



O R E G O N

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session Summary Minutes

Marion County Community Survey Discussion

August 7, 2025. 10:30 AM

Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Salem
5th Floor, Suite 5232, Commissioners Board Room

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Kevin Cameron, Colm Willis, and Danielle Bethell.

Board's Office: Matt Lawyer, Chris Eppley, Jon Heynen, Jan Fritz, and Trevor Lane.

Legal Counsel: Steve Elzinga.

Sheriff's Office: Nick Hunter.

Ragnar Research: Ryan Steusloff.

Citizen: Kathy Rogers.

Commissioner Danielle Bethell called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Presentation of Survey Results from Ragnar Research

- The survey was done July 13th and 15th 2025, focusing on Marion County residents.
- Overall satisfaction with county services is high compared to other regions.
- Homelessness identified as the number one issue, especially in Salem:
 - Non-Metro areas report it as less pressing.
- Majority of residents are satisfied with government communication and services.
- State government is seen as most responsible for the drug crisis:
 - Followed by city and county governments.
- Trend lines show improvement in perceptions of county direction and satisfaction with services since previous surveys.
- Sheriff and patrol services received the highest satisfaction ratings:
 - Significant improvement since 2023.
- Emergency and recovery services, wildfire recovery, and waste reduction/recycling services received high satisfaction.
- Areas with lower satisfaction:
 - Mental and drug abuse help, and mental and physical health promotion.
- Value for taxes paid:
 - State perceived as best value, followed by federal, county, and city taxes.

Discussion

- Differences in satisfaction and perception:
 - based on geographic area and length of residency in Marion County.
- Many residents unaware of some county services due to lack of direct interaction.
- Impact of national and state-level issues on local perceptions:
 - Such as the economy and inflation.
- Residents' primary sources of information include cable news and social media:

- Generational differences in media consumption.
- Homelessness is a complex, multi-faceted issue encompassing safety, behavioral health, and drug use.
- Further analysis of survey data, such as by geography and length of residency.

Other

- Efforts to include both landline and cell phone users.

Next Steps:

- Coordinate to present the findings at the September 4th elected official meeting.
- Provide the full crosstab data on the survey results:
 - Breakdowns by geographic areas (North Salem, South Salem, non-Metro).
- Find differences in responses between residents who have lived in the county for over 10 years versus newer residents.
- Prepare the survey slides in a PDF format to be shared with the commissioners.

Adjourned – time: 11:06 a.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Reviewed by: Gary L. White