



# BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon  
(541) 388-6571

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

## JOINT MEETING WITH CIRCUIT COURT

4:00 PM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024

Allen Room and via Zoom

<b>Deschutes County Attendance:</b>			
x	Commissioner Anthony DeBone	x	Nick Lelack, County Administrator
x	Commissioner Patti Adair	x	Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator
x	Commissioner Phil Chang	x	Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator
X	Dave Doyle, Legal Counsel	x	Kim Riley, Assistant Legal Counsel
X	Lee Randall, Facilities Director	x	Brenda Fritsvold, Executive Assistant
<b>Circuit Court Attendance:</b>			
	Hon. Judge Bethany Flint	X	Hon. Judge Beth Bagley
X	Hon. Judge Wells Ashby	X	Hon. Judge Alison Emerson
X	Hon. Judge Alycia Sykora	X	Hon. Judge Raymond Crutchley
X	Hon. Judge Alycia Herriott	X	Hon. Judge Randy Miller
	Hon. Judge Michelle McIver		Chief Justice Megan Flynn
X	Deputy Trial Court Administrator Christa Neal	X	Trial Court Administrator Angie Curtis

### 1. Introductions

Chair Adair called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm., at which time everyone present introduced themselves.

### 2. Courthouse Expansion Project

Lee Randall, Facilities Director, provided an overview of the Courthouse expansion project, including work completed to date, and shared a construction timeline



schedule showing completion in the spring of 2026. He said at the current time, foundation pilings and sound insulation are being installed along with a generator for power backup.

### **3. Mental Health and Public Safety**

Discussion ensued regarding the deflection program which was initiated in September.

Judge Ashby said it is not yet known what the impacts of this program might be, although he was cautiously optimistic.

Commissioner Adair shared that a majority of those offered deflection appear to be accepting it. She added that although Oregon has one of the highest rates of drug overdose deaths in the nation, these may be leveling off or trending down.

Commissioner Chang concurred that the number of overdoses reported by the emergency department is much lower than before.

Commissioner Adair said the Deschutes County District Attorney's Office recently facilitated the hosting of a fentanyl roundtable by the US Attorney's Office in Bend.

Judge Crutchley reported on a meeting earlier this month of the Governor's Advisory Committee on DUII which took place at COCC.

Commissioner Adair announced that this committee, which is chaired by retired Oregon State Police Captain Chuck Hayes, will hold its statewide meeting in Bend next April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. She added that she has encouraged Hayes to invite Kevin Sabet, former White House Office of National Drug Control Policy advisor, to speak at that meeting.

Commissioner Adair referred to a recent editorial in the Bend Bulletin regarding negative effects of cannabis use, including psychotic disorders.

Judge Emerson reported a 137% increase in the court's mental health court docket, adding that nearly everyone who comes through has an associated co-occurring drug and/or alcohol issue, and the number of persons experiencing mental health issues is expected to continue to rise. She spoke to the problem of no residential beds or secure residential treatment facility (STRF) beds available anywhere in the state, which results in persons cycling through the system.

Commissioner Adair said the County is working to build a 16-bed SRTF in Redmond.



Commissioner DeBone asked if the Court wants the County to advocate for anything specific in the upcoming legislative session.

Responding to Commissioner Chang, Judge Emerson said both civil commitments and Aid & Assist cases have increased significantly, and Oregon State Hospital is no longer accepting civil commitments. She said many who cannot access the civil commitment system end up in the criminal justice system.

Commissioner Adair said the rule limiting STRFs to no more than 16 beds is from 1963 and antiquated.

#### **4. Status of Public Defense Services in Deschutes County**

Judge Ashby reported on efforts undertaken to contract for public defense attorneys, saying the court is currently down to 112 unrepresented persons. He said the cost of living in Deschutes County is prohibitively expensive and a large factor in the difficulty of contracting with public defense attorneys in this area.

Commissioner Adair shared that she has talked with a few people recently who have had their civil cases postponed and asked how often this happens and what is the reason for it.

Judge Ashby asked that calls such as this be directed to him or to Court Administrator Angie Curtis. He said while attempts are made to determine trial readiness, various factors can interfere with whether or not a case proceeds in front of a judge as scheduled.

Judge Miller added that sometimes, cases are settled just before a trial is scheduled to begin.

In response to Commissioner DeBone, Judge Ashby believed that the County has adequate jail space to maintain community safety. He praised the professionalism of the County jail facility and staff.

#### **5. Mediation Funding**

Court Administrator Angie Curtis explained that the Court receives funding from the State for meditation services for custody and domestic relations cases—the County allocates 37.5% of this revenue to the supervised visitation program run by Mary's Place. The Court also receives revenues from filing fees for this program.

Curtis said a change in how the State allows these funds to be used could place the \$94,000 granted by the County to Mary's Place at risk, as mediation services may no

longer be an eligible use of those funds. Curtis said it is not clear if the County will be able to continue to support this program with these funding sources.

Discussion ensued of the significance of the supervised visitation program and its positive impacts.

Commissioner Chang asked for information on counties that use these funds for programs other than mediation services.

## **6. 2024 Court Updates**

Judge Ashby reported that the Court will begin partnering with Guardian Partners, a non-profit out of Portland, to provide guidance to new guardians as well as audit functions.

Judge Ashby praised Judge Miller and the Veterans Intervention Strategies Court for the difference made in the lives of veterans who choose to participate in this supportive program.

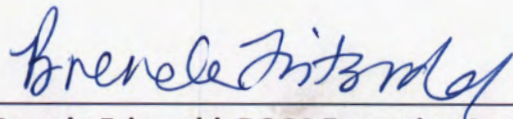
Judge Miller said about 20 veterans are currently in the program, which offers a wonderful culture for participants.

Judge Ashby credited Matt Nelson at the DA's office with building this fantastic program.

Judge Emerson urged the County to continue funding Behavioral Health programs and services.

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**Adjournment:** Chair Adair adjourned the meeting at 5:09 pm.



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**Brenda Fritsvold, BOCC Executive Assistant**