

**MINUTES OF THE GOAL-SETTING MEETING
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

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

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

Staff: Rachel Bulder, Marriah De La Vega, Maura Kwiatkowski, Board Staff; Erika Milo, Board Recorder; Anne Thwaits, Public Information Officer; Lindsey Goodman, Greg Munn, Debbie Sessions, Financial Services; Jen Brown, Sean McGuire, Sustainability; April Holland, Rocio Muñoz, Health Services; Bailey Payne, Petra Schuetz, Community Development; Laurel Byer, Public Works

Guests:

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Wyse called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and introductions were made.

2. Review & Approve Agenda

Item 5.4, Letter of Support for Senate Bill 564, was added to the agenda.

3. Announcements

No announcements were made.

4. Discussion Topics

4.1 Regional Sustainable Materials Management Plan – Sean McGuire, Sustainability Coordinator; Bailey Payne, Solid Waste Coordinator

The Sustainable Materials Management Plan (SMMP) Task Force was convened to explore regional solutions, promote sustainable materials management, and to proactively address the region's solid waste management system. There are four subcommittees that focus on: food and organics, built environment, products and packaging, and regional solid waste management. The subcommittees will discuss details within the assigned topic, then bring the information to the Task Force for

feedback and recommendations. The task for each subcommittee is to identify three to five feasible areas that can be addressed and what tools will be used moving forward. Each subcommittee also has a list of topics to further explore within its scope, including environmental justice, equity, and economic development opportunities. McGuire listed partners currently working with the SMMP. At the end of the Task Force, there will be an assessment of work, intergovernmental agreements, and legislative opportunities. McGuire mentioned an article regarding Polk County moving forward with a transfer station project. McGuire is hopeful the Regional Solid Waste subcommittee will research that topic and discuss how different counties can work together and fund transfer station-related projects.

Malone expressed concern that a regional perspective might not be utilized for Polk County's transfer station project; instead it could be a response to Coffin Butte Landfill's (CBL) limited lifespan. Malone stated that Polk County had a land use hearing the previous evening to discuss the zoning of a location that is under consideration for the transfer station.

Payne stated Polk County is looking into other municipalities in the area to obtain flow control, which would require those municipalities to bring their waste to that transfer station. Payne believed that without that requirement in place, it will be hard to justify the costs associated with the transfer station.

McGuire mentioned that during SMMP interviews, it was realized that some counties are not communicating with each other, while other counties are having conversations in the background. The intent of the Regional Solid Waste subcommittee is to promote regional communication and collaboration. A few coastal counties have not communicated their plan for when CBL shuts down.

4.2 Courageous Conversations Training Overview – April Holland, Director; Rocio Muñoz, Health Equity, Communications, and Engagement Manager, Health Services

Holland stated that Courageous Conversations is a two-day workshop and training opportunity that Health Services is undertaking. Equity work has many components, including policy, operations, and access. Starting with individual awareness and providing tools to navigate from, equity is a foundation that can be built upon.

Muñoz provided their experience organizing and participating in multiple Courageous Conversations training sessions through the Health Department and the Public Health Division. The content of the training is better described as a conference; there are breakout sessions, and attendees are provided the opportunity to learn and network. Muñoz discussed Courageous Conversations as a toolkit or a protocol to engage in a conversation that is productive, respectful, and solution-oriented. Muñoz provided a personal reflection of attending the training and how it was a personal and professional benefit. There are many components that follow the topic of race during the training,

including demographics; Muñoz stated the importance of beginning to work on being reflective of that community being served. Muñoz stated that the Health In All Actions Committee had previously committed \$5,000 to send County employees to the training; some leaders from the Board of Commissioners and other departments also attended. The workshop's intention is to navigate participants through uncomfortable or unfamiliar situations, utilizing tools throughout. The Health Department executed a contract with Courageous Conversations to offer two workshop series at the end of February 2025 and the beginning of May 2025. The workshop can accommodate up to 80 participants per session.

Holland offered to send the sign-up link to County leadership.

Muñoz is planning debrief sessions for both workshop series and offered to schedule one-on-one debrief sessions. Muñoz reviewed who can sign up.

Wyse registered for the workshop in May.

McEneny noted that staff are preparing for the 2025-27 biennial budget and that climate and equity goals are embedded in departmental annual budgets.

Shepherd cannot attend the workshop in February, but may attend the May workshop.

Muñoz discussed how Courageous Conversations focuses on equity training through self-reflection. Muñoz encouraged Health Services management to engage in the training as a means to support staff and the community.

McEneny discussed implicit bias training.

Malone expressed interest in attending.

4.3 2025 Public Health Week Events Planning – Rocio Muñoz, Health Equity, Communications, and Engagement Manager, Health Services

Holland stated that Public Health Week is a significant event for Public Health employees.

Muñoz stated the American Public Health Association (APHA) distributes an annual campaign along with a package of tools and resources to help the Nation's Public Health division's recognize public health work. Muñoz shared the Board of Health's Benton County Public Health Week invitation that's distributed to the community. Muñoz reviewed previous highlighted topics that Public Health Week had focused on; those topics usually reflected the department's work and engagement. Between 2020 and 2023, no Public Health Week events occurred due to COVID-19. In 2024, instead of coordinating an event similar to the pre-COVID events, there was a Proclamation during a regular Board of Commissioners Meeting and pre-event breakfast with community

partners. Muñoz discussed the Sheldon Wagner Award and the Roger Irvin Health in All Actions award. April 7 through 13 is the 30th Anniversary of National Public Health Week. Muñoz shared the 2025 key priorities and requested the Board's feedback on ideas or topics to explore for 2025 Public Health Week.

McEneny mentioned the Health Departments' efforts to name a County building after Barbara Ross and opening the new Benton County Crisis Center. McEneny suggested adding County efforts into the messaging for Public Health Week. McEneny asked where the event would be held.

Muñoz said the location has not been confirmed.

Wyse asked for Muñoz's and Holland's ideas and preferences for the event.

Holland stated an evening event would be more accessible for the community to attend than an event held in the morning. Holland suggested that if an event is held in the evening, the Board of Commissioners meeting take place in the evening as well in order to adopt the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) during the event.

Wyse suggested the event be held on April 15.

Shepherd agreed with holding an evening event on April 15.

Muñoz indicated that previous events had been held in a Board of Health or Board of Commissioners meeting format, but no additional topics other than the event program were discussed. Muñoz discussed topics of interest that can be discussed during the event such as the Crisis Center, CHIP, and the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool Program.

Malone asked why April 1 or April 15 were selected as potential event dates.

Holland stated both dates coincide with Public Health Week.

Muñoz added that historically, the event dates have been selected to coincide with Board Meeting dates, but it is not a requirement if the Board wanted to change the date.

Wyse stated that the April 8 Goal-setting meeting was a possibility.

Malone, Holland and Muñoz discussed theme and topic ideas for Public Health Week. Malone suggested that photos of the County's vaccination events at Reser Stadium are shared during the event and to highlight community efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wyse asked who decides the recipients of the Sheldon Wagner and the Roger Irvin Health in All Actions awards.

Muñoz stated the Public Health Advisory Committee selects the Sheldon Wagner awardee and the Health in All Actions Committee selects the Roger Irvin awardee.

McEneny asked if the family members of the individuals who the awards are named after are invited to the event.

Muñoz confirmed.

4.4 2025 Proclamations and Events Schedule – Nancy Wyse, Board Chair

Wyse provided a final draft of the 2025 Proclamations and Events Schedule for Commissioners to review before submitting to staff. Wyse added that the Board received a request for another Proclamation; Lesbian Visibility Week on April 21 through April 27. Wyse requested that Proclamation is read during a Board meeting.

Shepherd and Malone agreed.

Shepherd asked if staff is planning an event for Wildfire Awareness Month.

McEneny confirmed; Bryan Lee, Emergency Services Manager and the Local Fire Chiefs will be involved in the event.

Malone suggested involving OSU Extension Wildfire Agents.

McEneny added that the event could be a theme for an upcoming Information Sharing meeting.

Shepherd requested inviting Fire Protection District electeds and Fire Chiefs.

Malone agreed with the event being a theme for an Information Sharing meeting.

Chair Wyse recessed the meeting at 10:06 a.m. and reconvened at 10:13 a.m.

5. New Business

5.1 Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) 2025 Membership Renewal and Dues – Nancy Wyse, Board Chair

Wyse asked if the Board wanted to renew its membership with AOC.

Malone expressed satisfaction with AOC staff, but added that the staff is constrained by its membership. Each county is given one vote, but membership dues are calculated by a county's population; therefore the organization would not function without the membership of more populous counties.

McEneny asked if Malone was implying the distribution within AOC was not equitable between the smaller and larger counties.

Malone believed that smaller counties received more input in legislative efforts than Malone was comfortable with, adding that it was a systemic problem within the organization. Malone will vote to renew the County's AOC membership but had reservations.

Shepherd recently learned that concerns similar to Malone's will be addressed in 2026; there is work underway regarding AOC's fee schedule and county influence.

Malone agreed that influence has been a long-term problem. Malone believed AOC members should uphold steering committee recommendations because those committees engage in in-depth discussions regarding specific proposed legislation. Malone stated that approximately five steering committee recommendations had been reversed.

Wyse acknowledged the system within AOC is imperfect but believed the membership was worthwhile for the County. Wyse made a suggestion to add "and Council of Forest Trust Land Counties dues" in the motion, because it is a separate entity from AOC, but the amount is included in the dues.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to approve renewal of Benton County's membership in the Association of Oregon Counties and in the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties in the amount of \$43,071.26 for 2025. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

5.2 ABC House Celebration of Hope Event Sponsorship – Nancy Wyse, Board Chair

Wyse stated that the Board of Commissioners have historically sponsored the ABC House Celebration of Hope event.

Shepherd mentioned the Board of Commissioners budget for sponsorship had a remaining \$1,800; adding that the minimum sponsorship amount for the ABC House event is \$800 and sponsorship for Celebrate Corvallis is \$1,200. Shepherd asked if there was additional funding the Board could appropriate to sponsorships.

Wyse confirmed it was possible.

McEneny asked if the Board had additional sponsorship priorities to consider between present to July 1, 2025.

Wyse was not aware of any.

Crager stated the Board of Commissioners office has discretionary spending within the budget's line items for materials and supplies. Crager added that the Board's budget was trending low for the biennium.

The Board discussed increases in minimum amounts for many sponsorship opportunities.

Malone requested a spreadsheet of current Board of Commissioner sponsorships and how the costs.

McEneny confirmed it could be provided at an upcoming Goal-setting meeting.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to sponsor the ABC House fundraising event at the table sponsor level of \$800. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

5.3 Corvallis Chamber of Commerce Celebrate Corvallis Event Sponsorship – Nancy Wyse, Board Chair

MOTION: Shepherd moved to sponsor the Celebrate Corvallis event at the table sponsor level of \$1,200. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

***5.4 Letter of Support for Senate Bill 564 – Nancy Wyse, Board Chair**

Crager informed the Board that Senate Bill (SB) 564 is in support of appropriating funding for widening the lanes on Highway 20 between Corvallis and Philomath. The project is a part of Benton County's Transportation Plan; staff suggested the Board provide support of the bill through a letter, but there is an opportunity to testify. Crager stated that Stockhoff and Byer will draft the Letter of Support.

Byer discussed how the corridor has been studied for a period of time to improve the interconnectedness between traffic signals and to provide a more seamless travel experience for freight vehicles. The project has experienced a delay due to an increase in costs. SB 564 is an effort to begin the project by installing additional lanes and improving existing signals for bike and pedestrian use.

Crager discussed the timeline for SB 564; the bill is sponsored by Senator Anderson and is before the Joint Committee on Transportation.

Malone has engaged in discussion with individuals from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) for a number of years regarding smart signals. Malone asked for clarification regarding the cost benefits of smart signals compared to the widening of Philomath Boulevard.

Byer believed that if ODOT were to widen the road, they would also make improvements, such as smart signals, to the intersection.

Malone asked for more information regarding the type of road improvements that could improve traffic flow.

Byer stated that SB 564 is not specific in what is being proposed.

Crager discussed SB 564 being used as a placeholder; and if resources are available, project details will be finalized.

Malone believed smart signals and additional bicycle and pedestrian improvements were more practical in terms of cost than widening the lanes.

Crager stated it was not typical for bills to be as detailed in their early stages.

MOTION: Malone moved that the Board of Commissioners support the widening of U.S. Highway 20 in Senate Bill 564. Shepherd seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

Shepherd asked if any of the Commissioners were available to read the Letter of Support at the public hearing.

Wyse was not available.

Shepherd offered to read the letter.

Crager stated that speaking at the public hearing was optional.

6. County Updates

Rachel McEneny, County Administrator:

- Attended CFM Federal and State check-in meetings.
- Attended Legislative Breakfast.
- Met with local 2062 AFSCME leadership.
- Will attend ongoing Labor Management meetings.
- Attended the Benton Believes Comprehensive Plan kickoff meeting.
- Met with Staci Yutzie, the Project Manager who will help operationalize the Crisis Center.
- Has recently focused on cold weather shelter coordination.
- Met with Jessica Hougen, Executive Director for the Benton County Historical Society.
- Attended the Samaritan Awards.
- Attended a Valley City Managers and County Administrator lunch.
- Will attend the Corvallis leadership meeting with Commissioner Wyse.

- County offices will be closed on Presidents Day.
- Engaged in budget planning meetings with County departments.
- Paneling a Federal Policy group.

Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator:

- The Board of Commissioners had approved its 2025 State Legislative priorities, one of those priorities was in regard to rural water and sewer infrastructure. CFM is preparing a letter in support of its clients that encourages continued legislative support for water infrastructure. The County has been asked to add its logo to it, along with Adair Village. Crager asked if the Board supported the request.

The Board expressed support.

- Preparing for the upcoming Legislative Breakfast.
- Working through the Community Development Director recruitment process.
- Has engaged in conversations with County Counsel, Community Health Centers (CHC), and the Oregon Health Authority regarding recent Federal Executive Orders. Crager is not ready to make any recommendations; CFM is gathering more information at the Federal level. Crager has not received feedback from Governor Kotek's office regarding recommendations.

Malone asked if there have been any interruptions in funding.

McEneny is approving some purchasing and grants the County was awarded to maintain operations.

Crager stated the County's largest risk is regarding the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which is federal funding for Community Health Centers (CHC). There is currently no disruption in HRSA funding.

Wyse and Crager discussed the concept of applicable Executive Orders, the wording used within State grants, and whether it could be removed by the State if necessary.

Malone emphasized the importance of the County maintaining its course of action and to seek clarification from ODOT, the Department of Justice, and the Governor's office.

Commissioner Shepherd:

- Councilor Kadena from the City of Corvallis attended the Board meeting as a City Liaison to the County.

Kadena addressed the Board.

- Attended AOC day and spoke with Representatives about County priorities. Shepherd spoke with Representative Diehl regarding health-related bills.
- Finished meetings with the Heads of County Departments.
- Will begin County facility tours.
- Filing is open for the May 20 Corvallis School Board election.
- Will attend Corvallis Game Con.
- Attended the Corvallis Rural Fire District meeting.
- Will attend the Adair Village Rural Fire District meeting.
- Asked staff if there was an upcoming conversation regarding the Housing Subcommittee.

Crager stated the discussion was moved to the April Goal-setting meeting to better align with budgetary discussions.

Commissioner Malone:

- Met with Attorney General Rayfield last month.
- Attended the Sustainable Materials Management Plan Task Force meeting.
- Attended an Oregon Metropolitan Planning Organization Consortium meeting.
- Attended the Legislative Breakfast; Senator Merkley and Representative Val Hoyle were also in attendance.
- Malone has been working to coordinate a visit to Jackson Frazier Wetlands with Representative Hoyle.
- Malone mentioned Representative David Gombert's newsletter, which included a list of projects; one was \$600,000 to reopen the Alsea Health Clinic.
- Attended the AOC meet and greet and spoke with the Head of the State Emergency Management Department. Malone stated that Bryan Lee, Emergency Services Manager, is well regarded within emergency management.
- Malone spoke with the AOC Executive Director, Gina Nichols, who expressed interest in Benton County's Crisis Center.
- March 7 is the Annual Benton County Forestland Review.

Commissioner Wyse:

- Will potentially attend the NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet.
- Will attend the NACo Legislative Conference.
- Plans to attend the Forest Trust Lands Advisory Committee meeting as an audience member.

Malone will not attend the annual NACo Conference this year. Malone stated that late March or April might be a better time to engage in lobbying efforts for Benton County projects in hopes that there will be more clarity on Federal funding by then.

Wyse agreed and confirmed that had been discussed with CFM.

Shepherd believed Chair Wyse should engage in lobbying discussions on behalf of the Board.

Wyse agreed.

Crager stated that CFM recommended the County not engage in lobbying discussions during the NACo Conference.

McEneny stated that staff could make a cost assessment on one or more Commissioners attending the NACo Conference.

The Board continued to discuss who should attend the NACo Conference.

Crager agreed the Board should be aware of how much the County spends on attending the conference.

Shepherd believed the Chair should be the first point of representation for the County, then the Vice-chair, unless the topic falls in a specific Commissioner's portfolio.

Malone asked for the dates of conference.

Wyse stated March 23 through 26.

McEneny explained why having a Commissioner attend could be helpful to the County.

Malone requested a report of the conference for the County's benefit.

Crager agreed.

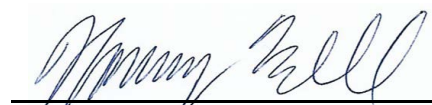
The Board continued to discuss additional upcoming NACo and related events.

7. Other

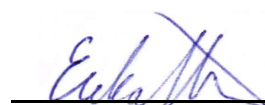
No other business was discussed.

8. Adjournment

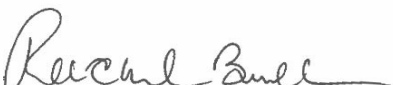
Chair Wyse adjourned the meeting at 11:41 a.m.



Nancy Wyse, Chair



Erika Milo, Recorder



Rachel Bulder, Transcriptionist

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