



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

DESCHUTES COUNTY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

8:00 AM

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2025

ZOOM MEETING

A legislative work session was held on Friday, April 4, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. via Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform.

Deschutes County Attendance:			
x	Commissioner Anthony DeBone, Chair		Nick Lelack, County Administrator
x	Commissioner Patti Adair, Vice Chair	x	Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator
x	Commissioner Phil Chang	x	Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator
x	Kristie Bollinger, Property Manager		Tim Brownell, Director Solid Waste
x	Sara Crosswhite, Director 9-1-1		Steve Dennison, County Clerk
x	Chris Doty, Director Road Department		David Doyle, Legal Counsel
	Charles Fadeley, Justice of the Peace	x	Janice Garceau, Director Health Services
x	Stephen Gunnels, District Attorney	x	Peter Gutowsky, Director Community Development
x	Holly Harris, Director Behavioral Health		Geoff Hinds, Director Fair & Expo
	Deevy Holcomb, Director Community Justice	x	Heather Kaisner, Director Public Health
	Sean Kirk, Manager Veteran's Services	x	Bill Kuhn, Treasurer
x	Tom Kuhn, Public Health Program Manager		Scot Langton, Assessor
x	Tania Mahood, Director Information Technology	x	Kevin Moriarty, Forester
	Elizabeth Pape, Internal Auditor		Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager

x	Angie Powers, BOCC Administrative Assistant	x	Lee Randall, Director Facilities
x	Kim Riley, Senior Assistant Legal Counsel	x	Robert Tintle, Chief Financial Officer
	Kent van der Kamp, Sheriff		Aaron Wells, Undersheriff
	Heather Herauf, Procurement Manager		Daniel Kieffer, Budget & Financial Planning Analyst
	Cody Smith, Assistant Director Road Department		
Others Present:			
x	Doug Riggs, Director NW Policy Advocates	x	Corey Barber, Outreach Director NW Policy Advocates
x	Emma Innes, Associate NW Policy Advocates		

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair DeBone called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

2. Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Adair reported visiting 42 offices in Salem on Tuesday to advocate for \$2.5 million needed for the Terrebonne Sanitary District project.

3. Updates from NW Policy Advocates

Doug Riggs reported that the framework for the transportation package was introduced yesterday. It is intended to fill the funding gap for operations and maintenance. House Republicans oppose in its current form due to lack of accountability measures for ODOT, but these measures are in progress.

SB 75, the ADU technical fix bill, passed out of committee with a dash 3 amendment which removes any reference to wildfire hazard maps in statute. Amended **SB 83** includes a repeal of the wildfire hazard maps.

At 5 p.m. tonight is the third Ways and Means Committee Road Show at Warm Springs. He anticipates it will be well attended, with good representation from Central Oregon. The committee is receptive to input. Commissioner DeBone summarized the Board's one-page summary of priorities, including but not limited to CORE3, a regional youth psychiatric facility, community corrections funding, criminal restorative justice grants and public health modernization. He plans to attend and provide testimony. Commissioner Chang plans to discuss the wildfire funding package, if he's able to attend the Road Show.

Wednesday of next week is the deadline for bills to get out of most committees then the weekly bill tracker report will be shorter.

4. Review Bill Tracker Report by Department

Heather Kaisner, Public Health Director, spoke in support of **HB 2954**, which appropriates money from the General Fund to the Oregon Health Authority for distribution to local health departments and federally recognized Indian tribes to provide addiction prevention services. She requested the Board's support of her or Tom Kuhn providing verbal testimony at an upcoming hearing, and their consideration of signing onto a letter of support for this bill. The Board expressed their support and directed Kaisner to proceed. Board position: priority 1 / support.

Commissioner Adair asked that Rep. Breese-Iverson's rural housing bill **HB 3928** be added to the bill tracker. She plans to testify at an upcoming hearing. Riggs shared that the Central Oregon delegation has formed a Central Oregon Caucus which meets every two weeks in Salem, and **HB 3928** was discussed at a recent Caucus meeting.

Peter Gutowsky spoke about **SB 1154**, which modifies provisions of law related to declarations of areas of groundwater quality concern and groundwater management areas. South Deschutes County has not yet met the threshold to qualify as a groundwater management area. Once it reaches the threshold, they will be granted a Goal 11 exception and there will be a prioritization of funding to these areas for the repair or replacement of septic systems.

Commissioner Chang said the new category of "groundwater quality concern area" is an opportunity to get ahead of a problem prior to meeting the regulatory threshold. Gutowsky emphasized the magnitude and implications of categorizing properties.

Although the goal of this lengthy bill is admirable, Riggs is cautious of its heavy-handed regulatory proposals. The Board will dive deeper into this bill and testimony for a full understanding of its impact and discuss it further under Other Items on Wednesday.

Hale summarized **SB 1159**, which transfers the office of the Children's Advocate from DHS to the office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Riggs said that this bill creates an additional regulatory enforcement office that is unnecessary and adds more red tape and regulation. What is needed are more *streamlined* regulations that improve child safety. The Board directed Deevy Holcomb to draft a letter in opposition to this bill. Board position: priority 2 / oppose.

Erik Kropp said that **HB 3140** updates recreational immunity statutes and provides that an operator may require people engaging in sport, fitness or recreational activity to release the operator for claims for ordinary negligence. This could impact the Fair and Expo Center and other County-owned lands on which people recreate. Board position: priority 2 / support.

Erik Kropp discussed **HB 3644** which requires the Housing and Community Services Department to establish a statewide shelter program through which regional coordinators are selected to administer funding to shelter providers. This bill would fund the maintenance, expansion or services for existing shelters.

Commissioner Chang said this bill is an opportunity to keep the current shelter capacity open and operational. Commissioner DeBone spoke about the ongoing and growing problem of unsanctioned camping on government owned land.

From a service provider perspective, Janice Garceau said that significant progress has been made in creating a variety of housing options and shelters play a critical role. After 4-5 years of double-digit increases, the unsheltered houselessness numbers remained stagnant over the past year. Commissioner Adair doesn't believe low-barrier shelters to be the answer and advocated for high-barrier shelters which empower individuals instead of enabling them. Commissioner Adair wishes to see the 2025 Point in Time Count numbers for our county, and statewide, noting that Lane County's numbers doubled since last year. Board position: priority 2 / support.

Commissioner DeBone spoke briefly about Recreational Vehicles as rental dwellings, which will be an opportunity for alternate housing options for unhoused individuals.

Chris Doty discussed the Transportation Funding Package framework. It includes maintenance and operations funding, funding for unfinished capital funding projects and adjustments to transit including alternate modes. It's aggressive and includes new funding mechanisms, including a sales tax of 1% applied to vehicle purchases. He noted that many neighboring states have an existing sales tax on vehicle purchases. The package includes no earmarked projects. He spoke to the importance of adequately funding maintenance. Commissioner Chang echoed Doty's comments, stating that this bill includes a robust commitment to operations and maintenance.

Holly Harris shared that she testified yesterday for the CJC budget and IMPACTS. The hearing included much testimony in support for IMPACTS and deflection.

Next Meeting: The next virtual legislative update meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 11 at 7:00 a.m.

Adjourn: Chair DeBone adjourned the meeting at 8:52 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Angie Powers, Administrative Assistant