

**MINUTES**  
**UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
Work Session of March 05, 2026  
2:30 pm, Room 130, Umatilla County Courthouse  
Pendleton, Oregon

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**Commissioners Present:** Chair Dan Dorran, Vice-Chair John Shafer and Commissioner Cindy Timmons  
**County Counsels:** Doug Olsen, Nicholas Warner  
**Guests Present:** Robert Pahl, Chief Financial Officer; Jennifer Blake, HR Director; Robert Waldher, Community Development Director; Megan Davchevski, Planning Manager;  
**Video link or Calling in:** Jason Jensen, CFO

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CALL TO ORDER: Chair Dorran called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm. He reminded all that the meeting is a public forum and there is a call-in option provided. The meeting is being video and audio recorded and minutes will be taken.

**Pledge of Allegiance** - led by Chair Dorran.

**Additions to Agenda** – None

**Work Session Items**

1. **BUILD Grant**– Presented by Megan Davchevski, Planning Manager and Bob Waldher, Community Development Director. Umatilla County, in coordination with the City of Hermiston and City of Umatilla, has applied for a BUILD planning grant for a new bridge crossing and roadway connection across the Umatilla River near Hermiston. The Board authorized the application at the February 18, 2026 Board Meeting. If awarded, the planning grant will design a comprehensive surface transportation plan including preliminary engineering up to 30% project readiness, environmental permitting, community outreach and a comprehensive benefit cost analysis. The total planning project cost is estimated at \$3,677,000. The grant requires a non-federal match of 20%. The total grant amount would be \$2,941,600 and the County’s 20% local match would be estimated at \$735,400. It is anticipated that a significant portion of the match would be in-kind with the remainder coming from the Economic Development budget.

The process for this project began two years ago. Merchant McIntyre recommended the County be the lead on the grant application, it is a County road. That would leave the County with the responsibility of the fiscal reporting. Both the City of Hermiston and the City of Umatilla have included this project in their transportation plans and have signed resolutions. If the grant is awarded it will be for planning purposes.

There is not a pre-set dollar amount on how much each partner will contribute due to the unknown total of in-kind from each partner at the end of this process. If there are additional funds needed to

satisfy the 20% match they will come from the County's Economic Development funds and from the other partners.

Robert and Megan have discussed the creation of a spreadsheet detailing all Community Development grants in process. The spreadsheet will include match amounts, timelines, staff time spent and other pertinent details. Megan is currently building this spreadsheet.

2. Procurement Policy – Presented by Nick Warner, Deputy County Counsel. Our current County procurement policy is not very robust. A revised version of the policy has been drafted to help guide procurements. The policies are two-fold, first to give guidance to managers and to make things more efficient. Additionally, alterations to the Required Authorizations of Expenditure of Public Funds policy have been drafted to match the new procurement policy. Both drafted policies are provided for review and discussion.

The draft policy revisions currently suggest that purchases of \$10,000 or more would require full board approval. Purchases between \$5,000 and \$10,000 would require approval from the CFO or the liaison commissioner. Purchases less than \$5,000 would be authorized by a director, administrator, or program manager. The intent of this policy is to define the proper steps to attain approval for purchasing. This policy touches on several related topics that are more thoroughly covered in other policies specific to that topic.

Chair Dorran would like to see the flow of approval of purchases be routed through the appropriate director before it comes to the Commissioners. There was also some disapproval expressed with managers delegating spending authority, it was recommended spending be delegated only to Directors.

Credit Card Use is one example of a topic covered by an additional policy. Most credit card limits are set to \$2,000 and Finance requires notification from a Director to temporarily increase the limit when a bigger expenditure is planned, like travel.

Inflation has made spending \$5,000 easily achievable. Mr. Pahl expressed concern for payables submitted when work has already been completed or the product received and the commission has not approved the procedure or purchase. Educating delegated spenders and department heads is crucial. Additionally, educating vendors on the County Procurement policy once it is completed will be a task. Eventually getting to a purchase order/requisition system would be a step in the right direction.

Chair Dorran adds an additional concern of software or app purchasing, IT should always have input on those purchases as should Maintenance for facility projects and supplies. Nick pointed out the section in policy 502.8 where additional restrictions or requirements could be added.

The 502 policy focuses on procurement process requirements. This draft strongly encourages at least three bids for procurements under \$5,000 or reasons as to why they weren't able to obtain three competitive bids, use of the bid sheet and submission of all other pertinent estimate or quote information. Procurements of \$5,000 and over require three competitive bids or an explanation as to why three were not obtained, use of the bid sheet and pertinent estimate or quote information. It also covers not fragmenting projects to keep amounts under the \$5,000 mark.

It was recommended to have an annual meeting with Department Heads to review the 500 series policies and discuss spending. This policy can also include wording stating purchases have to comply with any and all other County policies and the County handbook.

Robert requested that the bid sheet and pertinent documentation be submitted with the payable so Finance sees that they followed the appropriate process.

3. Employment Reclassification - Presented by Jennifer Blake, HR Director. The process for budgeting for fiscal year 2026-27 has begun. As part of that process, each department was given the opportunity to request additional positions or position reclassifications. After a review of those requests, those receiving positive feedback totaled approximately \$756,000. The matter is before the Board to authorize the Finance Department to incorporate the requests into the proposed budget.

The Sheriff anticipates that the inmate technician program would free up 1.5 to 2 FTE, it is a civilian position. Balancing the budget this year was more difficult than last, the general fund budget is increasing by 7.6% while the personnel budget is increasing by 5.5 % with slightly less FTE than the previous year. Mr. Pahl encouraged being conservative so that cuts are not needed. A contingency can be added to certain positions that if funds are not received to help pay for positions, that it will not be recruited for. This will be added to the agenda for 3/18.

4. Updated Pinkie Form – Presented by Nick Warner Across the county there are many departments that use different or outdated versions of our pinkie for board meetings. Mr. Warner would propose we create an updated version and provide it to county managers and staff. No suggestions were made to the draft form. With the updates and education of the procurement policy hopefully people will follow the policy and get approvals before the expenditures occur. Kelsey will send a notice on Mondays reminding Department Heads and management that pinkies are due on that Thursday, before the next week’s meeting. This will be added to the agenda for approval by BOC.

Work Session adjourned by Chair Dorran at 4:10 pm.

*Kelsey Bailey*

Executive Secretary – Board of Commissioners