

MINUTES
UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION

Meeting of April 17, 2026
2:00 pm, Room 130, Umatilla County Courthouse
Pendleton, Oregon

Commissioners Present: Chair Dan Dorran, Vice-Chair John Shafer and Commissioner Cindy Timmons

County Counsels: Doug Olsen, Nicholas Warner

Guests Present: Bill Hansell, Past Commissioner; Robert Pahl, Chief Financial Officer; Jason Jensen, Chief Financial Officer; Bob Waldher, Community Development;

Video link or Calling in: Laurie Gordon, DEQ; Rachel VanWoert, DEQ; Kevin Miracle, Waste Connections; Denise Hodson, Pendleton Sanitary Disposal; Derek Ranta, Waste Connections;

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Dorran called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. He reminded all that the meeting is a public forum and there is a call-in option provided. There is time on the agenda to provide input (or for hearings) to provide comment. The meeting is being video and audio recorded and minutes will be taken. Also, meetings are now live-streaming. Comments will become part of the meeting record and ask that they be three minutes or under. If persons wish to speak before the Board, please identify yourself and state where you live in order to be heard on the record – also note if you are speaking on behalf of others.

Pledge of Allegiance - led by Chair Dorran.

Additions to Agenda – None

Public Comments and Recognition of Visitors – Bill Hansell, retired Senator and Commissioner, presented to the Board about the current role he and his wife recently agreed to as a board member on the Inland Northwest Musicians Organization. This group provides an opportunity for musicians and a choral group to perform free concerts across the Pacific Northwest. The organization is considering a performance or multiple performances across several counties for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The discussion included the idea of performing "The Four Freedoms" and the possibility of Umatilla County sponsoring a free concert, Northwest Musicians do not charge for attendance. There has not been a date set or any set plans made yet, coming in today to speak with this Board was the first step.

Chair Dorran requested a schedule and budget information in order for the County to be involved. Community Development has some money for community events and could be an option. Having experience in the symphony, Commissioner Shafer was asked to be the liaison and coordinate with Mr. Hansell to develop a schedule and budget details. Bob Waldher suggested including Karie Walchli, Umatilla County Tourism Coordinator, in the development of these plans. Mr. Hansell left the meeting at 2:15 pm

Business Items

1. **Recycle Modernization Act** – Presented by Bob Waldher, Community Development Director. Online are representatives from DEQ, Waste Connections and Pendleton Sanitary Disposal.

Beginning July 1, 2026, as part of Oregon's Recycling Modernization Act (RMA), cities with a population over 4,000 or more are required to provide curbside recycling service for residents inside city limits and Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB). Waste Connections (DBA Sanitary Disposal, Inc. and Pendleton Sanitary, Inc.), having a solid waste franchise in Umatilla County, propose to establish a rate for new curbside recycling services within the respective franchise service areas. If approved, the rate would be effective July 1, 2026 and would apply to all customers within the franchise service area, regardless of whether or not the customer participates in curbside recycling. The following rate for curbside recycling was recommended for approval by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee at their meeting on February 23, 2026:

Sanitary Disposal, Inc.

- \$8.00 per month for every-other-week residential (single-family) curbside recycling service
- \$24.00 per month for every-other-week multi-family curbside recycling service

Pendleton Sanitary, Inc.

- \$8.00 per month for every-other-week residential (single-family) curbside recycling service

The Board of Commissioners, at their March 18, 2026 meeting requested a work session on this matter to collect more information.

Questions to be addressed in the Work Session:

- Would there be an option to come back at a later date and implement RMA outside the UGB if it is not included at this time?
- Will delaying the implementation of RMA outside the UGB affect funding from producer responsible organizations?
- What part of the franchises' operating expenses will be covered?

The Opportunity to Recycle Act has been in effect since 1982, this required all cities in all counties over 4,000 to be provided on route recycling collection. Many of the cities in Umatilla County operated under an alternative program because hauling recyclable materials to Portland was not cost effective. Through RMA, funding will now cover the cost of transporting those materials from the reload facility to the recycle centers in Portland so they will no longer be able to operate under the alternative programs. The RMA will cover the cost of trucks, roll carts and transportation reimbursement for materials to be delivered more than 50 miles away to a mixed use recycling facility. Operating expenses will not be included in this funding.

Laurie Gordon, DEQ, both statute and administrative rules require DEQ to do periodic needs assessments. Most recently this was done in 2023. The goal is for the next needs assessment to go out to all local governments in 2028. That will heavily target the expansion of RMA into multifamily housing, communities that initially decided to delay implementation and cities where the population will exceed 4,000. It is anticipated that funds will be available again for upfront costs, trucks, roll carts etc. when the next needs assessment is done, but funding can change through the legislature.

The statute states a person cannot pay more for recycling services than garbage services, but does not mandate a fee.

Allowing people outside the Urban Growth Boundary the option of having the recycle service if they choose was discussed. Kevin Miracle and Derek Ranta explained that basing the recycling rate on a customer base that can opt out makes it difficult to run trucks efficiently and spreads the cost less effectively than a mandatory service. If this was the decision, they would have to remodel the rate structure likely resulting in an increase in proposed fee. Laurie, Rachel, Kevin, Denise and Derek were thanked for all of the information and attending the meeting today. They left the meeting at 2:43 pm.

Additional information regarding item #1, Derek Ranta emailed Waldher; the two key items for the Board to consider are whether to offer service outside of the UGB now or wait for future years. And whether or not to make recycling mandatory or offer a subscription type service. If the commission decides on a subscription service, Waste Connections will need to revisit the pricing plan. The \$8 fee was based off 100% participation for the entire service area. With implementation happening in July a timely decision was encouraged.

May 6th is the next BOC meeting. The Board has to approve the rate inside the UGB as well as decide about services outside the UGB. The City only has jurisdiction to approve the rate inside the city limits.

2. Procurement Ordinance - Presented by Nick Warner. The County purchasing ordinance is in need of updating to match modern procurement needs. County Counsel has drafted an amendment version of the ordinance (Chapter 36) for the board's review. Copies of the ordinance with changes were distributed.

There are three dollar levels, small procurements under \$5,000, intermediate procurements \$5,000 - \$25,000 and large procurements over \$25,000. This draft is intended to ensure that exemptions applying to Request for Proposal (RFP) procurements also apply to small and intermediate procurements. The amendment aims to realize exceptions for things like the purchase of rock that falls below the \$25,000 threshold.

Chair Dorran asked, why computer hardware was eliminated. Hardware was added back in subsection 17, requiring three competitive quotes. Proposed edits would allow software to be excluded, multiple quotes for things like Microsoft Word are not always an option. The question remained, where to draw the line with a dollar amount on software purchases?

The Chair also expressed concern over high-cost software packages, suggesting the Board should have the opportunity to see a spread of options and costs for comparable software, even if the departments prefer a specific one. Purchases over \$5,000 would still require commission approval.

The difference between something being sole-sourced and something being a better fit was also discussed. It was noted that certain specialized software, such as the dispatch software recently brought before the Board, may be unique enough to limit other providers, but that this determination must be explained if chosen as the best fit.

Warner asked for additional input or questions. The ordinance will be updated with the edits discussed and brought back before the Board.

3. Camping on County Property – Presented by Nick Warner. The county owns property that has been the site of camping by members of the public. Chair Dorran feels the County is obligated to clean up the area. The County cannot physically remove campers, but can clean up the garbage and mow down weeds. The wind carries garbage from the County’s property on to other properties, causing an issue for neighbors. Public Works has the ability to mow the taller, unsightly fields that currently serve as shelter, wind blocks and camouflage.

Bob Waldher asked if the County is not evicting people from the property, can their stuff be collected. – The short answer is yes, with notice. There is a container at Stafford Hansell that personal belongings removed from the property could be stored in to allow the owners to claim them within a certain amount of time. The difficulty with evicting people from the property in question is that they have to have a place to go. Stepping Stones/PATH does not have enough beds to house all of the houseless population in the County.

The question before the Board is; should clean up take place with County dollars.

Chair Dorran suggested moving forward with the intention of mowing and cleaning up garbage leaving personal items and the population there until another solution is devised. Waldher requested creation of a list be to define what is considered a personal belonging versus garbage, so that work crews can have some direction.

There was discussion about limiting access to the road and property. This property, located behind BMCC was originally kept due to its close proximity to Stafford Hansell. It could be sold.

4. CTUIR Retrocession of Civil Jurisdiction - Presented by Dan Dorran. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have requested that the Board of Umatilla County Commissioners consider sending a letter to Governor Kotek in support of their pending request for retrocession of civil jurisdiction. There is potential in this to relieve pressure on the court system. It strictly pertains to civil matters for tribal members. No objections noted.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Shafer: None

Commissioner Dorran: Chair Dorran and Bob Waldher will be in DC all next week. UEC’s 89th annual meeting is tomorrow night.

Commissioner Timmons: None

Meeting adjourned by Chair Dorran at 3:41 am.

Kelsey Bailey

Executive Secretary – Board of Commissioners