people who live just outside of Benton County but need services inside of Benton County. DAB provides service on holidays when DAB purports to be closed. Harder reported personally having driven – as have some of DAB’s most dedicated staff – homeless, disabled, and elderly community members on Thanksgiving and Christmas over the past 10 years. DAB also provides more revenue hours; more hours than are paid for by County dollars by using private funding.

6. Work Session

6.1 Enterprise Permitting System – Project Update – Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator

Crager reminded the Commissioners of the Board’s \$100,000 sponsorship of the Enterprise Permitting Project, the purpose of which is to evaluate system opportunities related to various County permitting processes. The first half of the funds was used to analyze permitting processes within various departments, and the information and value gained from that process was substantial. The recommendations that resulted from that first phase of the project were presented to the Board in fall 2024.

There is a need for more business process mapping. Some processes are documented, some are not, and to understand where there are duplications and opportunities. There is also a need to understand the customer experience. Web pages are not clear about where to go, and the process is confusing. Telephone calls sometimes result in customers being handed off multiple times to various County employees.

The recommendations were clear on the need to focus on customers. How do we help people navigate systems?

Crager indicated the remaining funds will be used to complete the mapping processes for all departments, which will help identify opportunities to reduce duplication and increase efficiency. The second component will be the website navigator; creating a one-stop shop for all answers relative to permitting. The intent is to complete this work by August 31.

It is important to lay this foundation even if resources are not available in the next biennium.

Project Manager Shannon Bush is on leave; however, the Board Office has identified one of its employees to continue the work until Bush returns.

6.2 Floodplain Program Update – Toby Lewis, Floodplain Administrator, Community Development Department

Lewis provided updates on the Oregon Silver Jackets high water mark data collection project; status of work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Flood Hazard Mapping, and Substantial Damage Assessment.

Oregon Emergency Management approached Benton County on behalf of the Oregon Silver Jackets (OSJ) to review and provide feedback on a pilot project to collect water mark data during and after flood events. OSJ developed a data collection tool with instructions and asked Benton County to test it. Watermarks are important to identify where flood hazard maps require updating. Lewis displayed a map with flood events and high-water marks and where the tool is being used. The tool works on a cellphone, iPad, or desktop computer and shows who collected the data, the date and time, the location, and how to contact the collector. The tool also provides for the inclusion of photographs and a map feature to provide accurate location information. It is easy for staff and the public to use.

Lewis advised the Board that the ability to communicate with FEMA staff has slowed due to federal administrative changes. The most recent information available is that staff at FEMA Region 10 are allowed to respond to local requests for data and technical information. However, the information must be reviewed internally before being provided to local jurisdictions. In-person meetings and travel restrictions remain in place. Regarding the Integration of the National Insurance Program and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Project, the injunction filed at the Washington, DC court level was moved to the Oregon court system for review in mid-March. The injunction will be reviewed at the same level as a previous case. County staff still hope to implement its ESA requirements for floodplain, but the final documents are still needed from FEMA. The subset of that project is the cooperating agency reviews. County staff are reviewing draft documents provided by FEMA regarding final implementation of the ESA, including a new document for review received at the beginning of April and for which comments will be submitted April 15. The full Draft Environmental Impact Statement is expected for review later this month.

Lewis indicated the FEMA risk map that covers the Upper Willamette Valley Watershed, which includes all of Benton County except for the Luckiamute Watershed, is moving forward but has slowed. FEMA's last communication was that it planned to have draft

maps available for review online in early April, but the maps have not yet been posted. The flood risk review meeting is still postponed due to travel restrictions on FEMA staff. The Luckiamute project is still moving forward; a joint meeting was held in mid-March with various agencies to identify outstanding questions in order for the application to be deemed complete.

Lewis referenced the area's heavy rainfall events in December 2024 and January 2025. The State issued a state of emergency declaration to allow the Oregon Department of Transportation to access federal highway funds to repair damaged portions of the federal highway system. The declaration covered 15 counties, but it was not needed in Benton County at that time. February and March 2025 weather events due to flooding resulted in emergency declarations covering 10 counties; again, Benton County was not affected.

Lewis discussed substantial damage assessment requirements, although Benton County does not typically have many weather-related disaster events. Assessments are required to be done in general to potentially access state and federal funds to help with event-related repairs. The general assessment is required as part of the County's commitment to uphold its floodplain regulations. There is a slight difference between general damage assessments and disaster event assessments; disaster event assessments are completed to determine whether significant damage to structures and infrastructure has occurred.

Malone expressed a desire to have atmospheric rivers classified by level of severity, so community members do not become complacent with the term. Lewis indicated the National Weather Service may implement an atmospheric river classification system.

Chair Wyse recessed the meeting at 9:56 AM and reconvened at 10:03 AM.

6.3 Update on Benton County Facilities: Courthouse/District Attorney's Office and Emergency Operations Center – Gary Stockhoff, Public Works Director

Stockhoff indicated a meeting is scheduled for April 16 with Communications staff to plan a groundbreaking ceremony for the new courthouse, which will be held May 9 at 4 PM. Groundbreaking attendance will need to be limited for safety reasons.

Soil treatment is underway for the east parking lot, which is several weeks ahead of schedule; and power and cable are being relocated for the Clubhouse (northeast of the site). Building sitework is underway and on track for foundation work to begin mid-May.

The fee for the major City of Corvallis permit was paid on April 14. Two minor permits are outstanding for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The EOC building is on a

separate track and will be completed before the Courthouse. EOC plans should be ready for County permitting review in approximately six weeks.

Two bids were received for deconstruction of the Swick House. County staff will meet the low bidder to discuss a few clarifications to their proposal.

Malone requested more videos as the project progresses.

Stockhoff indicated the May 2025 report will be the last Board meeting update. Project reporting will transition to an online dashboard with photographs, videos, drone footage, and project updates. The dashboard should be available June 1 and will be shared with the Public Information Officer.

Malone asked whether the State funding agreement has progressed to where it should be at this point.

Stockhoff indicated the County is still waiting for a signed Phase I agreement. The authorization to sell the bonds was issued, so the funding is there. It is now a matter of having the Oregon Judicial Department reimburse the County for the money it has fronted.

6.4 Benton County Crisis Center Update – April Holland, Director; Staci Yutzie, Crisis Center Project Manager, Health Services

Yutzie reported that Crisis Center activities are moving quickly. Page 4 of the project plan update shows the project timeline, which is now operationally focused. The first batch of new positions will be posted this week, and there is a timeline for the second batch of positions. The hiring processes are being staggered to move large groups of applicants through efficiently. The first batch of newly hired employees is anticipated for July 1. Second-round interviews for the manager of the crisis program were completed the week of April 7. Health staff will be meeting with Information Technology and Facilities Management the week of April 21 to begin building out the moving plan. May 7 is the handover date for the keys to the facility. The operation of existing services from the new building will begin on June 2. Furniture for stabilization was backordered and will arrive mid-June.

Yutzie noted that significant focus is now on staffing and communications. The County is receiving many requests from community partners for facility tours, and staff are having conversations about how to navigate those. A series of open houses is anticipated in mid- to end of May. There will be a tour for internal Behavior Health staff, followed by tours for external partners such as Oregon State University and others. Community partners are anxious to see the facility. Yutzie is hoping for the end of May

for tours and an external open house. The grand opening celebration is being planned with the date to be determined.

McEneny expressed a desire to have a City Managers tour of the new Crisis Center before it opens for service.

Holland reported staff are working to ensure policies, procedures, and forms are all aligned and have been working with community partners for insight into procedures that may need to be in place. Communications teams will be issuing press releases; and since May is Mental Health Awareness Month, there is a natural connection for messaging. The website is being updated, including updated project timelines.

Holland noted that on April 10, after 10 weeks of bargaining, the County reached tentative agreement with AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees) on staffing for the Crisis Center. Human Resources is working to bring the agreement to the Board for approval. Holland indicated the process was very collaborative and a good experience working through the wants and needs of staff and the facility. A more in-depth discussion of this subject is on the agenda for the April 21 department head meeting with the Board.

Wyse thanked Holland and Yutzie for their dedication to the project.

Shepherd noted the focus on staffing the stabilization function prior to staffing the respite function.

Holland confirmed that Step 1 is for current services to move into the facility. Then, downstairs stabilization will be added and hours of operation will be phased up. Health wants to have as much knowledge and security as possible at every phase of operation and to practice revenue generation to have a sustainable facility. The goal is to be strategic, knowing there are many questions regarding funding at the State and Federal levels.

Shepherd stressed the need for the County to be very open with the community about the purpose of the Crisis Center and how it is being funded.

Holland agreed, indicating communications plans are currently being developed, along with partner conversations, to help with the education process. The website is being updated now, and marketing around how the facility works would be helpful. There has been discussion around creation of videos and other readily available and digestible communications about the Crisis Center.

Malone agreed with the importance of outreach to the community and tours and asked about the progress of recruitment activities.

Holland indicated recruitment is being staged. The first round of additional staff will be five staff. The Human Resources team, Yutzie, and others have worked to make recruitment as enticing as possible. This was also part of the discussions with AFSCME. It can be very challenging to recruit for behavioral health professional positions. Having smaller recruitments will help. Planning has gone well, and Holland is hopeful all positions will be filled. The County will continue to adjust as needed.

Malone asked about the County's current behavioral health staffing level. Holland indicated it was 12.

Malone noted there have been some legislative discussions regarding changing Oregon standards to match Washington and California and asked whether there is any sense of change coming from the Oregon legislature.

Holland suggested having that discussion at the April 21 department head meeting when more subject matter experts will be present.

Holland indicated that Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHPs) in Oregon are highly qualified. There have been instances during hiring crises when qualifications were adjusted. QMHP hiring challenges are occurring throughout the state.

6.5 Partnership for Community Health of Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties: Community Health Improvement Plan 2024-2028 – Rocío Muñoz, Health Improvement Program Manager, Benton County Health Services; Amy Young, Project Manager, Partnership for Community Health

Muñoz advised the Board that Benton County has been identified as among the healthiest counties in the state, as well as the nation, by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation based on a variety of factors. Despite this ranking, Benton County community members still face health challenges.

Muñoz introduced Amy Young, Project Manager for the Partnership for Community Health of Linn, Benton, and Lincoln (LBL) Counties. Young provided an update on the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) 2024-2028 implementation. The last update presented to the Board was at the end of summer 2024.

Young noted that all operations are embedded in health. The Partnership for Community Health (PCH) is a multiagency collaborative responsible for CHIP and the Regional Community Health Assessment. The partnership was established in 2021 to create a regional community health assessment and improvement plan. Previously, most of the work was done at the County level. Members of the partnership are the LBL

Health Departments, Samaritan Health Services, IHN CCO (InterCommunity Health Network Coordinated Care Organization) , LBL Health Equity lines, Siletz Tribes, and United Way. This collective impact model seeks to solve complex problems through a shared vision of positive change, a pursuit of equity through focus on system change, shared measurement, and accountability.

The Community Health Assessment (CHA) and CHIP generally run on a five-year cycle. The CHIP was adopted at the end of 2024 based on findings from the regional CHA. Groundwork will be completed in 2026 for a new regional health assessment for 2027 through 2032. All partners have officially voted to ratify the plan and have adopted it as their guiding document for health improvement.

Young described what a CHIP implementation looks like at a regional level. The model used is Plan-Do-Study-Act, which is a form of rapid cycle improvement grounded in having measurable aims and evidence-based evaluation. Activities include inventorying and collaboration within and across partners to determine what is occurring and how it aligns with CHIP. CHIP priority areas include access to affordable housing; access to quality care; behavioral health; and Inclusion, Diversity, Anti-racism, and Equity (IDARE). Each goal is divided into three strategies that delve deeper into key areas of need that have been identified by partners, workgroups, community members, and other collaboratives.

Muñoz discussed two local initiatives that closely align with the priorities. One is the Coordinated Homeless Response Office work to rehouse community members and contribute to expanding housing units and supportive services. The program has provided housing support to at least 40 households since the beginning of the Flexible Housing Subsidy Program. The second initiative links back to the behavioral health goal, including the work being done around the Crisis Center.

Young highlighted the PCH website launch; <https://blpartnershipforhealth.org>. It is a central website for Partnership for Community Health and CHIP information, including dashboards, reports, and impact stories. In addition, a communications assessment is being conducted by a contractor to better use communication resources such as the website to identify audiences, communicate the mission, and enhance the organization's face as a resource in the community. Findings from the communications assessment are due in the next several months.

Young invited the Commissioners to reach out to her or Muñoz with questions or to schedule presentations for specific groups.

Malone expressed appreciation for the collaboration between the various partners and recognized that a great deal of work is required by everyone to achieve Benton

County's high health ranking. Malone encouraged the Communications team to highlight the excellent progress being made.

7. Consent Calendar

7.1 Approval of March 12, 2025 Minutes of the Benton County Board of Commissioners and City of Corvallis Joint Meeting

7.2 Proclaiming April 30, 2025 as Vietnamese American Remembrance Day, Proclamation No. P2025-014

7.3 Proclaiming April 30, 2025 as National Therapy Animal Day, Proclamation No. P2025-015

MOTION: Malone moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Shepherd seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

9. New Business

9.1 Citizen Advisory Committee Bylaws Amendment – Petra Schuetz, Interim Community Development Director

This item was heard prior to Item 8. Public Hearing.

Schuetz reported that the Alsea Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) stood up again approximately one year ago. The CAC reviewed the 2016 bylaws for CACs and recommended several changes. Recommended changes include incorporating virtual options for meetings, changing the dates and times for meetings, officer term start changes, and changes for proposed timing for reports on CAC work. Schuetz acknowledged Shepherd's question about the intentionality of one of those dates. Schuetz believed the date change was intentional; however, Counsel was unsure that was the case.

Shepherd asked about the number of CACs currently active in Benton County. Schuetz responded that Alsea was the only currently active CAC.

Shepherd noted the revised bylaws would change when individuals are elected. Shepherd's question related to the last paragraph of Article 4. Shepherd noted that Article 3, Section 1, indicates elections are to be held the first meeting in April preceding the beginning of new term, and the new term begins July 1. The last paragraph of Article 4 indicates one-year terms for officers that commence January 1 of each year. Shepherd asked whether the Article 4 date should be July 1 to avoid a situation where

the Chair would hold that position for only a few months, since the first meeting of each term year is July 1. Shepherd suggested that it be changed to resolve the conflict.

Wyse asked about the preference of the Commissioners. Shepherd did not see a need to delay approval of the bylaws and suggested moving forward with the July 1 date since Paragraph 1 indicates officers will be elected at the first meeting, and their term begins July 1. Wyse was comfortable with the July 1 change.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to approve the proposed amended Citizen Advisory Committee bylaws as amended, with the last paragraph of Article 4 changing the month from January to July. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

8. Public Hearing

PH 1 In the matter of the first reading of Ordinance No. 2025-0325, Amending the Corvallis Comprehensive Plan Map (City file No. CPA-2023-02) and Amending the Benton County Zoning Map (County file No. LU-24-006) – Toby Lewis, Senior Planner, Community Development

Wyse opened the Public Hearing at 11:01 AM.

Staff Report

Lewis reminded the Board of the March 12, 2025 joint hearing of the Benton County Board of Commissioners and the Corvallis City Council to review the applicant's request for amendment of the Corvallis Comprehensive Plan Map to change the zone designation from low-density residential to mixed use commercial and amendment of the Benton County Zoning Map to change the zone designation from urban residential to urban commercial. The location of the applicant's property is 5840 NW Highway 99, Corvallis (just north of Corvallis and northwest of the intersection of Highway 99W, Lewisburg, and Granger Avenue).

The bodies voted to approve the change to the Corvallis Comprehensive Plan Map and the amendment of the Benton County Zoning Map. The Corvallis City Council held their ordinance hearing and adoption on April 7, 2025, with an ordinance effective date of April 17, 2025.

Public Comment

No comment was offered.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to conduct the first reading of Ordinance No. 2025-0325, amending the Corvallis Comprehensive Plan Map and the Benton County Zoning Map. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

Counsel read the Ordinance aloud (short title). The Ordinance will return on May 6, 2025 for the Second Reading and will take effect on June 5, 2025.

9.2 Order No. D2025-049, Granting a Sole Source Approval to Contract for Animal Shelter Services – Don Rogers, Undersheriff, Dawn Dale, Business Analyst; Benton County Sheriff's Office

Rogers indicated the request is for a sole service approval to contract with Heartland Humane Society (HHS), which is the only provider of this type of service in Benton County. It is an ongoing contract between the County and HHS.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt Order No. D2025-049 granting sole source approval to contract for animal shelter services. Shepherd seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

9.3 Resolution to Create Fund 516: Law Enforcement Intergovernmental Services Fund, Resolution No. R2025-005 – Debbie Sessions, Deputy Director, Financial Services

Sessions indicated the request is to add a new fund. Historically, Fund 514 has housed all intergovernmental services: information technology, human resources, finance, law enforcement, facilities, and fleet. In order to create more transparency and more effectively document the cost of doing business for fleet, facilities, and law enforcement, staff requests creation of Fund 516 for law enforcement.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt Resolution No. R2025-005 to create Fund 516, the Law Enforcement Intergovernmental Services Fund. Shepherd seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

Sessions noted that another fund will be repurposed to isolate public health funds, which will be part of the 2025-27 budget process.

9.4 Approval of Assessment and Tax (County Assessment Function Funding Assistance; CAFFA) Grant Application for Fiscal Period 2025-26 – Debbie Sessions, Deputy Director, Financial Services

Sessions presented the annual request for approval to submit a CAFFA grant application, which helps support tax and assessment functions. The 2025-26 request will fund approximately 10 percent of the cost of those functions. Funding for this purpose has declined over the last two bienniums. There are two bills in the legislature

that would help with assessment and tax funding: one is HB 2082, which authorizes a study to identify options for improving the system of funding; and the second is HB 3518, which expands the recording fee for assessment. HB 3518 is currently with the Revenue Committee.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt the 2025-26 CAFFA Grant document, certifications, and Resolution No. R2025-006 as presented and to authorize the Financial Services Deputy Director to digitally sign the online documents on behalf of the Board of Commissioners and submit them to the Oregon Department of Revenue. Shepherd seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

9.5 Public Health Legislative Support Discussion and Request – Sara Hartstein, Public Health Division Director

Hartstein noted that the State Legislature is midway through its 2025 session, and Benton County Health has two budget requests. The first is Oregon Health Authority Policy Option Package (POP) 410; a \$25 million request for additional public health modernization (PHM) funds. PHM is a framework for public health in Oregon that helps health agencies across the state create infrastructure for foundational programs and services such as communicable disease prevention services and environmental health services. If the POP is approved, the additional funds will go to local communicable disease programs. County Health staff have seen programs shrink with COVID response funds no longer being available and the recent Federal rescission of COVID-era funding. The additional funding would help strengthen the communicable disease program to address the increase in sexually transmitted diseases and Hepatitis C, as well as for preparedness, response, and control of disease outbreaks.

The second POP is the Coalition of Local Health Officials Early Childhood Request for \$10.2 million per biennium. Of this amount, \$4 million would shore up WIC (Women, Infants, and Children). WIC serves pregnant mothers and children under age five and has historically been underfunded. Federal funding is often insufficient, which requires counties to provide supplemental funding. Benton County provides approximately \$100,000 in General Funds to support WIC so it can remain fully staffed.

The remaining \$6.2 million would go to the Public Health Nurse Visiting Program, which is also a statewide program. There are four public health nurse visiting programs in Oregon, and Benton County participates in three. Two of the programs in which the County participates require the County to match the Medicaid reimbursement. Given Federal de-investment in health and local budget concerns, it is important to ensure these very important programs are maintained.

One request of the Board is to reach out to legislators Sara Gelser Blouin and Sarah Finger McDonald to ask them to sign onto the letter of support by the end of April. The letters will then be shared with the Ways and Means Co-chairs. Staff also requested the Commissioners sign letters of support for each POP to submit to Ways and Means Co-chairs and Ways and Means Health and Human Services Co-chairs.

Malone asked for a refresher on the WIC program and the nature of the outreach.

Hartstein indicated the County currently has three full-time staff providing services to pregnant mothers, lactating parents, and children under age five. Services include nutrition education; supplemental food; a registered dietician who is also a program coordinator; one certifier, and one community services representative to help with scheduling and communications plans.

Malone asked about the other programs in which the County participates.

Hartstein indicated Family Connects is a universal public health nurse visit program. Any new family may have a free public health nurse visit, and there are no eligibility requirements. The program was delayed by COVID, but County Health staff are now working closely with Lincoln and Linn Counties and Samaritan Health Services to ensure an embedded referral system. The Family Connects program covers the Medicaid match and is fairly well funded. The other two programs – Babies First and Cocoon – do not have the Medicaid match from the State. Cocoon serves children with higher needs who may be at risk and can support families until those children are 18.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to authorize the Chair to send email communications to encourage legislators to sign on to the 2025 Legislative Public Health Modernization Package Early Childhood Budget Request support letters. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to approve the Board signing the letters of support for the 2025 Legislative Public Health Modernization Package and Early Childhood Budget Request and submit to the Ways and Means Committee Co-Chairs. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

10. Other

10.1 Budget Committee Vacancy – Gabe Shepherd, Commissioner

Shepherd indicated that a Budget Committee member had recently resigned and suggested the Board conduct public outreach for interested applicants to fill the vacancy. Training for Budget Committee members is scheduled for approximately two weeks from April 15.

Wyse agreed public outreach for applicants was appropriate and it would be helpful for Commissioners and staff to reach out to contacts who may be interested in serving on the Committee.

Shepherd expressed a desire to interview candidates, since the Budget Committee and Planning Commission are the Board's most significant bodies. Wyse agreed.

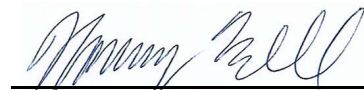
Malone stressed the need to make clear the dates and timeline; there is a very rapid turnaround. Hearings begin at the end of May, so the vacancy should be filled as soon as possible, especially with the need for the new member to complete training.

Crager indicated a willingness to facilitate public outreach and candidate interviews.

Counsel clarified that there is no specifically required process to fill the vacancy so long as the Board makes the appointment in a public meeting.

11. Adjournment

Chair Wyse adjourned the meeting at 11:31 AM.



Nancy Wyse, Chair



Erika Milo, Recorder



Maura Kwiatkowski, Transcriptionist

* NOTE: Items denoted with an asterisk do NOT have accompanying written materials in the meeting packet.