



Board of Commissioners

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025, 9:00 AM**

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: Rachel Bulder, Maura Kwiatkowski, Board staff; Dawn Dale, Dean Barnes, Sheriff's Office; Cory Grogan, Anne Thwaits, Public Information team; April Holland, Scott Kruger, Rebecca Taylor, Health Services; Erika Milo, Board Recorder; Debbie Sessions, Financial Services

Guests: Aleita Hass-Holcombe, Shawn Strohl, residents

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Vice Chair Malone called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

2. Review and Approve Agenda

The following item was added to the agenda under item **7. Other:**

7.1 Stabilization and Transition Engagement Program – Gabe Shepherd, County Commissioner

3. Announcements

No announcements were made.

4. Comments from the Public

Malone announced that the Board would not accept public comment regarding the Republic Services Conditional Use Permit (LU-24-027) application or the associated appeal public hearings, as the official record had closed.

Aleita Hass-Holcombe, Corvallis resident, Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC) Chair and volunteer, Housing Justice Coalition member, speaking on behalf of the Housing Justice Coalition, discussed a proposed cover letter and resolution [see packet] regarding the need to establish a stabilization and transition engagement program for unsheltered residents. On November 3, 2025, this information was shared with the Corvallis City Council. Federal Section 8 vouchers and rapid rehousing funding are on hold indefinitely. The number of people with inadequate housing is growing. The most recent count in Corvallis indicates over 600 unsheltered people in the community; a group of Corvallis service providers suggests a number closer to 1,000. This resolution addresses the lack of available shelter beds. The Housing Justice Coalition asks Corvallis, Benton County, service providers, and representatives of the homeless community to develop a program to stabilize unsheltered individuals through dedicated locations with service and hygiene access. Hass-Holcombe urged the Board to plan a joint work session with the City of Corvallis to prepare for the creation of a statewide Coordinated Housing Response Office.

Shawn Strohl, resident, member of the Board of Directors for the Corvallis Daytime Drop-in Center (CDDC), described his personal experiences with homelessness and his transition into housing with help from CDDC and Corvallis Housing First. Stabilization and services are effective tools to transition from homelessness to housing. The proposed resolution [see previous speaker and packet] aims to end unsheltered homelessness and prioritize transition into housing. The resolution has a two-year time limit, because this should be a temporary program, paired with a targeted approach to establishing trust and transitioning people into permanent supportive housing. Strohl requested that the County examine this topic at a joint work session with the City of Corvallis.

5. Old Business

5.1 2026 Environmental Health License Fees, Order No. D2025-067 - Scott Kruger, Environmental Health Manager

Kruger noted that the Board approved the proposed 2026 fees on October 21, 2025; this Order officially confirms that decision.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to adopt Order #D2025-067, implementing the 2026 Environmental Health fee schedule, effective January 1, 2026. Malone seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

6. New Business

6.1 Revision of the Sheriff's Office Civil Division Fee Schedule for Real and Personal Property Sales, Order No. D2025-066 - Dean Barnes, Civil Division Coordinator; Dawn Dale, Business Analyst II, Benton County Sheriff's Office

Dale presented a revision of Civil Division fees which are based on employee wages. Exhibit 1 shows the method of fee calculation, using an average that includes deputies, lieutenants, and sergeants, and is based on the calendar year.

Barnes reported that there was one foreclosure in 2024, but none in 2025 to date. Posting the various notices for each item requires considerable staff time.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt Order #D2025-066, revising the fee schedule for the Sheriff's Office Civil Division real and personal property sales, effective January 1, 2026. Shepherd seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

***{Exhibit 2: BCSO Civil Fee Calculation }**

6.2 Request for Approval to Respond to the Oregon Housing and Community Services' Request for Applications for Statewide Shelter Program Regional Coordinators - Rebecca Taylor, Coordinated Homeless Response Office Manager, Health Department; April Holland, Health Department Director

Holland requested Board approval for staff to apply for the OHCS regional shelter coordinator position for the Statewide Shelter Program (SSP), established under House Bill (HB) 3644. This would allow CHRO to continue leading coordination of shelter and rehousing funds for Benton County. Community partners, including Community Services Consortium, have been informed and have been very supportive.

Taylor displayed a presentation [see packet] to review the rollout of Phase 1 of the SSP and provide more information from the State.

Shepherd asked whether OHCS decides who receives the funds.

Taylor replied that the Association of Oregon Counties is coordinating a group of counties (including Tillamook, Multnomah, Clatsop, and Lane) to provide feedback to the State about the rollout of Phase 2 through Benton County. The group has provided feedback to the State that there should be special consideration for agencies or counties already serving as pass-throughs for Phase 1, or even for Governor Tina Kotek's Executive Orders, because those groups have demonstrated skill, expertise, and trust. The alternative provided to the State is that if there are concerns about the current agencies, that should be changed through a thorough application process. However, four communities have demonstrated that ability.

Shepherd asked whether 'community engagement and coordination' in the application referred to letters of support from community agencies, or engaging local agencies to support this application.

Taylor replied that the application asks about the applicant's experience providing engagement in the community. Applicants describe the work they will do, then, based on a demonstrated track record, create a plan. Benton's application shows that the County's work with both Executive Orders, the Home, Opportunity, Planning, and Engagement (HOPE) project, and Housing 360 all demonstrates a history of engaging with the community around this issue.

Shepherd asked whether this was not the time to request letters of feedback.

Taylor explained that part of staff's feedback staff to the State is that applications from organizations that have already served as pass-throughs should be considered differently from those that have not. However, the information in the presentation is based on what OHCS sent out before counties provided that feedback. On October 31, 2025, AOC shared feedback from communities. The counties also provided verbal feedback to the Governor's Office, who will share it with constituents and partners. Therefore, multiple factors could change this process.

Malone commented that Benton County seemed to be in good shape due to its history of efforts to address homelessness.

Taylor noted that for several years, Benton County has served in a role that is similar to the regional coordinator position, and has established relationships with the community and OHCS that have improved its ability to deploy statewide services into the community. Requirements have been drafted into this process, so there can be a role that is not top-down, but more of a partnership. The County is well-placed to communicate the needs of its service providers. Through CHRO and the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool, the County can be more integrated into direct service and provide overarching policy feedback to the State, which has helped to align those elements. Staff are excited about opportunities to advocate to the State about Benton's continual improvement on this issue, which provides a competitive advantage when applying for grants.

Malone asked whether Benton County should keep doing what it is already doing, with modest modifications.

Taylor shared that another element of feedback on Phase 1 is that the obligations in the contract do not match the funding allocation. Much of the feedback Benton staff have coordinated from other communities concerns aligning program expectations with funding allocation.

Malone asked if 15% of the award (mentioned in the application) was a fee to be able to administer the program.

Taylor confirmed. There is concern that because of the allocation gap, counties would have to make compromises on whether to fund program administration or keep beds open. Staff appreciate that 15% is considerably more than in previous grants, which allowed only 2% for administrative costs. The State is responding to community feedback, but the bottom line is that the State's expectations of shelter bed numbers and ongoing performance measures must reflect the funding amount counties receive. Counties need that administrative support to successfully fulfill State expectations.

Holland added that overall, staff feel that Benton County is well situated as an applicant for this coordinator position.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to approve the Health Services' request to submit an application for the Oregon Housing and Community Services request for applications for statewide shelter program regional coordinators. Malone seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

6.3 Authorizing the Payment of Property Taxes to Certain Municipalities or Other Taxing Districts in Advance of Tax Year 2025-26 as Authorized by ORS 311.392, Order No. D2025-068 - Debbie Sessions, Deputy Director, Financial Services

Sessions explained that each year the County buys out smaller taxing districts which owe \$17,000 or less. The total of those levies is \$121,311.67. If the County pays those expenses before December 1, 2025, the County can deduct the 3% early payer discount, leaving \$117,672.34.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt Order #D2025-068, authorizing the payment of property taxes to certain municipalities or other taxing districts in advance of the tax year 2025-26, as authorized by ORS 311-392. Shepherd seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

6.4 Ratification of the October 27, 2025 Request Letter for Emergency Funding for Emergency Sheltering - Rick Crager, Assistant County Administrator, Benton County Board of Commissioners Office

Crager asked the Board to ratify a letter that Wyse authorized on October 27, 2025. There was a shortage of resources in SSP Phase 1 funding. Multnomah, Deschutes, and Lane Counties are leading an effort to request that OHCS make an emergency board request to the legislature in the interim. Benton County's portion of the funding is \$800,000. Commissioners may be asked to testify and support this request.

Shepherd asked whether the letter had been sent to Benton County's legislative delegation.

Crager to follow up.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to ratify the October 27, 2025 letter signed by Board Chair Nancy Wyse requesting emergency funding for emergency sheltering. Malone seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

Responding to a question from Malone, Crager replied that the emergency board would probably meet in December 2025.

7. Other

7.1 Stabilization and Transition Engagement Program – Gabe Shepherd, County Commissioner

Shepherd mentioned watching the November 3, 2025 Corvallis City Council discussion of a proposed resolution to establish a stabilization and transition engagement program for unsheltered residents. Shepherd planned to attend a joint City-County work session where CHRO will present to the Council and discuss housing. Shepherd was tentatively in support of a joint work session but wanted to know what benefit it would provide for both jurisdictions.

8. Adjournment

Chair Wyse adjourned the meeting at 9:36 AM.



Nancy Wyse, 2025 Chair

Erika Milo, Recorder