



O R E G O N

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session Summary Minutes

Solid Waste Update

October 30, 2025. 1:30 PM

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

ATTENDANCE:

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

Board's Office: Alvin Klausen, Chris Eppley, Heather Inyama, Matt Lawyer, and Trevor Lane.

Legal Counsel: Scott Norris, and Steve Elzinga.

Public Works: Brian Nicholas, Brian May, and Dennis Mansfield.

Citizen: Kathy Rogers.

Union Pacific Railroad: Robert Martin.

Commissioner Colm Willis called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m.

Financial Update

- Proposed rate increases:
 - Urban.
 - Rural.
 - Residential.
 - Commercial.
 - Industrial solid waste services.
- Considered haulers' request for a January 1 increase:
 - Residential at 4.4%.
 - Commercial at 1.6%.
 - Industrial at 3.6%.
- Concern over urban vs. rural revenue balance and its effect on rate fairness:
 - Increases must balance extra revenue from rural areas and underperformance in urban areas.
- Cost-saving opportunities in 2025–2026 budget:
 - Leachate disposal.
 - Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility.
 - Labor.
 - Administrative allocations.
- Leachate management liability:
 - Projected at \$10M over four years.
 - Fund from rates or allocate networking capital as one-time or short-term.
- Budget components:
 - Stormwater fund subsidies.
 - Code enforcement allocations.

- Major maintenance.
 - Contracted services.
- Public Works Administration, Full Time Equivalent (FTE)s.
- Costs allocated:
 - Safety.
 - Facilities.
 - Administration.
 - Accounting:
 - Including methods for cost-sharing among departments.

Discussion:

- How to address requested hauler rate increases:
 - Disproportionate impact on urban vs. rural areas.
 - Perceived unfairness in considering only one side of business.
- Agreed to propose a reduced residential rate increase:
 - 2% instead of 4.4%.
 - Need equity, particularly urban residents who would bear more of the cost.
- Cost/benefit analysis of reducing Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility open days:
 - Large reductions yield small labor savings:
 - About \$74,000.
 - No meaningfully offset of a multi-million dollar budget gap.
- Out-of-county usage of HHW facility:
 - Especially Polk County.
 - Plans to charge non-residents full cost of service.
 - Pursue legislative or grant support.
 - Possible regional cost-sharing in future.
- Multiple approaches to administrative cost allocations:
 - Current method is an FTE-only method.
 - Preferred option equitably shares overhead between funds and departments.
- Materials & Services (M&S) and capital budgeting issues:
 - Brown's Island and Montefiore landfill closures.
 - Annual and one-time administrative, maintenance, and disposal expenses.
- Personnel and role reorganization within Public Works:
 - Maximize efficiency.
 - Ensure critical administrative support.
 - Consider budget reductions.
- Transfer station volumes, customer bases, and market shifts affect both operational costs and projected revenues.

Other:

- Substantial information reviewed quickly:
 - Code enforcement allocations, administrative role responsibilities, and others to be followed up later.
- Ongoing education of regular customers about changing facility hours and rates:
 - Effective public communications.
- Practical and legal requirements of subsidizing services for out-of-county users.

Next Steps:

- Take proposed 2% residential cart rate increase back to haulers for negotiation.

- Develop mechanism to charge non-resident HHW facility users full cost:
 - Increase Polk County's rate to standard level.
- Explore options for regional cost-sharing or grant funding.
- Analyze and report on impact of all toggled budget decisions:
 - Solid waste fund balances and outcomes for each cost-saving measure.
- Request and compile a full breakdown of current and projected code enforcement funding:
 - Responsibilities from the Sheriff's Office and Finance.
- Refine methodology and documentation for allocating administrative costs among funds and departments:
 - Prepare updated projections based on selected options.
- Conduct further analysis on leachate management timing and costs:
 - Updated projections for landfill closure and reserve utilization.
- Continue to review and adjust budget items based on new data:
 - Relating to transfer station utilization and service allocation.
- Schedule work sessions for detailed review of the administration program:
 - FTE assignments, service allocations, and budgeting methodologies.

Adjourned – time: 3:06 p.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Reviewed by: Gary L. White