



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon  
(541) 388-6570

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# BOCC MEETING MINUTES

1:00 PM

**MONDAY October 30, 2023**

Allen Room  
Live Streamed Video

Present were Commissioners Patti Adair and Phil Chang. Also present were County Administrator Nick Lelack; Deputy County Administrator Erik Kropp; Assistant Legal Counsel Kim Riley; and BOCC Executive Assistant Brenda Fritsvold.

This meeting was audio and video recorded and can be accessed at the Deschutes County Meeting Portal website [www.deschutes.org/meetings](http://www.deschutes.org/meetings).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Vice Chair Adair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and noted the excused absence of Commissioner DeBone.

**CITIZEN INPUT:** None

### **AGENDA ITEMS:**

#### **1. Presentation on Deschutes County's Behavioral Health Resource Network**

Holly Harris, Behavioral Health Director, said in 2021, the Legislature approved Senate Bill 755 which provided for the creation of Behavioral Health Resource Networks (BHRNs) across the State. A BHRN is an entity or group of entities which works to increase access to low-barrier addiction services and offer support to people with substance use disorders or harmful substance use. For Central Oregon's BHRN, Deschutes County Health Services collaborates with BestCare Treatment Services, Boulder Care, Healing Reins, Ideal Option, and Rimrock Trails.

Rick Treleaven, BestCare Treatment Services, said BestCare routinely sees people who have a history of 20 overdoses. He said half of maternal deaths are tied to drug use and that babies who are exposed to drugs while in the womb are subject to long-term birth defects. Noting that fentanyl is very cheap, he said BestCare previously averaged one overdose death each year, but 19 have occurred so far this year.

Treleaven explained that the BHRN represents an effort to build a continuum of care. He advised viewing addiction as a chronic disorder such as diabetes and described the needs of addicted persons, as follows: outreach and engagement, harm reduction, on-demand treatment access, and recovery support. He listed the services offered at the Taylor Center—including a needle exchange, employment counseling and housing vouchers—and emphasized that because fentanyl is so addictive, it is not ethical to offer treatment without rapid access to medication-supported recovery.

Deputy County Administrator Erik Kropp asked for an explanation of harm reduction and how this fits in the treatment strategy. Treleaven said BestCare offers medication to those who are not in treatment because otherwise the risk of death is high, and the most basic aim is to prevent deaths by overdose. He said demand for this treatment is growing and referrals into the medication-assisted clinic have tripled in the last year.

Commissioner Adair spoke to the devastating complications suffered by babies born after being exposed to fentanyl in the womb.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Treleaven said the treatment providers in the Central Oregon BHRN were selected following an open process.

Lisa Bradley, Healing Reins, described the mental health services and equine-assisted therapy offered by the organization, stating that horses enhance treatment goals. She shared the objectives of group therapy, reported that 21 persons have been served in conjunction with the BHRN, and said challenges include staffing issues and a lack of referrals.

Sara Love Sanderson, community liaison with Boulder Care, provided an overview of the telehealth and medication-assisted treatment for opioid and alcohol substance use disorders which are offered, noting that funding from Measure 110 covers the cost of care but not of medication. She described plans to distribute phones, increase the community liaison presence for southern Oregon, and work with PacificSource to secure prescription benefits for clients.

Deschutes County Behavioral Health Director Holly Harris described the County's Community Mental Health Program which offers crisis services, homeless outreach and criminal justice diversion. Harris said four peer support specialists were added to the Stabilization Center to support afterhours operations of the BHRN, and another six FTE now supplement the harm reduction and homeless outreach programs.

Heather Daugherty, Ideal Option, provided a synopsis of the organization which offers low-barrier treatment in eleven states. She explained that medication-assisted treatment is available for addiction to fentanyl, heroin, meth and alcohol, and concluded that Ideal Option opened a new clinic in Redmond this past January.

Treleaven added that because the risk of death by overdose multiplies by 27 upon a release from incarceration, it is very important that medication-assisted treatment be offered to those in jail.

Katie Keck, Rimrock Trails outreach director, said Rimrock offers a residential treatment program for persons between the ages of 12 and 17 and additionally offers outpatient counseling in Bend, Redmond and Prineville. She outlined the number of counselors and other staff and provided information on the number of screenings and assessments performed from the fourth quarter of 2022 to the second quarter of 2023.

Treleaven shared that the waitlist for outpatient services at the Taylor Center is up to three months, which is unacceptable—ideally, the wait would be less than 72 hours. He judged that the overdose crisis has not yet stabilized but in fact is still growing.

Commissioner Chang asked if criminalization is needed to motivate people to seek treatment. Treleaven was not sure if re-criminalizing drug possession would have any impact, positive or negative. He said while so-called “carrot” approaches such as outreach efforts and connection with peers in recovery are proven to work, he believed that both stick and carrot approaches are needed. He added that many clients express a great fear of fentanyl, yet still are compelled to use it.

Daugherty added that addicted persons are especially fearful of fentanyl withdrawal.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Treleaven said the BHRN needs substance use disorder treatment for youth, residential treatment for Latino women and pregnant women, and treatment services for older persons who are on Medicare.

## **2. Department Performance Measures Updates for FY '23 Q4 and FY '24 Q1**

Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager, said five departments were selected to provide updates on progress made during FY '23 Q4 and FY '24 Q1 on performance measures which fall under the County Goals and Objectives of Service Delivery and Healthy People.

County Clerk Steve Dennison said one of the goals of the Clerk's Office is to contain the staff cost of elections as measured per 1,000 ballots tallied for countywide elections. The target was \$419 and the actual staff costs for the May 16, 2023, Special District Election were \$251 per 1,000 ballots.

Dennison said the second performance measure involves comparing the number of election staff FTEs to the volume of voter registrations, with the target being between 80-110% of comparable counties. In Deschutes County, there are 52.239 registered voters per FTE; the average of comparable counties is 51.710 registered voters per FTE. Dennison noted that the office had added another FTE in FY 2022 to help address the low staffing level in its Elections section.

Financial Planning & Budget Manager Dan Emerson described the performance measure involving coordinating with the Board of Commissioners to distribute ARPA funds and provide public updates on the investment of ARPA funds. Emerson said as of June 30, 2023, \$38,103,783 of the county's \$38.4 million total ARPA award had been committed to pandemic recovery efforts in the county.

Human Resources Director Kathleen Hinman reported on the performance measure to compare the percentage of directors, managers, and supervisors in the County's workforce in relationship to the community's population percentages for women and minorities. Hinman said both measures trail the community percentages, which staff is addressing by encouraging departments to open up recruitments to external applicants and also by looking at different places to advertise openings.

Clinical Services Manager Anne Kilty and Public Health Educator Erin Hoar reviewed the performance measure to assure that 90% of pregnant women being served by DCHS receive prenatal care beginning in the first trimester; the actual percentage is 96%.

County Forester Kevin Moriarty presented on the performance measure to maintain or increase the number of communities participating in the Firewise program. The number previously was 61; there are now 68 active Firewise communities and another five pending. Moriarty added that the County has awarded grant funding of \$270,000 total in the last year to 53 of the Firewise communities.

**OTHER ITEMS:**

- Commissioner Adair reminded of the graduation of the County College attendees tonight at 6:00 pm.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

**ADJOURN:**

Being no further items to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

DATED this 29<sup>th</sup> Day of Nov. 2023 for the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.

  
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**ANTHONY DEBONE, CHAIR**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**PATTI ADAIR, VICE CHAIR**

  
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**RECORDING SECRETARY**

  
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**PHIL CHANG, COMMISSIONER**