

County Commissioners
Colm Willis, Chair
Kevin Cameron
Danielle Bethell



Chief Administrative
Officer
Jan Fritz

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION

Stormwater Program Follow-Up Minutes

Thursday, October 8, 2026, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Commissioners' Boardroom
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Suite 5231
Salem, Oregon 97301

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Colm Willis and Kevin Cameron.

Board's Office: Jonathan Sanford, Matt Lawyer, Cameron Russell, Trevor Lane and Toni Whitler.

Legal Counsel: Steve Elzinga.

Public Works: Brian Nicholas, Brian May, Stephanie Pulvers, Ryan Wade

Guest: Kathy Rogers.

Commissioner Kevin Cameron called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

-Commissioner Kevin Cameron

2. April 7, 2026 – Work Session Recap

-Stephanie Pulvers

Summary of Discussion:

Projected stormwater funding needs, loss of Environmental Services support, rising costs, and difference between area covered by the stormwater permit and the area currently charged a stormwater fee. Options previously requested for further analysis:

Increasing existing fees.

Extending fees to other service districts.

Establishing broader district.

Direction & Follow-Up

No Board Action or follow-up given.

3. Stormwater Program Discussion

a. Cost Allocation

b. Stormwater Fee Options

-Brian Nicholas and Stephanie Pulvers

Summary of Discussion:

a. Cost Allocation:

Stormwater revenue remained relatively flat for 12 years. Labor costs increased by approximately 22% over four years. The removal of the Environmental Services subsidy and

its contribution toward half of the stormwater supervisor position affected revenue and expenditures. Staff's analysis estimated that Road Fund could cover approximately \$330,000 in eligible roadway-related stormwater costs. Compared with its historical contribution of about \$182,000. After contribution, staff identified a current-year funding gap of approximately \$448,000. Commissioner Colm Willis requested legal review of whether the Road Fund could pay for a broader range of costs.

Direction & Follow-Up

Task: Review legal scope of stormwater costs that may be paid from Road Fund and clarify funding boundary.

Assigned To: Steve Elzinga.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

b. Stormwater Fee Options

Summary of Discussion:

Current single-family residential charge is \$2.55 per month plus \$2 per Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU), for a total of \$4.55 per month. Estimate adding current fee to Brooks and Labish Village service districts could generate about \$62,000 in additional revenue. Establishing a district covering broader Stormwater Management Area could generate about \$268,000 in additional revenue after accounting for the existing Estimate Salem Service District (ESSD) fee. Discussed increasing the ESSD fee. No fee option or increase was selected. Commissioners discussed whether construction and stormwater permit fees could be adjusted. Noted that permit-fee revenue would be limited and would not by itself resolve recurring program costs.

Direction & Follow-Up:

No fee increases or new district was approved during discussion. Legal mechanism for extending a fee beyond existing ESSD remained unresolved. Including whether to establish or expand district or use another fee-for-service approach.

Task: Review legal mechanism for applying a stormwater fee outside existing ESSD, including district and fee-for-service options discussed.

Assigned To: Steve Elzinga.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Examine if construction or stormwater permit fees could be increased and consider potential revenue and ongoing-cost implications.

Assigned To: Not specified.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Determine if to pursue a stormwater fee option or combination of options, and amount, if a change is to be placed on the 2027 tax statements.

Assigned To: Not specified.

Deadline/Timeline: By June 2027, as stated by staff for inclusion on 027 tax statements.

4. Temperature Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

a. Implementation Plan – Draft

b. Streamside Evaluation Requirement

-Ryan Wade and Stephanie Pulvers

a. Implementation Plan – Draft:

Summary of Discussion:

Described draft implementation-plan language for revised temperature TMDL. Initial plan is due to Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) by November 9, 2026. Streamside evaluation and updated management strategies are due October 2027, with final materials due in May 2028. Commissioner Colm Willis raised concerns about scientific basis and terminology of requirements. Including phrase "thermal pollution control,". Board discussed preserving County's ability to challenge requirements.

Direction & Follow-Up:

Board indicated staff could proceed with submitting plan after changing terminology to "temperature reduction practices". Incorporate legal language preserving County's rights to challenge requirements. No separate motion or vote was recorded.

Task: Revise the plan's terminology, send the draft to Legal Counsel for review, and submit the revised plan to DEQ.

Assigned To: Stephanie Pulvers.

Deadline/Timeline: Submit by November 9, 2026.

Task: Review and redline the plan to add language preserving the County's rights to challenge the TMDL requirements.

Assigned To: Steve Elzinga.

Deadline/Timeline: Before submission to DEQ on November 9, 2026.

b. Streamside Evaluation Requirement

Summary of Discussion:

Evaluation covers waterways throughout County, and a prioritization matrix would help focus work. Propose using Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) grant funds to support temporary interns. Potentially recruited from Oregon State University (OSU) or similar programs. For part of evaluation, with North Santiam Watershed Council conducting another portion. Staff advised not to use Pudding River Watershed Council for that work. The staffing approach, vehicles, tablets, equipment, and total costs had not yet been determined. Staff said it would provide a management update. Commissioners discussed County's limited resources and how to respond to other cities seeking technical assistance.

Direction & Follow-Up

Staff indicated it would proceed with developing North Santiam Watershed Council and intern approach. Subject to determining costs and available funding. Question of how much technical assistance to provide other cities remained unresolved.

Task: Develop streamside-evaluation staffing approach, including intern recruitment, equipment and vehicle needs, total costs, available grant funding, and a management update.

Assigned To: Stephanie Pulvers.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

Task: Clarify whether and how County will provide further technical assistance to cities undertaking their own TMDL evaluations.

Assigned To: Not specified.

Deadline/Timeline: Not specified.

5. Next Steps

-Stephanie Pulvers

Summary of Discussion:

Commissioner Colm Willis requested broader discussion of Public Works funding needs. Including stormwater, parks, service districts, and other programs with budget pressures, before next budget decisions. A roughly two-hour session was discussed, and December 8th was identified as a placeholder date.

Direction & Follow-Up

Task: Arrange a roughly two-hour Public Works funding discussion and provide proposed dates to the commissioners.

Assigned To: Matt Lawyer.

Deadline/Timeline: Proposed dates requested on October 8, 2026. Session targeted for early December 2026, with December 8th noted as a placeholder.

Adjourned – time: 10:39 a.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Reviewed by: Gary L. White