



MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Minutes

Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Commissioners' Boardroom
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Suite 5231
Salem, Oregon 97301

Attendance:

Commissioners: Danielle Bethell, Colm Willis and Kevin Cameron.

Board's Office: Trevor Lane, Jon Heynen, Chris Eppley, Alvin Klausen, Toni Whitler, and Matt Lawyer.

Legal Counsel: Steve Elzinga.

District Attorney's Office: Brendan Murphy, Pami Guerra.

Sheriff's Office: Jason Bernards, and Nick Hunter.

Community and Economic Development: Chip Bury, and Kelli Weese.

Public Works: Ryan Crowther, Jacob Warren, Shane Ottosen, Carl Lund, Brian May, Brian Nicholas, Austin Barnes, and Brandon Reich.

Finance: Jessica Paler.

Health and Human Services: Ryan Matthews, Susan McLaughlin, and Wendy Zieker.

Citizen: Kathy Rogers.

Commissioner Colm Willis called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

Informational

1. Impaired Driving Grant Application

-Commander Jason Bernards

Summary of Presentation:

- Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (DUII) grant through Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) using federal funds.
- Goal is to fund a dedicated DUII enforcement position:
 - Address high percent of fatal crashes with impaired drivers in last five years.
- Position existed but was eliminated in 2018 due to staffing and other issues.
- 80% grant funded and 20% county match.
- Funds available October 2026:
 - Plan starting January 2027 to align with anticipated full patrol staffing.
- Position would:
 - Take over time intensive DUII investigations after an arrest:
 - Intoxilyzer.
 - Warrants for blood draws.
 - Arranging safe rides home.
 - Free up patrol deputies to respond to calls for service and emergencies.
- Senate Bill 48:
 - DUII is generally no longer a jailable offense for most first-time cases.
 - Felony DUIs are treated differently:
 - Three in 10 years.

Board Direction:

- Meet with commissioner who is not supportive:
 - Answer detailed questions and provide additional justification for the position.
- Proceed toward application preparation:
 - Resolve concerns before bringing a formal action item to the board.

2. Purchase Order with AXON for Vehicle Camera Replacement

-Commander Jason Bernards and Lieutenant Matt Wikinson

Summary of Presentation:

- Five-year purchase order with Axon for car video systems, covering seven systems.
- Total contract amount approximately \$93,692.55:
 - With an annual payment of about \$18,738.
- Existing car camera system (WatchGuard) is at end of life:
 - Hardware failures and recording issues.
 - Many units have already been pulled.
- Axon contract cost is higher than past annual costs but provides:
 - Full support and cloud-based video management "360 Axon" ecosystem.
 - Work with potential future body camera program and other sources:
 - Drones and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) if allowed.
- Axon provides body cameras and some drone solutions:
 - This contract is only for in-car cameras.
- Body camera program will require Request for Proposal (RFP):
 - Multiple vendor consideration.
- Using Axon for car cameras does not commit county to Axon for body worn cameras.
- Contract allows supplier to cancel on 60 days' written notice.

Board Direction:

- Legal/Contracts:
 - Apply updated county purchase order terms to this Axon purchase order.
 - Confirm adequate exit provisions for county:
 - Include ability to pivot other vendor without significant financial harm.
- Sheriff's Office:
 - Provide annual cost figures for WatchGuard versus Axon for cost comparison.
- Bring this back for board approval after legal review is complete.

3. Contract Amendment #1 with Garten for Battery Sorting

-Andrew Johnson

Summary of Presentation:

- Amendment to contract with Garten Services for battery sorting and packaging.
- Extends current agreement for six months to its maximum term:
 - Through June 30, 2027.
- Adds \$60,000 for a revised not to exceed total of \$160,000.
- Increase is due to higher volumes:
 - About 15 tons annually in 2022 to about 41 tons of batteries in recent years.
 - Including more lithium batteries from household tools, lawn equipment, etc.
- Proper sorting/packaging reduces fire risk during shipping and recycling.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward on consent.
- Public Works:
 - Proceed with amendment for an additional \$60,000-and six-month extension.
 - Updated packet to clearly reflect \$60,000 increase and revised contract total.

4. Consider Resolution to Apply Local Government Grant Program to Support Bear Creek Campground Rebuild

-Ryan Crowther, and Kevin Thompson

Summary of Presentation:

- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant:
 - For Bear Creek Campground rebuild.
- About \$1.2 million in Planning, Infrastructure, and Economic Revitalization (PIER) grant funds awarded and used for design.
- New grant of up to \$1 million would:
 - Requires 50% match.
 - Can be met entirely with existing PIER grant at no additional county cost.
 - Allow expanded improvements beyond current budget:
 - Paving internal roads.
 - Paving instead of gravel.
 - Adding picnic structures.
 - Other park amenities.
- Grant requirement:
 - Park must remain in public recreational use for 25 years.
 - Has Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund requirement for perpetual recreational use:
 - 25-year requirement is not a practical new constraint.
- Application due end of March:
 - Board must adopt an order authorizing application as part of submittal.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward on consent.

5. Contract with Sigmund Excavation & Construction for Salmon Falls Park Improvements

-Kevin Thompson

Summary of Presentation:

- Competitive bid results:
 - Approximately 17–18 responsive bidders.
 - Sigmund Excavation is the lowest at \$147,857.50.
- Scope of work includes:
 - Paving entrance road to the park.
 - Paving constructed portion of parking lot.
 - American Disabilities Act (ADA) parking pad and restroom circulation.
 - Adding an ADA path to a small picnic area.
- Strong bid prices allow paving of current parking lot area:
 - Originally been expected to remain gravel.
- Public Works operations has already:
 - Built the gravel base for the lot.
 - Installed the vault restroom:
 - Key schedule milestone to open for summer.
- Contract requires completion within 30 days of notice to proceed.
- Goal is to complete work in time for the summer season.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward on consent.
- Public Works:
 - Coordinate to start as soon as feasible.
 - Including possible walk-on scheduling to next board agenda if needed.
 - Provide photos or video of Salmon Falls Park to the board.

6. Battle Creek Road at Wiltsey Street Roundabout

-Ryan Crowther

Summary of Presentation:

- Follow up on an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with ODOT.
- Prior board action:
 - County contributed \$557,203 toward design change to a roundabout.
 - Subject to final concurrence once design and cost were confirmed.
- ODOT has:
 - Completed additional design work.
 - Confirmed roundabout can be constructed within original estimate:
 - No additional county funds required.
- Confirmed design meets county needs and safety/operations objectives.
- Brought back solely to confirm board remains supportive of roundabout change.

Board Direction:

- Direction to Public Works staff:
 - Communicate to ODOT to proceed with roundabout under the existing IGA.
- No new board action or agenda item required since there is no change to agreement.

7. Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) Scenario Plan Edits & Submission to Department of Land Conservation and Development

-Austin Barnes and Carl Lund

Summary of Presentation:

- Edits to joint Marion County–Salem–Keizer CFEC scenario plan:
 - Outlines transportation and land use strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over 25 years.
- Key concerns:
 - Language referencing a local fuel tax and potential chariots payroll tax:
 - Not discussed with the board in prior meetings.
 - Increased residential density in East Salem compared to current densities.
 - Perception of commitment to densifying communities in East Salem without infrastructure investment:
 - Roads, schools, services, groceries, and healthcare.
 - Philosophical objection to CFEC as state driven policy that may harm East Salem residents and reduce local control.
- Staff and counsel reported:
 - Draft edits remove references to fuel tax and local payroll tax.
 - Only binding quantitative target is that 2% of new housing be within 0.5 mile of Cherriot's core transit network.
 - Vacant lands analysis:
 - About 2% of buildable lands are already within half mile area.
 - 2% target is theoretically feasible without rezoning or forced density.
 - If targets not met, there is no punitive enforcement:
 - County must revisit plan and adopt new or adjusted measures.
- Map/density discussion:
 - Significantly higher "preferred" densities in in Marion County's jurisdiction compared to current densities.
 - Explore changing densities back to current levels in county-controlled areas.
 - Concern about term "preferred scenario":
 - Implying endorsement and potential misuse by state agencies.
- Process/coordination:
 - Salem and Keizer able to accept Marion County's changes in county portions:
 - Including tax language and CFEC specific policies.
 - Options:
 - Joint submission with Salem/Keizer incorporating county changes.

- Separate Marion County submission.
 - No submission.
- Consequences of not submitting:
 - Potential eligibility loss for certain urban transportation funding through Metropolitan (MPO)/ Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS):
 - Projects like Center Street, State Street, Delaney Bridge, etc.
 - Possible federal pathways to bypass states but this is speculative.

Board Direction:

- Not moving forward at this time.
- Legal Counsel:
 - Explore changing density map to match current density not higher “preferred” densities.
- Planning/Transportation:
 - Modify local fuel and payroll tax for Cherrlots in county portions language.
 - Investigate if term “preferred scenario” must be used or other wording is fine:
 - If not, clarify practical meaning and limits of that terminology.
 - Confirm if Salem and Keizer will join joint submission with revised sections:
 - Parking standards language, tax references, etc.
- Commissioner Bethell to meet with Steve Elzinga to evaluate legal and policy risks.
 - Will bring back to staff after commissioner has reviewed:
 - By end of the month.

8. Consider Proclamation for March 2026 Gambling Awareness Month

-Susan McLaughlin and Wendy Zieker

- Proposed board proclamation mirrors state and national proclamations:
 - Similar to prior years.
- Will present proclamation.
- Give presentation on:
 - Local programs.
 - Community outreach.
 - Prevention work and youth focused resilience/connectedness initiatives.
- Youth art contest and calendar program:
 - Middle school art submissions.
 - Top entries used for an English/Spanish calendar.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward for board session on March 11th.

9. 2026 STOP Violence Against Women Act Competitive Grant

-Pami Guerra

Summary of Presentation:

- Request to approve grant that is a one-year extension of the 2023–2025 award.
- Extension offered by state to avoid forcing full competitive reapplication this cycle.
- Grant funds support a bilingual program coordinator in Victim Assistance office.
- Conducts outreach, coordination, and direct services to domestic violence victims.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward on consent.

10. Tourism Grant Program Establishment

-Tami Cirerol

Summary of Presentation:

- New Travel/Tourism Grant Program is ready to go live.
- Bring program structure to board session in two weeks for formal adoption:
 - Open the grant application window in April.
- Commissioners raised concern about accountability:
 - Ensure grantees do what they propose.
 - Enforceable mechanisms if goals are not met.
- Draft template contract has biannual reporting requirements with invoices:
 - Payments may be withheld and issues elevated to board if scope not met.

Board Direction:

- Work with Legal to draft accountability/enforcement language, including:
 - Requirement to submit periodic performance reports.
 - Ability to withhold payment if grantee does not execute approved plan.
- Ensure this language is highlighted in:
 - Public facing grant program information.
 - Application materials.
 - Final contracts.
- No need to return to management update before bringing program to board session.

11. Chemeketa/KROC General Education Development (GED) Support for Youth
-Chip Bury

Summary of Presentation:

- \$75,000 to support GED program at Kroc Center:
 - In coordination with Chemeketa.
 - To be used as matching funds for a larger U.S. Department of Labor grant.
- Program aimed at youth GED completion and workforce readiness:
 - County previously supported program from another source.
 - Through Marion County (MC) 4-H giving around \$50,000.
- Current request is proposed from lottery/economic development funds:
 - Alignment with workforce development.
 - Limited available balance in existing MC4-H budget line this fiscal year.
- Need to discuss goals for OSU Extension and MC4-H:
 - Including youth development vs. extension services vs. capital needs.
- Strategy and not reacting to annual budget requests and ad hoc grants.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward.
- Direction to Community Services:
 - Proceed with MC4-H Budget Committee meeting on April 1st.
 - Schedule a work session after budget meeting.

12. Contract with Power System West, LLC for the Public Works Generator Radiator Replacement

-Tamra Goettsch

Summary of Presentation:

- Large generator serving Building 1 at Public Works has a leaking radiator:
 - Generator is still operational but requires repair.
- Recommended solution:
 - Disassemble and repair the radiator on site.
 - Provide temporary backup generator during repairs.
- Radiator cost alone is approximately \$85,000:
 - Total project cost is higher when labor and rental equipment included.
 - Capital project shared between Public Works and the county capital fund.
- Repair is more cost effective than replacing the entire generator at this time.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward on consent.

13. Notification of Binding of County Insurance Policies

-Tamra Goettsch

Summary of Presentation:

- Renewal/binding of several insurance policies effective March 1st:
 - Excess General Liability:
 - Two-year pricing guarantee.
 - 0% change from prior year.
 - Substantial savings versus previous carrier.
 - Excess Workers' Compensation:
 - Two-year policy.
 - Self-insured retention remains \$750,000 across all class codes:
 - Including law enforcement.
 - Premium increased about 21% due to market conditions.
 - Marine policy for ferries:
 - Premium increased about 13% due to a paid and a pending claim.
 - County retained coverage in a tight market.
 - Medical malpractice for contracted HHS providers:
 - Decreased about 10% due to accurate risk information and no claims.
 - Medical malpractice for sheriff/juvenile contracted physician:
 - Large premium increase due to significant claim activity and payouts.
 - Current premium is about \$158,677:
 - Up sharply from prior years.
- Plan for corrections medical malpractice:
 - Contract for current corrections physician ends June 30th.
 - Will not be renewed.
 - Will cancel medical malpractice policy when contract ends.
 - Only 25% of premium is "minimum earned,":
 - County will request a refund for the unearned portion.
 - Future coverage will depend on model selected by Sheriff/Juvenile:
 - Contracted physician vs. outside provider with their own insurance.
- Risk team has authority under county rules to bind coverage.
- Board approval is required for invoices over \$100,000, not for policies themselves.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward for board session on March 18th.

14. Petty Cash Fund Requests for Parking Fees & Other Small Purchases**a. Health and Human Services – Rural Services Team****b. Health and Human Services – Addiction Treatment Services Team**

-Sherry Downs and Jessica Paler

Summary of Presentation:

- a. Health and Human Services – Rural Services Team:
 - Request to establish petty cash for HHS Rural Services Team - Woodburn.
 - Reimburse parking and similar expenses for meetings and trainings.
 - Salem removed free street parking downtown:
 - Increasing the burden on employees traveling from outlying locations.
 - Process:
 - Staff pay for parking at kiosks, obtain receipt or photo evidence.
 - Submit to local petty cash custodian for reimbursement.
 - Petty cash fund reconciled monthly.
 - Replenishment handled through accounts payable and treasury.

- b. Health and Human Services – Addiction Treatment Services Team:
 - Similar petty cash request for HHS Addiction Treatment Services.
 - Same reimbursement purpose and process as Rural Services Team.
- Employees should not bear costs for work expenses and forced into expenses:
 - P-cards was also mentioned as a possible alternative in some situations.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward.
- Matt Lawyer:
 - Policies to state employees should not personally bear work related expenses.
 - P-cards or reimbursement mechanisms must be made available.

15. Meeting Material Updates

-Gary White

Summary of Presentation:

- Follow up on prior request to reduce paper waste from printed meeting packets.
- New process:
 - Reduce standard number of printed copies from 20 to 10.
 - Five copies for commissioners and key staff.
 - Five on the side for attendees who did not print their own.
 - Others to download in meeting invite and read digitally or print a copy.
- Technical implementation:
 - Packets stored on OneDrive.
 - Meeting invite contains direct link to packet.
 - GovDelivery to email agendas and notices to subscribers:
 - Not full packets.
 - Self-service subscription form is now on the county website:
 - Board of Commissioners → Meetings → News → Subscribe to Public Notices.
 - Allows public to opt in/out without staff manually managing lists.
 - Analytics allow staff to see engagement.
- Confidential/proprietary materials:
 - Board packets include confidential information that are not shared via links.
- Public access:
 - Management update packets are not yet posted as public documents.
 - Members of public attending in person can obtain printed materials.
- Potential further reduction to five after short transition period and evaluation.

Board Direction:

- Approved to move forward.

16. Legislative Update

-Alvin Klausen

Summary of Presentation:

- Session scheduled to end in five days.
- Many Marion County priorities did not advance:
 - Woodburn Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) bill to expedite expansion died in committee.
 - Bill to require a public vote for the Cherriots mass transit tax increase died.
- Some bills of interest have passed both chambers and await Governor’s signature.
- Transportation funding and regulatory issues remain in flux.
- Battery Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation:
 - Battery recycling.
 - Bill moved to Ways and Means late in session.

- Keizer Fire District and Marion County Fire District #1 joint project federal earmark:
 - Request could be competitive with other county earmarks.
- River Road railroad clearance project:
 - In prior meeting asked staff to obtain contact at the railroad/federal level.
 - Gustavo, from Senator Jeff Merkley's office has given information and offered to help facilitate a meeting.
- Woodburn UGB one time expansion:
 - Statewide bill.
 - Correcting previous one-time expansion mechanism.
 - May cover Woodburn's request even though Woodburn specific bill failed.
- SB 1599:
 - Moving a transportation related tax question to a May ballot.
 - This passed.

Board Direction:

- Keizer Fire District and Marion County Fire District:
 - Do not send a support letter for that earmark, due to potential competition with county prioritized federal requests.
- River Road railroad clearance project:
 - Request this be federal partners led, with local partners as technical leads.
- Estate Tax proposal:
 - Status bill reportedly raising exemption threshold but increasing top rate.
 - Staff will research and follow up.

17. Board Session

- **March 4, 2026 - Agenda**
- **March 11, 2026 - Preview Agenda**
- **March 18, 2026**
- **March 25, 2026**

-Commissioner Colm Willis

Summary of Presentation:

- Overview or board session.

Board Direction:

- Good with update.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS and UPDATE

Commissioner Danielle Bethell

- N/A

Commissioner Kevin Cameron

- Bureau is redoing Western Oregon Resource Management Plan:
 - O&C Counties will be representing Marion County.
 - Board will need to sign formal agreement of this.
- Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS) Transportation Improvement Plan:
 - Out for public comment.
 - Jon Heynen to send it out to the public to encourage engagement.
 - Open House on March 10th.
 - Public Hearing May 26th.
- North Santiam Drought Contingency Plan:
 - Plan does not reflect dam drawdowns.

Commissioner Colm Willis

- N/A

Other

Veterans and First Responders Memorial

-Jon Heynen

Summary of Presentation:

- Letter forwarded from Chip Bury in Community Services.
- Commissioner Kevin Cameron has already reviewed:
 - Remove any references to specific funding amounts or funding sources.
 - Keep letter focused on support for project rather than financial commitments.
- Revised letter presented to the board.

Board Direction:

- Agree to sign letter of support, with revised, non-financial language.

Fire Reset Self-Attestation

-Matt Lawyer

Summary of Presentation:

- Happens annually.
- 22 individuals have not done it yet.
- Reminder email or letter has been sent.

Board Direction:

- Agree to send a letter from the board's office

Adjourned – time: 11:18 a.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Reviewed by: Gary L. White