

**MINUTES OF THE GOAL-SETTING MEETING
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
DECEMBER 10, 2024**

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

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

Staff: April Holland, Health; Maura Kwiatkowski, Board Staff; Sean McGuire, Sustainability; Erika Milo, Board Recorder; Anne Thwaites, Public Information Officer; Tami Tracy, Assessment, Greg Munn, Financial Services; Petra Schuetz, Community Development

Guests: Christopher Jacobs, Corvallis Benton County Economic Development Office; Gabe Shepherd, Commissioner-elect; Debbie Palmer; Alex Powers; Bernie Cummings; Wendy Geist, Thomas Sexton; Cole Hansen

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Augerot called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and introductions were made.

2. Review & Approve Agenda

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Announcements

No announcements were made.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 November 13, 2023 Goal-setting Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Malone moved to approve the November 13, 2023 Goal-setting Meeting minutes. Wyse seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

5. New Business

5.1 Sponsorship Request from the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation for the January 30, 2025 Hands Across Corvallis Fundraising Event – Xanthippe Augerot, Board of Commissioners

The Board has not sponsored this event before. Augerot asked for the current status of the Board's sponsorship budget.

Kwiatkowski said there was \$3,000 remaining in the sponsorship budget for the current biennium.

Wyse asked if a specific amount was requested.

Augerot and Kwiatkowski stated the program minimum was \$500.

Wyse is unable to attend the event, but supported sponsorship.

Malone discussed one-time sponsorships turning into reoccurring sponsorships and asked if there was a list available of all of the Board's sponsorships and memberships.

Kwiatkowski offered to provide a list during the January Goal-setting meeting.

Augerot asked if memberships are budgeted separately from sponsorships.

Kwiatkowski confirmed.

Augerot agreed that a list of those whom the Board has contributed to in the past would be useful to ensure the Board is not sponsoring the same groups every year.

Malone added that a list will ensure the Board is spreading contributions equally throughout the County.

Crager stated that if the Board sponsors \$500, the County name and logo will be added to the program. If the Board sponsors \$1000, additional social media attention will be given.

MOTION: Wyse moved to sponsor in the amount of \$1000. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

5.2 Consideration of Membership in the Philomath Area Chamber of Commerce – Xanthippe Augerot, Board of Commissioners

Augerot stated that the County has been a member for many years.

Wyse was in favor of continuing membership.

Malone and Kwiatkowski discussed the membership levels and cost.

MOTION: Wyse moved to approve renewing the County's membership for the Philomath Chamber of Commerce as a civic organization in the amount of \$275. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

5.3 Initiation of Building Naming Process for 4185 SW Research Way –
Xanthippe Augerot, Board of Commissioners

Augerot stated that due to a recently adopted policy, the Board must vote to give McEneny approval to initiate the naming process for the 4185 SW Research Way building.

McEneny will provide the Board with name ideas and requested the Board bring forth name preferences as well.

Augerot stated if the Board motions for approval, McEneny will return on December 17 with names, and staff will research the proposals to ensure the names comply with the County's naming policy.

Malone recognized Representative Dan Rayfield for his assistance to Benton County over many years. Malone believed it would be appropriate to name the building after Rayfield because of his role in securing its funding.

Wyse preferred not to name buildings after a living person. Wyse acknowledged Rayfield's support to Benton County but did not find it appropriate to name the building after Rayfield.

Augerot mentioned that 4185 SW Research Way was one of the many buildings the Board must name. Augerot also preferred to not name the building after a living person but believed it would be appropriate to acknowledge Rayfield's support with another building. Augerot asked if a theme for County building names on Research Way is being considered.

Wyse asked why the building will not be named the Children and Families Behavioral Health Building.

McEneny believed the building will still be referred to as the Children and Families Behavioral Health Building, along with an official name approved by the Board.

Augerot mentioned that two different tenants also reside in the building.

Wyse requested a list with Rayfield's name, additional names for consideration, and to include an influential woman.

MOTION: Malone moved to initiate a Resource Naming Process for the 4185 SW Research Way Building and direct staff to include a naming decision agenda item on the Board's December 17, 2024 meeting agenda. Wyse seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

6. Discussion Topics

6.1 Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (CPACE) Program – Christopher Jacobs, Corvallis Benton County Economic Development Office

Jacobs described the CPACE program; it is an assessment tool that can be used to finance energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy, and seismic upgrades to buildings. The program was modeled after Deschutes County, and it assigns a majority of the burden on financing and the business or property owner receiving the benefit. Previous efforts to establish a CPACE program dissipated due to a lack of third party capital providers; that issue has since improved in Oregon. Jacobs added that there were several development projects in Benton County that would benefit from a CPACE program. The program is currently written that the County Administrator's office can designate the responsibility of processing applications, but the Corvallis-Benton Economic Development Office (EDO) has the capacity to take on that role. CPACE program applicants will submit a checklist, and EDO will verify that all required documents are submitted by the applicant. Once approved, a lien is put on the property, and a repayment plan is handled between the property owner and the third party capital provider. Jacobs discussed an example of when a special assessment would be used on a property. A special assessment can be utilized for improvements made to buildings that could not receive financing before; it is an alternative way to incentivize development and physical improvements to existing buildings. Jacobs stated the administrative burden will be minimal because the CPACE application fees will more than cover the cost of work. Jacobs believed the program will likely be utilized no more than two applications a year.

Augerot mentioned that during previous CPACE discussions, the administrative burden would be delegated to the Assessment Department; Augerot believed moving the responsibility to EDO would streamline the process. Augerot discussed the program with regard to many of the buildings in downtown Corvallis requiring upgrades.

Crager suggested Jacobs meet with the Assessment and Records Directors to discuss program impacts and the division of roles.

Augerot stated that the Assessments Department is not involved unless applicants default.

Jacobs added that many historic and industrial buildings would benefit from CPACE and program inquiries have been made Countywide.

McEneny requested the program be tracked by the annual number of users.

Jacobs stated EDO is beginning to track each incentive tax exemption and public dollar that is committed to projects, including the Return on Investment (ROI). Many EDO's statewide are understaffed and do not collect operational data, which leads to a difficulty in understanding which programs are the most effective in generating a ROI.

Malone agreed that many of the brick and mortar businesses in Benton County require significant upgrades.

Augerot was interested in learning if the CPACE program was utilized more by existing owners for property upgrades or new development.

Wyse asked if there were alternative programs to update existing buildings and make safety improvements.

Jacobs responded that the Corvallis City Council is discussing a different project for a tax increment financing district in downtown, and a feasibility study will likely be done in 2025. Establishing a tax increment financing district would directly provide for Americans with Disabilities Act improvements and mixed-use projects that require public investment.

MOTION: Wyse moved to direct staff to schedule a public hearing and first reading of the ordinance as provided or amended by the Benton County Code. Malone seconded the motion, which carried 3-0.

6.2 Assessment Department Presentation – Tami Tracy, Assessment

The current presentation is based on 2023 data; Tracy will return in 2025 to compare 2023 and 2024 data. Assessment's departmental mission is to administer the Property Tax Program accurately, fairly, and efficiently in compliance with Oregon State laws, while providing the highest level of customer service. Primary functions include valuing property, mapping, the administration of special assessment programs, maintaining property owner information, tax exemption processing, and calculating taxable values. Tracy reviewed the highlights of Assessment's 2023 data. In 2024, Benton County imposed approximately \$199 million total taxes, and the permanent rate brought in for 2024 was \$24 million. The Benton County local option in 2023 was \$9 million and in 2024, it was over \$10 million.

Malone asked if it was normal to collect 100% or better of taxes owed.

Crager stated the County is typically one to two percent above what is estimated.

Augerot asked if late filing penalties contribute to going over the estimated amount.

Tracy confirmed and added that Assessment has conducted many re-appraisals.

Wyse asked for clarification that taxes brought in is not only for Benton County, but divided across the taxing jurisdictions within the County.

Tracy confirmed.

Tracy reviewed the projects and tasks between the administration staff in 2023, including mailing and situs address changes, ownership changes, and data clean-up, which ensures accuracy. More will be done as staff prepares to move data to the new system. Tracy mentioned that when doing property class changes, staff must use two different systems until the department has transitioned to the new system. Appraisers will establish a Maximum Assessed Value that is then adjusted in Ascend. Assessed value is always the lower of real market value or the maximum assessed value, which was established in 1997. Property segregation is the processing of any changes made to a property, including the land. A common misconception regarding property segregation is the division of one's property with also divide its assessed value, which is not accurate. New utility accounts are handled by the Department of Revenue; staff had completed 274 accounts and added a few new railroad accounts.

Augerot asked if all of the new utility accounts were right-of-way.

Tracy said no, because some utilities can be intangible.

Tracy reviewed the type of mailings the department sends out annually.

Augerot noticed there were 40 sales notifications in 2023 out of 483 individuals who own special assessed properties; which is almost approximately a 10% turnover rate. Augerot asked if that ratio was typical.

Tracy did not have enough data to confirm if that was a normal rate.

One of Assessment's primary purposes is to value properties in Benton County at 100% real market value. Tracy stated that new construction has declined slightly. 550 re-appraisals were done in 2023, many due to clerical errors or omitted property information. Tracy added that many counties will only drive by a property when conducting re-appraisals, whereas Benton County will check all of the measurements in real time and speak with the property owner when possible.

Augerot asked for the County re-appraisal rate.

Tracy stated the County has 40,000 accounts; but moving forward, a department goal is to maintain a 10-year re-appraisal cycle. When Measure 50 passed, the requirement to re-appraise every seven years was suspended, and a minimal appraisal staff was utilized to meet minimum State requirements. Assessment is required to appraise new construction and to verify most of the sales if an appraiser has not visited a property for 10 years or if the sale price is 25% higher or lower than real market value. Tracy believed with a new system, the department can reorganize, allowing administrative staff the capacity to assist with the basic appraisal functions. Tracy discussed the

importance of re-appraisals. Property sales had declined in 2023, (1,587 total sales); those sales are used for Assessment's ratios study.

McEneny asked about the decision-making process when an appraiser visits a property for re-appraisal.

Tracy responded that the department will reference property data, including when the property was last appraised. Appraisers will visit properties that have not been reappraised in the previous 20 years. In the near future, Assessment will target reappraisals by areas instead of properties.

McEneny suggested a new process be discussed at a future Goal-setting meeting.

During the upcoming Budget Hearings, Tracy will request significant changes in Assessment's structure, including new positions.

Malone, Augerot, and Tracy discussed Measure 50 and reappraisal costs.

Tracy stated that Assessment is responsible for valuing all business personal property. In 2023, Assessment processed 2,060 business personal property returns; 1,323 of the businesses filed electronically.

McEneny asked how the electronic filing system was working for the department.

Tracy stated the system was working well; Assessments is training businesses on how to use the system and more corrections had to be made than Tracy believed was ideal. When Assessments transitions to the new system, the e-filing portion will change. There are two staff members working in the Cartography Department; Tracy reviewed the 2023 data for that department.

Malone asked when acreage changes would apply to properties.

Tracy stated when there are map updates, subdivisions, and creating new lots.

Tracy discussed property tax exemptions; 175 exemptions were processed in 2023. This includes veterans and surviving spouses, charitable, religious, educational, benevolent, or low-income housing organizations, and government entities. Other projects included a tax lot card cleanup, site cleanup, the digitization of district budget documents. An upcoming project is Assessment's transition to Helion, which will require a data cleanup. Tracy has requested a limited duration position to help lead a data conversion project; the conversion process is approximately a two-year long process.

Crager stated that the data system had already been budgeted, but the Project Coordinator position had not.

6.3 Corvallis Government Comment Corner 2025 Schedule – Maura Kwiatkowski, Board of Commissioners Office

Kwiatkowski stated that Alex Downing, the City of Corvallis Recorder, had contacted County staff to confirm a few dates for the Government Comment Corner program at the library.

Augerot participated twice last year.

Shepherd mentioned that although the current schedule lists two Saturdays a month, the City is willing to add more Saturday options. Shepherd expressed interest in attending a few of the meetings.

Augerot suggested that each Commissioner work with staff to schedule preferred meeting dates.

Malone asked if one Commissioner at a time attended a meeting.

Shepherd confirmed.

The Board discussed previous meetings and potential schedule conflicts.

Malone asked if a School Board Member could be paired with a Commissioner to increase community interest.

Shepherd believed Downing could arrange the pairing.

Augerot recessed the meeting at 10:35 a.m. and reconvened at 10:43 a.m.

6.4 Commissioners' Committee Assignments – Board of Commissioners; Commissioner-elect Gabe Shepherd

Shepherd has signed up to receive emails from many of the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) committees.

Malone mentioned the steering committees were open for any Commissioner to attend.

Shepherd offered to attend the steering committees that are not actively watched by the current Commissioners. Shepherd expressed interest in the Governance and Revenue Committee.

Malone and Augerot discussed the option to attend some of the meetings virtually; meeting attendance is greater during the legislative session.

Shepherd offered to continue as the City of Albany liaison; and if other Commissioners were not interested, to become an official liaison for the City of Corvallis. Shepherd

requested the Board solidifies a liaison position with Corvallis instead of rotating the position.

Augerot stated that the Board Chair usually meets with the Mayor to determine joint agendas and was open to the idea to establish a liaison with Corvallis. Augerot added that Wyse attends many Corvallis City Council meetings.

Wyse stated that Shepherd should attend the City Council meetings when possible, and the Chair can attend the City County Leadership Quarterly meetings.

Shepherd asked if every Commissioner attends the Community Services Consortium (CSC) meetings.

Augerot confirmed, except for the Executive Committee, of which Augerot is currently a member.

Shepherd was willing to join the Executive Committee if Wyse or Malone were not interested.

Malone is on the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments Executive Committee and is not interested in CSC Executive Committee.

Wyse asked if it had to be decided during the meeting.

Augerot said there was time to decide.

Shepherd asked about the role of the Community Health Centers (CHC) Board of Directors liaison.

Augerot stated that under Federal law, the CHCs have their own Board. The majority of its Board must be comprised of patients of the clinics and a Board of Commissioners liaison. It is not typical for a federally qualified health center to operate within a local government; and because the dual management is important, as a liaison, Augerot had attended approximately 95 percent of the Board's meetings. The CHC Board meeting conflicts with the Fair Board and Adair Village and Monroe City Council meetings.

Shepherd was invited to be the County Representative for the Intercommunity Health Network Coordinated Care Organization (IHNCCO) and believed being a part of both IHNCCO and the CHC Board would pair well.

Augerot agreed.

Shepherd asked about the Housing Alliance Development Land Use and Preservation Work Group.

Augerot had not regularly attended those meetings; the work group has three subcommittees. Augerot suggested the Commissioners subscribe to the mailing list.

Wyse is part of the Homeless and Tenant Protection Work Group but has not attended the meetings regularly due to scheduling conflicts.

Shepherd, Crager, and Augerot discussed the geographic coverage, mission, and attendance of the Housing Alliance Work Group.

Shepherd confirmed IHNCCO once its Board voted on the appointment.

Augerot discussed the committees within IHNCCO.

Shepherd asked about the Mental Health, Addictions and Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee (MHADDAC).

Augerot confirmed it was an internal committee. It is not mandatory, but the committee has a Commissioner liaison. Augerot discussed the lack of organization within the committee and a bylaws amendment to create subcommittees of MHADDAC.

Shepherd expressed interest in the Willamette Criminal Justice Council (WCJC).

Augerot stated the subcommittee on Mental Health Law Enforcement and Crisis Response was no longer meeting, and the WCJC lay council will be removed with the bylaws amendment. As an attendee, Shepherd would be on the Executive Committee under the new bylaws.

Shepherd expressed interest in being a voting member and liaison for the Corvallis Urban Renewal District and the Corvallis City Legislative Committee; Malone is currently on the latter committee.

Malone supported Shepherd continuing participation for the Corvallis City Legislative Committee.

Wyse requested more time to confirm participation for the Corvallis Urban Renewal District.

Shepherd stated if Wyse was no longer interested in the Historic Resources Commission, he could participate.

Wyse was still interested but has scheduling conflicts for the day the Commission meets. Wyse listed the AOC steering committees; Wyse was appointed as Co-chair of the Transportation and Community Development Steering Committee. Malone regularly attends those meetings.

Wyse offered to continue attending the Natural Resources Steering Committee.

Shepherd will attend the Governance Revenue and Veterans Steering Committee and potentially attend Health and Human Services and Public Safety Steering Committees.

Wyse will continue as the Adair Village liaison and attend CSC and Cross-Benton County Economic Development Coalition meetings. Wyse will also continue on the Home Opportunity, Planning and Equity Board and its Executive Committee; the Corvallis Chamber of Commerce Board; Corvallis-Benton Library Advisory Board; Monroe Liaison; Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies; Cascades West Economic Development District and its Executive Committee. Wyse will continue to serve on the Council of Forest Trust Lands Counties through AOC, as the City of Philomath liaison, and the Philomath Chamber of Commerce.

Malone would consider attending the South Valley Regional Solutions Advisory Committee.

Malone will become Alsea's liaison; it was previously Augerot's responsibility.

Wyse, Augerot, and Malone discussed Commissioner engagement with Alsea.

Shepherd believed all three Commissioners should be engaged with Alsea, with one Commissioner to liaison with the Alsea Citizen Advisory Committee and the School District.

Augerot requested the Sustainable Materials Management Plan (SMMP) Task Force liaison be discussed when Sean McGuire and Bailey Payne were present.

Wyse has been the unofficial liaison for the National Association of Counties (NACo) Western Interstate Region Conference.

Augerot agreed Wyse should maintain that role.

The Board discussed upcoming NACo conferences.

Malone will continue with the 911 County Service District Advisory Committee, Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, AOC Legislative Committee, Natural Resources Steering Committee, Transportation and Community Development Steering Committee, Capital Improvement Project Committee, CSC Committee, the Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Fair Board liaison, and Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation.

The Board discussed Northwest Oregon Works and the Mid-Willamette Workforce Investment Board.

Shepherd will consider participating in the Mid-Willamette Workforce Investment Board.

Malone discussed internal committees and expressed interest in the Forest Patrol Advisory Committee.

7. County Updates

7.1 County Administrator Updates – Rachel McEneny, County Administrator; Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator

McEneny:

- Greg Munn is Benton County's new Chief Financial Officer.
- Community Development Director recruitment.
- Toured the Monroe Health Center with Representative David Gomberg.
- Met with incoming Representative Sarah Finger-McDonald.
- Completed the lobbyist and ethics training.
- Attended Oregon Business Plan Leadership Summit.
- Planning a debrief with leadership regarding the strike.
- Augerot's Retirement Reception will be held December 18.

Crager:

- Started the Community Development recruitment process.
- Provided a project update for the New Courthouse, including issues with the permitting process and legal issues regarding an easement with the City of Corvallis. The goal is to break ground in January 2025, but the project is nearing the period when the County will need to use its tax-exempt bond funds.

The Board supported contacting Congresswoman Val Hoyle for support in prioritizing the project.

Wyse asked if the County was prepared and ready for the December 31 deadline for American Rescue Plan Act funding obligations.

Crager confirmed.

7.2 Commissioner Updates – Board of Commissioners

Commissioner Malone:

- Attended AOC conference in November.
- Shared the County's comprehensive legislative list with Representative Gomberg at a Monroe Health Center visit.
- Attended the Oregon Business Plan Leadership Summit. Malone had a brief conversation with Governor Kotek regarding shortages in qualified staff for the Crisis Center.

Commissioner Augerot:

- Discussed Governor Kotek's budget including the issues underlying the behavioral health focus and workforce shortage.

Malone asked if there will be any legislative proposals.

Augerot confirmed there will be a proposal regarding the behavioral health workforce.

Commissioner Wyse:

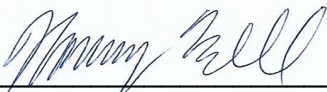
- Attended the Oregon Business Plan Leadership Summit.
- Ride-along with Officer Weichel of the Philomath Police.
- Corvallis Chamber of Commerce is recruiting a new CEO.
- Sworn in as Co-chair for the Transportation and Community Development Steering Committee.
- Attended the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties meeting.
- Swearing in ceremony is scheduled for January 2.
- Visited the Monroe Health Center with Representative Gomberg.

8. Other

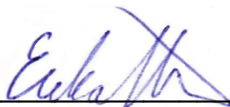
No other business was discussed.

9. Adjournment

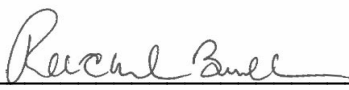
Chair Augerot adjourned the meeting at 12:43 p.m.



Nancy Wyse, 2025 Chair



Erika Milo, Recorder



Rachel Bulder, Transcriptionist

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