



**MINUTES OF THE
GOAL-SETTING MEETING
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
August 13, 2024**

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

**Elected
Official:** Jef Van Arsdall, Sheriff

Staff: Marriah De La Vega, Lindsey Goodman, Maura Kwiatkowski, Board Staff; Cory Grogan, Public Information Officer; April Holland, Health; Ryan Joslin, Chief Deputy District Attorney; John Larsen, Adam Loerts, Information Technology; Erika Milo, Board Recorder; Debbie Sessions, Finance; Gary Stockhoff, Public Works

Guests: Waylon Buchan, Ryann Gleason, Zack Reeves, CFM Advocates; Peggy Lynch, League of Women Voters; Alex Powers, Mid-Valley Media

1. Opening:

1. Call to Order

Chair Augerot called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

2. Introductions

2. Review & Approve Agenda

Executive Session was removed from the agenda.

3. Approval of Goal-Setting Minutes

3.1 Approval of the August 8, 2023 and October 10, 2023 Goal-setting Minutes

Augerot noted several typographical errors in the August 8, 2023 minutes.

MOTION: Malone moved to approve the August 8, 2023 and October 10, 2023 Goal-Setting minutes with the noted corrections to the August 8, 2023 minutes. Wyse seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0.**

4. Discussion Topics

4.1 2025 Legislative Session Discussion – Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator; Waylon Buchan, Ryann Gleason, Zack Reeves, CFM Advocates

Crager stated Representative Dan Rayfield will be leaving the legislature and emphasized the importance to strategize with CFM on advocating Benton County's key priorities. Crager provided a few topics of interest, such as proposals related to elected officials salaries, which could impact the District Attorney's (DA) Office.

Buchan introduced himself and described his professional background.

Gleason stated the legislature has new leadership. With Rayfield leaving, the House elected Speaker Julie Fahey. Fahey has approximately two years of experience as Majority Leader but does not have much budget experience. The Co-chair of the Ways and Means Subcommittee is also relatively new in the House. In the Senate, there is a new Co-chair of the Ways and Means Subcommittee. House Majority Leader Ben Bowman is still in his first term. A similar transition of leadership is happening on the Republican side; Representative Jeff Helfrich is fairly new; and in the Senate, Senator Daniel Bonham is the new Republican leader.

McEneny asked about turnover in staffing resulting from new leadership.

Gleason stated the professional staffing remains, but the staffers of members are new.

Reeves mentioned that oftentimes new leaders will staff their office with individuals from their team.

Gleason discussed Rayfield and State Senator Sara Gelser Blouin's efforts and support for Benton County. Gleason and Reeves plan to discuss how the changes in the legislature could affect Benton County. Gleason mentioned the election for the new Representative who will represent Corvallis; Sarah Finger McDonald will likely win the election.

Reeves stated the revenue forecast is not ideal. At the beginning of COVID-19, the State expected revenues to fall; instead, revenue has been at a higher rate for the last four-plus years and a decrease in revenue is inevitable. State economists predict while continuing service levels continue to rise in state programs, the revenue from it, especially in the current biennium, will remain stagnant. This will result in additional cuts to the budget and one-time federal funding will cease. Reeves discussed uncertainty regarding the amount of discretionary funding the State can allocate to existing programs. Reeves cited potential issues with the K-12 budget and with bigger agency budgets, such as the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), transportation, housing, and water infrastructure. The budget will be difficult to predict for many agencies because the amount of funds each will receive is still unknown.

Malone asked if housing budget issues are due to recently added programs requiring funding which leaves little to none left for new programs.

Reeves responded that there were numerous amounts of one-time funding allocated to building projects, such as shelters, and these projects are requesting ongoing funding in order to maintain services. Conversations surrounding housing in Oregon discuss the feasibility of establishing an ongoing funding stream because the projects that were funded may not succeed if funding stops.

Gleason mentioned that ongoing funding is not restricted to housing; there are needs for funding within healthcare, behavioral health, and education. It is the first time a Governor has set a cap on the amount agencies are allowed to request; the cap is 1% of continuing service level (CSL). In the previous two years, OHA had requested \$2 billion in funding from the legislature; this year OHA's request will be smaller and focused on continuing the basic needs of the agency. Over the last five years, the legislature had committed to investments in behavioral health and housing, which will likely continue. Representatives Rayfield, Helm, and Gomberg have advocated for water infrastructure investments. Gleason stated that due to added challenges, Benton County will need to maintain a focus on priorities and the session themes.

Buchan stated that the 2025 transportation package is in its early stages of planning; Buchan does not expect lawmakers to push for a large amount similar to 2017. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is experiencing an agency budget crisis, one cause is the diminishing fuel taxes as a result of Oregon fleet increasing its usage of higher efficiency vehicles and electric vehicles. ODOT could consider raising the fuel tax or vehicle registration fees; there are discussions regarding more sustainable methods of funding such as road user charging. The funding issues will impact ODOT's ability to run snowplows, graffiti cleanup, and homeless camp cleanup. ODOT has estimated that of its 4,900 employees, the agency will have to cut 1,200 people if the funding package does not pass. Additionally, ODOT is struggling with the cost responsibilities associated with Oregon's constitution; Article 9 Section 3. A. states that trucks and cars must pay their share in proportion of the damage done to the roads at a 65:35 rate. Oregon cannot utilize the weight mile tax because the State is not within constitutional balance; and due to a lawsuit brought onto the State, lawmakers can only raise that tax revenue from light fleet cars. The transportation package will focus largely on maintenance and safety, which can be difficult to attract votes because it will lack visible results, such as a new bridge. Regarding Benton County's transportation planning, revenue sharing will be an important aspect. For every dollar raised in taxes, 50 cents goes to ODOT, 30 cents goes to the counties, and 20 cents goes to the cities. City funds are distributed by population and county funds are by the number of registered vehicles within the county boundary. There is pressure on ODOT and lawmakers to not follow with the traditional 50/30/20 framework; but Buchan, Gleason, and Reeves plan to advocate for the traditional method of tax funding splitting because of its importance to local county and city road budgets.

Buchan transitioned the discussion to transit funding. Before 2017 there was minimal State investment in transit services; now transit is funded \$100 million a year from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF), which is funded on a payroll tax. Currently, the legislature is working on increasing the tax fee to fund STIF to

approximately \$500 million annually. Buchan mentioned that jurisdictional transfers, or orphan highways, will be another topic of interest. The Joint Committee is taking a statewide tour to discuss the importance of transportation funding and to receive public feedback regarding the funding package. Community feedback will be considered when the framework for the funding package is created, along with input from lawmakers, lobbyists, cities, counties, and additional stakeholders.

Malone testified before the Joint Committee on Transportation and mentioned the importance of the 50/30/20 formula to local jurisdictions. Malone also discussed the road user tax and agreed that the current gas tax funding has not worked well for many years. One of the ideas to fund road maintenance is requiring light fleet vehicles to pay by the mile. Malone added that ODOT has discussed with car manufacturers obtaining vehicle information, but manufacturers do not want to share it. Malone suggested he and Buchan further discuss transportation needs.

Buchan agreed that the road user fee is an important topic and will be a central theme in the transportation package. It will be difficult to transition away from the gas tax because it is the least burdensome way to raise taxes on an administrative level; whereas, the road user charge will be comparable to mobile tolling. Buchan said there are discussions in place to strategize a gradual move from the gas tax, but the public has concerns regarding user car tracking. If the State switches from a fuel tax to a road user charge, the County could lose its funding source from the gas tax. Instead of receiving 30 cents per every dollar, Benton County should discuss the possibility of receiving approximately 3.2 cents per every mile driven.

Augerot requested a discussion of priorities among the topics Crager had emailed to the Board.

Malone mentioned a meeting regarding funding for the correctional facility.

Crager stated the correctional facility is an important topic, but the County will need to pass a local bond to fund it. The bond could model the Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching Program, which is a constitutional issuance of bonds that enables the State to match an investment that communities are willing to pay; this model has been successful for public schools. Discussions involve the feasibility of modeling that program to fund a correctional facility. Unless the program can be fitted into the existing constitutional provisions, it will require a vote.

McEneny stated that other counties are struggling with their correctional facilities. There are challenges with building a new correctional facility and Benton County is engaging with the National Institute of Corrections to collaborate with the Sheriff on an assessment of future needs. If the County is connected with a project, it will then work with the Jails and Justice Center.

Augerot mentioned the Jails and Justice Center has a three-part series: evaluation, training process for local government and community members, and implementation assistance.

Wyse asked if there will be further research into the constitutional provisions and matching.

Crager acknowledged potential difficulties but will reach out to Carol Samuels, at Piper Sandler, to discuss options.

Reeves stated the County must refer a constitutional change to its voters; but if it is not considered a constitutional change, the process could be easier. The County would need to convince the State to direct state funds toward the local correctional facilities. The more counties involved in the process, the better.

Augerot mentioned if the State constitution is involved, it could take two to four years before funding was received.

Gleason added that the legislature has a history of showing reluctance toward funding jails.

Crager mentioned technical assistance and utilizing Measure 110 discussions. Benton County is standing up deflection program, which is intended to minimize the amount of people that are processed through the criminal justice system. This method will reduce the pressure on the system.

Augerot stated that behavioral health and homelessness are Governor Tina Kotek's main priorities and Benton County has interests in those areas. An important priority for Benton County is the Sustainable Materials Management Plan (SMMP) process, along with maintaining a relationship with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and legislators who are interested in solid waste issues. The timing is ideal with the implementation of the Recycling Modernization Act in July 2025; Augerot is hopeful Benton County can strategically promote SMMP and gain legislative support.

Crager mentioned that CFM is invited to the SMMP kickoff meeting to discuss strategy and policy changes.

Malone discussed Coffin Butte Landfill (CBL), SMMP, and the involvement of other counties; 100% of Tillamook and Lincoln County's waste is sent to CBL.

Augerot added that 75% of Marion County's waste goes to CBL. Augerot sent a CBL and Benton County solid waste fact sheet to Senator Sara Gelser Blouin, who then requested regular CBL related check-ins with the Board. Augerot discussed holding the Legislative Breakfast series in 2025.

Crager agreed and mentioned the upcoming legislative session will be ideal for relationship building while the County focuses on its ongoing facilities projects.

Augerot discussed funding for rural water infrastructure; Alsea and Alpine are in Representative David Gomberg's district and water is a topic of interest to Gomberg.

Gleason suggested the Board be prepared on its budget priorities in the event that topics of interest come up in the legislature.

Augerot mentioned the Historic Courthouse funding and the possibility of using the Oregon Cap Improvement Matching Fund.

Malone mentioned funding for Jackson-Frazier Boardwalk; approximately \$1.5 million has been raised and approximately \$2.8 million more is needed.

Wyse requested Crager's Board priority list that was emailed be added as an exhibit.

Crager offered formalizing the priority list.

Malone asked how the Board's discussion would coincide with upcoming legislative committees in September and October.

Reeves believed the deadline to submit Board concepts for pre-session is September 27, 2024.

Gleason added that during the December Legislative Days, legislatures can share preliminary agendas for the upcoming session. Policy issues CFM foresees include, recreational immunity, recommendations regarding foreclosed properties, and the transient lodging tax.

McEneny asked if the transient lodging tax included fees on event tickets.

Gleason responded that was separate; Gleason, Crager and Augerot discussed the how the tax relates to tourism.

Augerot suggested CFM return in October or November 2024 with another update.

Chair Augerot recessed the meeting at 10:15 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

{Exhibit 1: CFM Legislative Overview Presentation}

{Exhibit 2: Crager Email on Legislative Priorities}

4.2 Benton County Facilities Update – Electric Vehicle (EV) Plan – Gary Stockhoff, Public Works

Stockhoff provided copies of technical assistance reports that Facilities Manager, Paul Wallsinger and Sustainability Coordinator, Jen Brown, commissioned with Pacific Power to estimate the cost of installing EV charging stations at a number of Benton County locations. The County has funding for EV charging stations and EV buses at the Sunset Building; because the chargers are for the buses only, it will be located behind the

building. The estimates for EV stations include Kalapuya, Health Services, Avery, and the Monroe Library. There is a grant opportunity through a Federal program; the application closes on August 28, 2024, and the minimum award amount is \$500,000. There is a Corridor Program that targets specific highways that have been identified for EV charging stations that the County could apply for. Additionally, there is a community-based program the County is eligible for at public facilities; this creates EV charging stations that are available to the public. Stockhoff suggested pursuing the latter program and to include the Monroe Library or the Benton County Fairgrounds. Stockhoff is still gathering information on the match for funding and discussed funding strategy for EV charging. Stockhoff's request to the Board is if the County can apply for the community-based program.

Augerot stated in terms of the corridor funding program, there are no EV stations between Newport and further east (20-34 corridor), and the Kalapuya building or the Fairgrounds is near the corridor.

Stockhoff agreed, stating if the location is within one mile of a corridor, it can apply for the funding.

Augerot did not think it necessary to have multiple EV charging sites on Research Way.

McEneny liked the idea of adding a charging station in Monroe and asked if Philomath had a charging station.

Augerot and Malone said there was one in Philomath, but it does not have much capacity.

McEneny asked if the EV chargers would have level 3 charging capacity.

Stockhoff believes the funding is for stations that the user pays for the electricity and with super charging capacity. Stockhoff offered to include the cost of super charging in the estimate for the grant.

Augerot is supportive and would choose the Kalapuya Building instead of the Sunset Building to install a charging station because the Kalapuya Building is closer to other services and offers more parking. Augerot added that the Health Services Building has many visitors and public engagement.

Stockhoff stated that each County site offers different advantages for a charging station and discussed the learning process through other grant applications.

Malone asked if CFM has been helpful in the process of obtaining Federal grants.

Stockhoff has not utilized CFM for the EV charging grant process and was notified of the grant opportunity from a contact at the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG).

Crager asked if it was a State opportunity.

Stockhoff said it was Federal.

Augerot suggested that Stockhoff notify Michael Skipper with CFM when the County submits its application.

Crager asked where the match funding would come from.

Stockhoff said the project was not eligible for the Road Fund and suggested the match be funded from Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds during the 2025-27 budget.

Augerot asked when the grant funding would be received and if it could be factored into the CIP budget.

Crager agreed that match funding would have to come from CIP resources. If staff cannot find a qualifying match, the application can be withdrawn.

MOTION: Malone moved to encourage Benton County to apply for the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant. Wyse proposed changing 'encourage' to 'approve'. Wyse seconded the amended motion, which **carried 3-0.**

Stockhoff said County fleet progress is ongoing; however, there are a few challenges to remain aware of as the County transitions its fleet to EV, including cost availability, training and contracting maintenance, and factoring in battery costs.

Malone asked if there was an update on fleet service rates.

Crager said staff will return on August 20th to provide an update, along with a recommendation to balance the budget.

The Board discussed an update on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and additional County projects.

4.3 County Website Project Update – Adam Loerts, John Larsen, Information Technology (IT)

Larsen provided a recapitulation; in January, IT released the new County website and has recently completed transitioning County content, with Health Clinic content last to move. IT meets weekly to discuss strategy, Kidder has defined a web style guide and provided training, and the County has hired a senior Business Analyst for IT. IT meets with the content publishers monthly, and Kidder maintains regular communications with that team. In regard to website updates, publishers can modify the content due to necessary immediate website updates. Larsen added that the overall quality of web content has improved organization-wide.

The Community Development webpage had a complete remodel and that will be used to troubleshoot and guide future department webpage remodels. An example of new content for the Community Development page is the timeline feature on Benton County Talks Trash (BCTT). IT is currently focused on search and optimization; problems with the new software have been minimal, slow performance was an expected issue. IT is currently adding the Municode into the website search function. New functions include article sorting and aggregation. Larsen asked the Board to decide which department webpage projects should be priority. Larsen discussed the potential integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) once the County website processes have been thoroughly documented.

IT has an initiative for fall 2024 to improve monitoring tools; and in January 2025, IT will begin a second round of running analytics. The findings from the second round of analytics will be used to change how IT organizes website data. The BEE, which is the County's internal website for employees, will be integrated with the public website, but accessed with employee credentials. IT is working with Finance and Human Resources on the employee resources and manager toolkit feature within The BEE; the planned release date is late-November or December 2024.

Augerot acknowledged issues with updating licenses through ESRI and others but believes there is a large amount of opportunity to integrate the department through visual storytelling on the County's website.

Larsen stated the GIS budget includes the possibility to hire interns who can work on maps.

Loerts added that IT is addressing how to organize GIS work and a team with Russell Barlow, who is the County's GIS Coordinator. IT is considering a service desk that can be shared with individuals outside the IT Department that have experience with GIS.

Larsen continued to discuss GIS tools and a potential dashboard for the County website.

Augerot stated that most questions are received from individuals utilizing the Community Development and Board of Commissioners web pages.

Loerts stated that Community Development is working with a consultant to better organize department content. There has been a focus on historic data for BCTT, then the organization of information regarding CBL. The consultant suggested the County improve website navigation; and IT is working on implementing iconography, which adds more visual cues for user navigation.

Augerot mentioned updating the information on the website for the County's Boards and Advisory Committees.

Larsen discussed the potential to focus on specific projects within the County website, and projects with the greatest audience interest and use will be easier to find.

Loerts mentioned the implementation of CivicPlus will change how individuals engage with public meeting information.

Wyse stated the majority website feedback she receives is that information is difficult to find.

Loerts agreed the website needs continual improvements and discussed additional projects underway such as online counters for e-governance and a customer resource management tool.

McEneny stated it is helpful to understand what interests the public.

Larsen agreed and stated that IT currently meets on a monthly basis with the website's publishers to discuss areas of improvement, including IT improving its documenting and training. Accela, which is the State's online permitting system, will be one of the first systems the County integrates into its system.

Augerot acknowledged that many contractors have expressed complaints in regard to Accela.

Larsen mentioned difficulties in maintaining older systems.

Augerot and McEneny discussed the importance that the skill set of employees in a publisher role is being taken into consideration in regard to compensation, professional development, and creating flexible job descriptions.

Malone requested information regarding IT's plan for content updates and maintaining department information on the website.

Larsen mentioned three areas of focus: technology support, consistent content and access, and specific job knowledge. Larsen discussed how Kidder can help IT with the webpage design.

Augerot asked if IT received website accessibility feedback from the visually impaired community.

Larsen responded there have not been specific negative comments regarding the website.

Loerts stated that Kidder had developed a style guide that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and assists with branding consistency.

Larsen added that Kidder mapped the entire County website, which can help departments view its content. Larsen discussed website AI development and potential concerns such as accidentally allowing public access to protected information.

Malone asked if it is easier to recruit new hires in IT than it was a few years prior.

Loerts confirmed, adding that the several most recent hires were filled locally.

4.4 Proclamations and Events Review – Rachel McEneny, County Administrator; Cory Grogan, Public Information Officer

McEneny has been collaborating with Board staff regarding the proclamations process and events the County sponsors. Staff agree the Chair or Board should help in deciding proclamation readers and outreach because it builds relationships with the community. McEneny requested guidance from the Board on updating the County's proclamations program. McEneny asked how many events the Board celebrates.

Grogan responded approximately five events: Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Military Appreciation Month, Pride Month, and Women's History Month. Grogan suggested listing all of the events the Board is interested in celebrating each year.

McEneny mentioned the County has added events, such as Mental Health Awareness Month. Board staff receives many event requests; but with a smaller team, having event priorities would be ideal.

Grogan discussed the Board office organizing and funding a few events each year, and if other departments wanted an event for a proclamation, it could be funded and staffed through that department with Board approval.

Augerot mentioned past events were not a line item in the previous budget. Augerot confirmed if staff is suggesting the Board would sponsor four events a year and other events could be sponsored and staffed by the department that is interested.

Grogan confirmed.

Augerot suggested the possibility of an events calendar and rotating events to celebrate on a yearly basis.

Wyse agreed on having a process.

Grogan stated that inviting community partners to read a proclamation is meaningful and requested the Board lead in the outreach.

McEneny stated at an upcoming Goal-setting meeting the Board can choose events to sponsor for the upcoming year. During agenda-setting meetings, the Chair can identify event opportunities and provide outreach direction.

The Board agreed.

Wyse mentioned upcoming events could be a topic discussed during a Leadership Team meeting.

Wyse stated the Chair could take into consideration department ideas for proclamation outreach.

Malone agreed and stated there was a month in the previous year that had too many proclamations added to it.

Augerot agreed and approved of adding proclamations that would not be read that year to the Consent Calendar as a form of acknowledgement.

The Board discussed reading proclamations on the Consent Calendar at other community events.

McEneny and Grogan will return in a month with a process and identify events for the upcoming calendar year.

4.5 Discussion Regarding Requirements to Place Flag at the Front of the Kalapuya Building – Rachel McEneny, County Administrator

McEneny stated the Kalapuya Building does not have a flagpole, although there is an opportunity to budget for one to be installed at the front of the building. McEneny stated adding a flagpole could be used for compliance with the Governor's Office and ceremonies such as PRIDE Month or Military Appreciation Month. Staff will research the cost and flag protocol.

Augerot mentioned staff will need to budget for purchasing new flags from weather damage.

Grogan offered to research flag protocol.

McEneny will return with cost information.

MOTION: Malone moved to approve installation of a flagpole and national and state flags, with illumination, at the Kalapuya Building. Wyse seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0.**

4.6 Additional Opportunity for County Commissioners to Engage on Draft Wildfire Hazard Plan – Xanthippe Augerot, Board of Commissioners

Augerot stated there is an opportunity to review the Wildfire Hazard Map in-depth, and the opportunity for a Commissioner to engage in the map draft and plan at the State level is on August 26. Augerot does not plan to attend and asked if either Wyse or Malone will attend.

Wyse will attend.

Malone asked if the Board should check with Emergency Services Manager Bryan Lee on any County-related concerns with the Fire Hazard Map.

Augerot agreed.

Sheriff Van Arsdall asked if Lee has identified fire-related and mapping issues for Benton County.

Augerot said the new map does not look substantially different from the previous map and appears to downgrade Benton County's fire risk. Augerot expressed skepticism over the hazard assessment.

McEneny asked if Lee could review the Wildfire Hazard Plan with the Board in September or early October.

Sheriff Van Arsdall will confirm.

Malone and Augerot discussed the importance of County input on fire risk.

5. County Updates

5.1 County Administrator Updates - Rachel McEneny, County Administrator

- Focused on strategic planning with Crager.
- Participated in the active shooter training.
- Toured Jackson-Frazier Wetlands with County staff and staff from Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley's office.
- Held follow-up meetings with the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion consultant.
- Greenberry Gap meeting and discussions need to continue.
- Attended the quarterly CIP meeting.
- Benton County Fair.
- Reviewed transitions happening within the Community Development department.
- Attended the Philomath Frolic, Corvallis Knights staff baseball game night, Sheriff's Office softball game, the Annual Corvallis Celtic Festival, and the Benton County Fairgrounds Foundation Barbeque Dinner.
- New solar panels were installed on the Benton County's Historical Society's facility in Philomath.
- Attended an informational session with Gallup to bring back to a Leadership Team meeting.
- Taking classes with the International City/County Management Association and will attend a conference in late September.
- Has attended meetings with city managers on a continual basis.
- Plans to attend the annual Rural Timber Tour with Thompson Timber Company.
- Association of Oregon Counties District 5 meeting.
- The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) recruitment is beginning.

McEneny mentioned Crager's outreach and wanted to discuss an issue with the Monroe Library.

Crager stated that the Cities of Monroe and Corvallis have had ongoing conversations regarding concerns with the associated costs of the facility; the cities have had an Inter-governmental Agreement (IGA) on the library since 2013 that stated Monroe would pay for facility maintenance costs. Monroe can no longer incur the expenses associated with the library, and it was proposed that Corvallis could pay approximately 75% of the facility maintenance cost for one year. At the previous meeting, Corvallis Library Director Ashley Chavez provided proposals to Corvallis and Monroe on ways to mitigate cost. Crager stated that Benton County is supportive but does not have to be involved in the IGA if it is renewed. Important information was not available to Monroe City Councilors at the previous night's meeting. The Corvallis Councilors thought the issue regarding the property needed to be resolved before engaging in further discussion on the maintenance costs. The property belongs to Monroe since it was deeded in 2013 by a nonprofit organization; Benton County was a partner in the building transfer because the County had provided grant funding to remodel the building. There was an easement added to the property by the nonprofit to Benton County while the remodeling work was in place that was also deeded to Monroe after the work was done. Corvallis had a different interpretation of the previous events; County Counsel is meeting with Corvallis's attorney to discuss the issue.

Augerot asked if the facility is taxed as Monroes'.

Counsel confirmed.

Crager stated that until the parties come to an agreement on the facility ownership, the County cannot move forward. The service agreement was extended to September 30, 2024 and Chavez inquired about next steps.

Malone met with the Mayor of Monroe and City Manager Steve Martinenko last week and discussed extending the IGA to the end of the year.

Augerot stated Benton County would be required to extend as well.

Crager confirmed and added that a suggestion had been made to return the property to Benton County or to the nonprofit that originally owned it.

Counsel discussed an email sent to the Board from Martinenko that suggested the land of the property was in a different ownership, which Counsel disagreed with. Counsel stated in 2013, the deed stated the property was to go to Monroe from the nonprofit. Once the property was built, the City became the owner of the building and the land. Counsel continued to discuss the easement of the property, confirming that Monroe took on the terms of the easement when it had acquired the property. Counsel believes the easement is the main topic of discussion moving forward because the use restriction of the easement does not allow Monroe to move its City Hall functions into the property. Regardless of who owns the land or building, compliance to the easement is required

because that is owned by the County. If Monroe is determined to move City functions into the building, the Board will need to be directly involved. Although Benton County are signers to the IGA, there is no legal obligation for the County to sign.

Wyse stated that as liaison to Monroe and the Library Board, she is concerned about community members' access to the library as it is a community resource. Wyse clarified that the idea to cover 75% of maintenance costs would be in place for one year. Wyse has discussed fundraising opportunities with Chavez for future cost coverage.

Augerot and Counsel discussed the Railroad right-of-way easement and the history of the parcel of land the right-of-way is on, which Counsel is not aware of, but offered to engage in some research of the deed history.

Augerot stated the history would provide context.

Malone stated there appeared to be confusion regarding the issue; Monroe City Councilors had concerns regarding funding, which has then evolved to conflate different issues. Malone wanted to maintain a separation of issues from maintenance expenses to property ownership.

5.2 Commissioner Updates – Benton County Commissioners

Commissioner Wyse:

- Wyse reached out to Community Development regarding Cardwell Hill Cellars' inability to add a food truck to its business operations due to zoning restrictions. Wyse stated the importance to create equitable zoning consistency across the County.

Malone mentioned there being a reason for restrictive zoning due to limited events per year.

Augerot clarified that restriction as only applying to Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) zoning, whereas the winery in question is zoned as Agricultural Industrial, which excludes food carts on a section of its land because that was the only zoning option given to the winery at the time. Augerot stated Benton County reviewed all of the wineries within the County and found a few to be zoned as Rural Residential, which is a zoning that prevents food cart operations. Augerot agreed the zoning issue at Cardwell Hill Cellars should be fixed, and the County should review and find avenues to support all wineries in general as part of agrotourism and local economic development.

Crager believed there is a possibility to zone the property as EFU. Crager asked alternatively, could Cardwell Hill Cellars use the surrounding EFU zoned property for a food truck?

Augerot suggested it would be easier to allow a food cart operation on lands zoned as Agricultural Industrial.

Wyse stated that rezoning property is a substantial process and does not believe Cardwell Hill Cellars should endure the process. Wyse suggested the Board initiate a zone change on the owners behalf if the zoning has to change.

Crager said there are 12 total properties zoned Industrial Agricultural, but only two of the properties are wineries.

Malone stated there could be issues with agricultural businesses having more events to increase revenues or other opportunities that do not fit with the traditional EFU zoning practices.

Augerot said businesses with that zoning could have 18 total events per year.

Wyse expressed support for that rule but believes the rules should be applied equitably.

McEneny offered to add the discussion to an upcoming Board meeting agenda.

Augerot and Crager discussed what could be included in the agenda item.

McEneny stated the County should notify Benton County wineries of the upcoming discussion.

Crager confirmed that based on State statute, properties zoned Agricultural Industrial are not permitted the use of agrotourism components; therefore, a zone change would be required.

Wyse asked if the County could permit a temporary restaurant facility in the meantime.

Augerot stated that could not happen on Agricultural Industrial land.

The Board continued to discuss the State's zoning rules and agrotourism.

- Wyse discussed the recommendations from BCTT and the time taken during the SMMP process. A number of the recommendations involved the scenario of another Conditional Use Permit (CUP) being submitted. Wyse suggested a future discussion on what recommendations the Board wanted to prioritize.

Augerot agreed.

Crager confirmed Benton County staff was using the BCTT recommendations for a CUP application. For example, one of the recommendations was to hire a third-party consultant, which the County has implemented.

Wyse asked if it is considered ex parte contact for Commissioners to review documentation from the previous CUP application, which was another BCTT suggestion.

Augerot did not believe that was considered ex parte contact but acknowledged that Commissioners cannot change previous agreements of land-use approvals, and previous documentation is not considered relevant when reviewing a new application.

Wyse suggested guidance would be helpful.

Augerot agreed.

- Wyse stated the importance of having materials from earlier discussion topics added to the meeting packet, rather than exhibits, along with the motion the Board made for an EV grant not being listed in the meeting packet. Although Wyse agrees with the grant, the motion not being present caused concern.

Crager and McEneny discussed the timing of the materials with the agenda publication and stated the exhibits could be added to the meeting minutes or brought to a future meeting.

The Board discussed methods to prevent future confusion regarding motions and agenda items.

McEneny and Crager discussed the EV grant and the application process; even if Public Works applied for the grant, the County could rescind its application if the Board decided against it.

Commissioner Malone:

- Attended a joint committee meeting on transportation at Linn Benton Community College to testify.
- Attended CIP meeting.
- Attended the Road User Fee Task Force as an observer in Salem.
- Met with Mayor Dan Sheets and Martinenko regarding the Monroe Library.
- Attended Senator Wyden's Town Hall in Philomath.
- In early July, Benton County Small Woodlands toured Malone's tree farm.
- September 8 is the Chili Cookoff fundraiser in Philomath.
- Malone asked if the SMMP begins in October; Crager confirmed.

Commissioner Augerot:

- Received an email from George Ice in the Alpine area, there are multiple issues that Augerot shared with McEneny.
- Has been involved with the Community Services Consortium (CSC) and OCWCOG committee on its future leadership structure.
- Participated in a site visit at the Deschutes Juvenile Detention Extended State Program; Augerot discussed the program and the facilities.
- Interviewed by the Statesman Journal and KVAL on CBL.
- A community member who is neighbor to a winery requested a meeting with Augerot with his attorney present; Augerot anticipates a request for a noise ordinance.
- Plans to attend the CSC All Hands Retreat.

- Will be at the government booth at the Corvallis Library on Saturday.
- Will attend the Youth Intellectual and Behavioral Health Disabilities conference next week.

6. Announcements

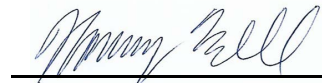
Malone stated the OCWCOG staff picnic is August 22 at Philomath City Park.

7. Other

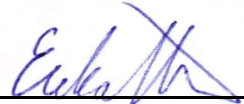
No other business was discussed.

8. Adjournment

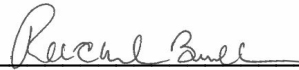
Chair Augerot adjourned the meeting at 12:58 p.m.



Nancy Wyse, 2025 Chair



Erika Milo, Recorder



Rachel Bulder, Transcriptionist