



Board of Commissioners

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2025, 9:00 AM**

Present: Pat Malone, Chair; Gabe Shepherd, Vice Chair; Nancy Wyse, 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: Jenny Anderson, Assessment; Rachel Bulder, Maura Kwiatkowski, Board Staff; Lea Hofman, Records and Elections; Jason Johannesen, Bailey Payne, Community Development; Sean McGuire, Sustainability; Erika Milo, Board Recorder; Jesse Ott, Natural Areas, Parks, and Events; Gary Stockhoff, Public Works/Community Development

Guests: Christopher Jacobs, Corvallis-Benton Economic Development Office; Nick Kittelson, Kittelson Associates

1. Call to Order and Introductions

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

2. Review and Approve Agenda

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Announcements

No announcements were made.

4. Comments from the Public

Joel Geier, resident, stated that many of the claims of progress in the Benton County Talks Trash (BCTT) status report [for Item 5.2] were debatable or incorrect. Geier estimated that at least one-third of the projects listed as completed or in progress were not completed in a way consistent with BCTT Work Group recommendations. Geier

asked the Board to review the information and reconvene the Sustainable Materials Management Plan (SMMP) Task Force.

In the Zoom meeting chat, Geier listed the report items he viewed as inaccuracies:

- For the Conditional Use Permit process, notification was not provided to all Polk County residents living within a 10-mile radius of Coffin Butte Landfill; most notifications stopped at the Benton County line.
- The regional SMMP task force did not have broad public involvement. Meetings were closed to the public and members of the SMMP subcommittees were not invited to participate.
- The regional SMMP did not give significant consideration to international examples.
- There is still no plan, only recommendations for a plan.
- The Solid Waste Advisory Committee is not "on hiatus" as stated in the report; it was dissolved.

5. Work Session

5.1 Benton-Corvallis Economic Development Office Fiscal Year 2025-26 First Quarter Updates - Christopher Jacobs, Economic Development Manager, Corvallis-Benton Economic Development Office (CBEDO)

Jacobs presented the CBEDO quarterly report, which was recently presented to the Economic Development Coalition and the Corvallis City Council. The plan covered an updated list of five core strategies and current and potential tools.

Kiger House in the City of Corvallis has applied for the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy program, and another company is working on an application. Developers have applied for the second Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption for a building in downtown Corvallis. The City Council will reach a decision in quarter one, 2026. The Airport Industrial Park annexation should also be complete in quarter one, 2026.

Data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the US Department of Commerce have allowed CBEDO to determine the presence of specific industries in Benton County, then compare that to other counties nationwide. [For details and methodology, see packet page 11.] Benton's employment is highly concentrated in the government sector, as well as education, health, leisure and hospitality, professional and business services, and information. As of August 2025, no Benton employment sector experienced a decline over the last 12 months. Mining, logging, and construction had the largest percentage gain of any Benton County industry over the last 12 months.

The report [packet page 12] provides business expansion service and retention metrics.

CBEDO had 24 total touch points in quarter one. The most frequent topic of conversation was grant administration. Site selection, business recruitment, and regulatory assistance were also frequent requests.

CBEDO is participating in a new regional partnership, the Southern Willamette Valley Innovation Corridor (SWVIC), whose steering committee includes the presidents of Oregon State University and the University of Oregon, plus representatives from Samaritan Health Services and several area businesses. The group will explore how research commercialization can create more jobs, taxable value growth, and innovation. Jacobs will meet the SWVIC steering committee today.

CBEDO has implemented a new Customer Relationship Management platform that helps businesses find incentives and navigate the development review process.

CBEDO has until the end of 2026 to expend all Food Hub grant funds. Jacobs anticipated that all funds would be spent by the end of quarter one, 2026. The “Las Doñas del Sur” food truck pod may have found a location in south Corvallis.

CBEDO has worked with listing agents and property owners to update Oregon Prospector, a database of large industrial properties. The project is about 85% done.

CBEDO is submitting a Regionally Significant Industrial Sites (RSIS) program application to the State. In a qualifying public infrastructure development, a portion of the State income tax paid by those employees reimburses the public entity for the infrastructure it helped fund. A lack of infrastructure can make sites less attractive and financially feasible to businesses. This has been a major deterrent in south Corvallis, even for companies that want to locate there. Another deterrent is the amount of time needed to complete the process. This tool helps CBEDO overcome that competitive disadvantage.

Malone asked whether Business Retention and Expansion is mostly passive, with business owners contacting CBEDO, or does CBEDO actively contact businesses about their concerns.

Jacobs replied it varies. About one-third per quarter are proactive contacts in which CBEDO staff contact the business owner. The other two-thirds are businesses approaching CBEDO about challenges. CBEDO participates in a monthly roundtable with economic development partners, including Downtown Corvallis, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, the Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network, the Small Business Development Center, and the Workforce Agency. This helps CBEDO be a source of information gleaned from a broader network of practitioners.

5.2 Review of Benton County Talks Trash (BCTT) Recommendations - Bailey Payne, Solid Waste Coordinator, Community Development; Sean

McGuire, Sustainability Program Coordinator, Board of Commissioners
Office

Wyse suggested having a monthly update/progress report about this project at Goal-Setting Board Meetings.

McGuire addressed Geier's earlier comment that BCTT has not resulted in a plan. The State Task Force is in place to take up that plan. The original Task Force could not have completed a plan in six months.

Responding to a question from Shepherd, Malone confirmed that Governor Tina Kotek's recommendations for State Task Force members were completed last week.

Malone noted being the appointed Benton County Commissioner and Chair of the State Task Force, and provided details about membership. Payne will help guide the effort. Malone was concerned that some newer members of the Task Force would want to start the process at the beginning; however, legislative staff were pleased that Benton County has a product from the SMMP to use as a starting point.

Wyse commented that some of the SMMP recommendations mention being addressed in a County Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP).

Payne hoped that the County could develop an SWMP, a guiding document to help with planning. Staff have been working on such a plan, but some technical aspects would benefit from the input of a consultant, which Bailey planned to request from the Board in early 2026.

Wyse shared that report items SMMP R-3, R-8, R-18, and R-20, Landfill Size/ Capacity/ Longevity (LSCL) R-2, and possibly other items mention the SWMP, so those aspects should go into the SWMP.

Shepherd observed that LSCL R-12 states that Benton County recognizes the need for composting and food waste prevention, but has not yet committed resources to promoting those measures. Shepherd asked whether a discussion of composting, recycling, and end-of-life care would be part of the SWMP.

Payne confirmed.

Wyse commented that LSCL R-8 says that Benton County should secure annual waste tonnage figures from Republic Services (RS). Wyse asked staff to share that information with the Board when available. LSCL R-9 mentions restarting the Solid Waste Advisory Council (SWAC); in that case, Wyse favored avoiding duplicate efforts.

Payne planned to consult the BOARD soon about reinstating SWAC and combining it

with the Disposal Site Advisory Committee (DSAC). DSAC focuses on Coffin Butte Landfill (CBL); SWAC has a broader scope and would be helpful in developing an SWMP. Since DSAC has responsibilities which are required by law, a subcommittee of SWAC would complete those responsibilities.

Counsel noted that members of DSAC must align with the statute for the regional waste committee. Thus, having SWAC select the members for DSAC is probably not compliant with statute. Certain types of seats on DSAC must be filled. Payne is referencing the model that Benton County used formerly: two committees comprised of an almost identical group of citizens. The difference was that DSAC was required to have an RS representative, while SWAC did not have an RS representative.

Shepherd requested an individual meeting with McGuire and/or Payne for a more in-depth discussion of SWAC and DSAC.

Wyse had also flagged LSCL R-12 and suggested a possible partnership with the Sustainability Coalition.

Malone noted there had been discussion with RS about separating construction debris from the solid waste stream. That could be part of the composting discussion.

Wyse commented that in the Legal Issues and Land Use (LLU) section of the document, several recommendations mentioned potentially being part of the Comprehensive Plan update. Community Development staff should be aware that these aspects are called out in this document.

McEneny will add an update on the Comprehensive Plan to a future Board agenda.

Payne will communicate the recommendations that relate to the Comprehensive Plan to Community Development staff, including Program Coordinator Shannon Bozigar.

Wyse added that LLU R-8 mentions that if there are additional criteria which the Board determines are necessary for reviewing a Conditional Use Permit application in the landfill zone, the Board would have to amend Benton County Code Chapter 77. Wyse also noted LLU R-13, which states that Benton County should evaluate its existing complaint monitoring and enforcement system to determine whether there are sufficient mechanisms in place, and says that could be the focus of a new monitoring position. Wyse requested more information from staff on that topic as it develops.

Malone requested an update on the timetable for the Comprehensive Plan update and how this discussion fits in.

Payne will provide the requested information to the Board.

Wyse noted that Conditional Use Permit (CUP) R-4 recommends an automated system for receiving and tracking CBL-related complaints. Complaints are currently tracked manually in a spreadsheet.

Payne explained that he typically forwards complaints to RS, but sometimes time elapses between receiving and forwarding, which makes it difficult for RS to mitigate the reported issue in a timely way. Payne suggested investigating whether the CivicPlus software platform could automate complaint submission and tracking, with complaints being forwarded immediately to Payne, RS, and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Shepherd noted CUP R-4 is very similar to Community Education and Outreach (CEO) R-16, which concerns collecting, tracking, and resolving neighborhood concerns about CBL. Shepherd stated it is a priority to establish a centralized place to collect these complaints that distributes the information to all parties. Community members have expressed concerns about complaints getting lost or not receiving a response. One of the biggest concerns Shepherd heard from residents about CBL was that the number of complaints reported could be artificially low because some people do not know where or how to submit complaints.

Payne added that DEQ also receives complaints directly, then notifies RS, but again, there is a time lag.

Shepherd stated that the three entities involved in operation or regulation of CBL need to coordinate when a complaint is submitted. The Board should be informed about complaints and the resolution of those complaints in a timely manner.

Payne shared that DSAC issues an annual report to the Board and DEQ that compiles all complaints submitted to DEQ, CBL, and Benton County.

Shepherd favored the County hosting a tracking system. Submissions to the County are public records, so this would eliminate the perception that RS could be artificially lowering the number of complaints. All complaints could be requested and verified, providing further confidence that this is the complete and total record.

Malone concurred on the need for a much more efficient way to notify RS. The immediate response and the quarterly report are two different systems. Getting the information to the operators in a timely manner should be the top goal.

Wyse noted that several CUP recommendations talk about when CBL closes; while that is very important, some of the recommendations could be long-term goals, whereas some should be addressed sooner.

Malone felt that the lifespan of CBL was an immediate goal; there are efforts underway

by Benton, Linn, Polk, and Marion Counties to assess current infrastructure and future needs once CBL closes. Malone emphasized coordination between entities and instilling a sense of urgency about all the goals.

Wyse suggested monthly or quarterly updates. Staff to return to the Board with a general update on today's topics, a SWAC timeline, the feasibility of having a monitoring system, and an estimated time when staff will update the Board.

Shepherd favored regular updates and suggested every other month.

6. Consent Calendar

6.1 Approval of the December 10, 2024 Board of Commissioners Goal-setting Meeting Minutes

6.2 Approval of the October 7, 2025 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

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

Chair Wyse recessed the meeting at 10:23 AM and reconvened at 10:33 AM.

7. Old Business

7.1 Benton Area Transit Self-Perform Analysis Discussion - Gary Stockhoff, Director, Public Works; Nick Kittelson, Kittelson Associates

Stockhoff presented three service alternatives for Benton Area Transit: self-perform transit service, contract transit service to an outside provider (the current approach), or a hybrid approach, possibly involving partnership with the City of Corvallis. Staff examined whether self-performing would result in service cuts. Based on this analysis (including Kittelson's 10-year projection of costs), the County would have slightly more revenue than costs as a result of self-performing. The County also needs to renew some of its contracts, including those with Corvallis and the Developmental Diversity (DD) program, to ensure the entity receiving services pays the appropriate amount. The DD service rate has not changed in at least seven years, and should be approximately doubled to recoup current costs. Stockhoff is in contact with DD Director Jasper Smith about this. The self-perform proposal does not depend on the passage of a transportation bill. This approach will continue to provide the current services and will not cause service cuts. The recommended cost per service hour is \$147, which is comparable to other agencies in the area. The rate the County charges the current provider, Dial-A-Bus (DAB), is lower because most of DAB's drivers are volunteers, but the County is concerned that this model is not sustainable.

One challenge with the self-perform option is the need for additional County staff to facilitate and administer the program, for an estimated 17.5 Full-Time Equivalent. This analysis used median pay scales in accordance with the Oregon Pay Equity law. These would be Union positions, with benefits and wages more aligned with other agencies.

There will be no permanent increase in State Transportation Infrastructure Fund (STIF) payroll tax. An estimated 12–16-month implementation timeline, with service beginning July 1, 2027, includes time for a contract and bargaining agreement, hiring staff, and determining a location for new staff. Earlier this year, Stockhoff put a line item in the budget for implementation if the County proceeds with self-performing.

Shepherd stated that one of his biggest priorities was making sure BAT service was not reduced from the current level. Regarding STIF funding, the payroll tax will likely go on hold as a referendum goes to voters. Shepherd felt it was time for Benton County to consider self-performing and favored advancing on the provided timeline.

Malone also favored proceeding with the self-perform option and felt the County could meet the deadline.

Wyse concurred about proceeding to self-perform. Wyse noted that she was not dissatisfied with DAB. Reasons for the change include service to constituents, compliance with State law, and fiscal responsibility.

Responding to questions from Wyse, Stockhoff replied that DAB was aware of this potential change, and staff will work with DAB on a transition plan.

8. New Business

8.1 Revising Fees for Permits, Applications, and Services Provided by the Public Works Department, Order No. D2025-070 - Gary Stockhoff, Public Works Director

Stockhoff reported 5% increases for several fees. There is also a fee increase for public land corner restoration; staff recommend changing the fee per recording from \$10 (as it has been since 1987) to \$30. County Surveyor Dave Malone will create a work program with a technician and will be able to record 30 corners per year. In the last few years, the program has used up some of its balance; part of this fee will fund the work program and increase the balance. The number of recordings in the last few years has dropped. If recordings increase, staff will adjust the work program annually.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to approve Order #D2025-070, setting fees for Public Works, to be effective January 1, 2026. Malone seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

8.2 Assessment Department 2026 Fee Schedule, Order No. D2025-072 -
Jenny Anderson, Chief Deputy, Assessment Department

Anderson proposed a 5% increase to the Assessment Department's fee schedule to address rising costs of staffing, technology, and materials that directly support mandated services. The costs of these services have continued to rise. According to the Employment Costs Index for state and local government, labor costs have increased 4% over the past year as of Quarter 2, 2025. The 5% adjustment aligns with these cost pressures and will help ensure service levels without reducing programs or shifting additional financial burden to the General Fund. The previous fee increase was in 2023.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt Order #D2025-072, adopting the revised Assessment Department fee schedule, effective January 1, 2026. Shepherd seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

8.3 Assessing a Fee for Property Value Appeal Submissions, Order No. D2025-073 - Lea Hofman, Senior Deputy Clerk, Property Value Appeals Board Clerk, Records and Elections

Hofman explained that the new fee of \$40 per filing will take effect during the 2026-27 session. The County never charged a petition fee previously. The fee is necessary to recover administrative costs of processing and reviewing submissions.

MOTION: Malone moved to adopt Order #D2025-073, assessing a fee for property value appeal submissions received by the Records and Elections Department. Shepherd seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

8.4 *Natural Areas, Parks, and Events (NAPE) 2026 User Fee Schedule, Order No. D2025-074 - Jesse Ott, Director, Natural Areas, Parks, and Events

Ott presented the 2026 NAPE rate schedule, including information on activities and facilities. Some fees will remain the same. Ott highlighted some changes, such as a \$10 increase for cabin and yurt rental at Salmonberry Campground. The order reservation fee was reduced from \$10 to \$0 due to the new reservation system. On the spreadsheet for Fairgrounds facility rentals [packet page 180], Ott noted a typographical error under the Hull-Oakes Picnic Table; those rates will change from \$135 per day to \$78 per day on weekdays and \$132 per day on weekends. The Fairgrounds recreational vehicle storage fee will increase 5%.

Malone requested an update on Crystal Lake Cemetery.

Ott replied that staff are upgrading the rental home on the property and will raise the

rent accordingly. Ott has discussed management operations and potential ownership with local cemetery providers. Providing cemetery plots is not part of the County's core mission. One way to make a cemetery profitable is to expand services, but this is beyond the County's capacity. However, cemetery revenue is up this year.

MOTION: Shepherd moved to adopt Order #D2025-074, setting user fees for Natural Areas, Parks, and Events services and facilities, effective January 1, 2026, with the change to the rental rate of the Fairgrounds Hull Oakes Picnic table from \$135 to read \$78 on weekdays and \$132 on weekends. Malone seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

{Exhibit 1: Revised NAPE Report}

8.5 Letter of Support to Maintain Full Funding for the City of Monroe's Water Prefilter and Automated Controls Infrastructure Project - Nancy Wyse, Chair, Board of Commissioners

Wyse shared that the Mayor of Monroe had spoken with the Board about this matter. The draft letter asks the State not to reclaim any of the funds allocated for the Monroe water project. Monroe had some setbacks, but has new leadership and is ready to proceed with the project if funding can be retained.

MOTION: Malone moved to approve signing the letter of support to maintain full funding for the City of Monroe's water prefilter and automated controls infrastructure project. Shepherd seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

9. Public Hearing

9.1 *First Reading of Ordinance No. 2025-0327, Setting Fees for Permits, Inspections, and Services Provided by the Community Development Department Building Division - Jason Johannesen, Building Official, Gary Stockhoff, Interim Director; Community Development.

Stockhoff noted that these changes go to the State Building Code Division. The fee changes are aligned with adjustments the State would make and are comparable to neighboring rates. Staff seek to have these changes in place by February 1, 2026.

Johannesen added that this ensures the County has a reserve in case of a permitting downturn. Most fees were adjusted slightly; a few have larger adjustments based on the staff time required to process the permits.

Chair Wyse opened the Public Hearing at 11:24 AM.

Public Testimony

No testimony was offered.

Chair Wyse closed the Public Hearing at 11:24 AM.

MOTION: Malone moved to approve Ordinance #2025-0327, Setting Fees for Permits, Inspections, and Services Provided by the Community Development Department Building Division. Shepherd seconded the motion, which **carried 3-0**.

Counsel read the Ordinance aloud (short title). The second reading will occur on December 16, 2025; the Ordinance takes effect January 15, 2026, but fees will be in effect February 1, 2026.

{Exhibit 2: Community Development Building Division Proposed Fee Schedule 2026}

10. Other

No other business was discussed.

11. Adjournment

Chair Wyse adjourned the meeting at 11:26 AM.



Pat Malone, 2026 Chair



Erika Milo

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