



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

# BOCC MEETING MINUTES

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9:00 AM

**WEDNESDAY December 17, 2025**

Barnes Sawyer Rooms  
Live Streamed Video

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Present were Commissioners Anthony DeBone, Patti Adair and Phil Chang. Also present were County Administrator Nick Lelack; Senior 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:** Chair DeBone called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### CITIZEN INPUT:

- Lynne Connelley said the process used to draft a BOCC district map was extremely partisan, starting with the makeup of the District Map Advisory Committee. On another subject, she said since 2020, the position of Chair of the Board of County Commissioners has been passed back and forth between Commissioner DeBone and Commissioner Adair and advocated for Commissioner Chang to be designated as Chair for 2026.
- Pete Shepherd relayed the history of Lane County's multi-year misadventure with redistricting amid claims of rigged maps and unlawful conflicts of interest. He said when a recent redistricting measure was put to the voters of Lane County, it not only failed by 73.6%, but it failed in every precinct of the county.

- Jim Barnett urged the Board to discard proposed district Map C and not forward it to the voters. Saying that district map-making is controversial and that no map should be proposed until after the Board is expanded to five Commissioners, he encouraged embarking on a different initiative that would focus on ensuring civility and collaboration and gather input from residents before any possible maps are drafted.

#### **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Commissioner Adair reported that she met with Dr. Greg Pereira, the new president of COCC, who shared that the college is expanding its welding and machinery programs. She added that COCC also runs the welding program at Deer Ridge which offers inmates the opportunity to gain workforce training and improve job readiness upon release.

Commissioner Chang announced that he will resume offering "Coffee with a Commissioner" meet-ups in 2026.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA: Before the Board was consideration of the Consent Agenda**

1. Authorization to accept a Quality Incentive Measures payment from Central Oregon Health Council for Public Health
2. Approval of Resolution No. 2025-039 adopting a supplemental budget, increasing or transferring appropriations within the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY 2026) Deschutes County budget

#### ***Convening as the Governing Body for the Countywide Law Enforcement District (District 1)***

3. Approval of Resolution 2025-047 adopting a supplemental budget increasing Fiscal Year 2026 Beginning Working Capital and appropriations within the Countywide Law Enforcement District (District 1) Fund

#### ***Convening as the Governing Body for the Rural Law Enforcement District (District 2)***

4. Approval of Resolution 2025-048 adopting a supplemental budget which increases FY 2026 Beginning Working Capital, and appropriations within the Rural Law Enforcement District (District 2) Fund

#### ***Convening as the Governing Body for the OSU Extension and 4-H Service District***

5. Approval of Resolution 2025-050 adopting a supplemental budget which recognizes additional Fiscal Year 2026 Beginning Working Capital and increases

appropriations within the Deschutes County Extension and 4-H Service District

***Reconvening as the Governing Body of Deschutes County***

6. Approval of third amendment to the lease with Telecare Mental Health Services of Oregon for the Recovery Center at 20370 Poe Shoes Drive in Bend
7. Consideration of Board Signature on letters of appointment, reappointment and thanks for various Special Road Districts
8. Consideration of Board Signature on letter thanking Judy Trego for service on the Deschutes County Budget Committees
9. Consideration of Board Signature on letter appointing Jennifer Hobson-Hinsley for service on the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council Board
10. Approval of the BOCC meeting minutes of November 24 and December 1, 2025

CHANG: Move Board approval of the Consent Agenda as presented

ADAIR: Second

VOTE:                    ADAIR:            Yes  
                          CHANG:            Yes  
                          DEBONE:            Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 – 0

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**ACTION ITEMS:**

**11. Proclamation: 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence**

The Commissioners suggested changes to a draft proclamation celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which will happen in 2026. The Board was in consensus to take no action at this time and bring this back in January.

Commissioner Adair reported that students from Mountain View High School will travel to Washington DC to march on Constitution Avenue at the end of May.

**12. Consideration of first reading of Ordinance No. 2025-020: Sunriver Community Limited District Text Amendment**

Caroline House, Senior Planner, reminded that on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Board had accepted the recommendation of the Hearings Examiner to approve the

requested applicant-initiated text amendment to the Sunriver Community Limited District.

CHANG: Move approval of first reading of Ordinance No. 2025-020 by title only  
ADAIR: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: Yes  
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

Chair DeBone read the title of the ordinance into the record.

**13. Consideration of Document 2025-1096, a Grant Agreement Between Deschutes County and Craig and Lori Gales Living Trust**

Commissioner Chang said processing of the rezone application submitted by Craig and Lori Gales for property they own and desire to use to shelter homeless persons is now estimated to cost \$32,520, which is \$7,520 more than expected.

Craig Gales, property owner, explained that after he and his wife purchased property at 62150 Hamby Road as an investment, they began working with homeless people and others in need. He said over time, many in the community have come to support the Gales's idea of offering safe parking on their property and, perhaps in the future, sustainable housing as well. He noted that many people cannot afford the cost of rent in this area.

Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator, added that the Coordinated Houseless Response Office (CHRO) recommended granting up to \$25,000 towards the cost of the rezone needed to allow a homeless shelter on the Gales property. Per the terms of the proposed grant agreement, up to \$25,000 would be transferred to the County's Community Development Department upon submittal of a rezone application to offset the cost of processing that. If the rezone is successful, a restrictive covenant would be recorded to restrict the use of the property to ensure that public funds spent on a rezone application for private property would result in the public good.

Commissioner Chang said it will be important to be able to offer shelter at the Gales property to homeless persons who are displaced from other areas. He envisioned a planned, managed space with indoor/outdoor areas that could accommodate between 75 and 100 people.

Referring to the big picture of the State land use system, Commissioner DeBone did not support this proposal to spend public money for the government to

review a proposed land use on private property.

Commissioner Adair said the Gales plan is thoughtful, and the Gales have been working on it for a long time.

In response to discussion on the increased cost of the rezone application, Gales asked that the County approve the proposed \$25,000 grant, with the applicant determining the source(s) of the other needed \$7,520.

Will Groves, Planning Manager, explained that the added cost for the rezone application is due to a decision by the Gales to pursue an exception to Goal 3, which will increase the cost of processing the application. Stressing that he cannot advise the property owner whether or not to seek a goal exception, Groves noted advantages and disadvantages to this more robust process that had not been discussed at the time the rezone was estimated to cost \$25,000.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Community Development Director Peter Gutowsky explained why CDD's fee waiver policy does not apply in this case. Commissioner Chang asked that County Legal review CDD's fee waiver policy and determine if a non-profit organization could partner with the Gales on this rezone in a manner that could possibly qualify this application for the fee waiver.

CHANG: Move approval of County Administrator signature on Document 2025-1096, a Grant Agreement Between Deschutes County and Craig and Lori Gales Living Trust

ADAIR: Second

VOTE:                    ADAIR:        Yes  
                          CHANG:        Yes  
                          DEBONE:      Chair votes no. Motion Carried 2 – 1

Commissioner Adair stated her appreciation for the vision and commitment of the Gales to this project.

**14. Consideration of Document 2025-1097, an Agreement Creating a Land Use Restrictive Covenant involving property at 62150 Hamby Road, Bend**

Deputy County Administrator Erik Kropp said in exchange for the grant funds provided by CHRO, the Gales have agreed that, upon a successful application to rezone the property at 62150 Hamby Road from Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) to Multiple Use Agricultural – 10 or Rural Residential – 10, a restrictive covenant shall be recorded limiting the use of the property to provide services to the County's homeless population which include indoor/outdoor shelter, related

services, and/or safe parking. If so recorded, the restrictive covenant would be effective through December 31, 2040.

ADAIR: Move approval of County Administrator signature on Document 2025-1097, an Agreement Creating a Land Use Restrictive Covenant (Gales' Project), which, if effected, would be in place until 2040  
CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: Yes  
DEBONE: Chair votes no. Motion Carried 2 - 1

Commissioner Chang asked to know how many non-resource rezone applications were pursued in the last three to five years as well as the total cost incurred in terms of staff/BOCC/Hearings Officer time when such applications are contested.

**15. Public Hearing: Consideration of Order No 2025-059 transferring jurisdiction of portions of Northwest Way, SW Helmholtz Way, and NW Pershall Way to the City of Redmond**

Cody Smith, County Engineer/Assistant Road Director, shared that the City of Redmond has requested jurisdiction of portions of Northwest Way, SW Helmholtz Way, and NW Pershall Way in conjunction with the annexation of certain properties into its Urban Growth Boundary. Smith shared maps detailing the locations of the requested road segments, which together total approximately 0.69 mile of road.

Commissioner DeBone said in the case of a jurisdictional transfer of roadway, the assuming jurisdiction takes over pavement maintenance, snow plowing, the processing of utility locates in rights-of-way, etc.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Smith said these transfers will not result in any appreciable savings to the County given their very limited total area.

*The public hearing was opened at 9:54 am. There being no one who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 9:54 am.*

CHANG: Move approval of Board Order No. 2025-059 transferring jurisdiction of portions of Northwest Way, SW Helmholtz Way, and NW Pershall Way to the City of Redmond  
ADAIR: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

**16. Public hearing and consideration of Resolution No. 2025-044 adopting a supplemental budget in the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY 2026) Deschutes County Budget**

Dan Kieffer, Senior Budget & Financial Planning Analyst, reminded of a previous Board action to establish a new PERS side account using funds from the PERS Reserve Fund in the amount of \$5 million and accepting a 25% match of \$1.25 million from the State. He further described a proposed adjustment to the Fair & Expo Center budget to reduce revenues and expenses by just over \$1,000,000 as formerly planned self-produced events will not go forward.

*The public hearing was opened at 9:57 am. There being no one who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 9:57 am.*

In response to discussion, Kieffer said Geoff Hinds, the former Fair & Expo Director, had envisioned that the considered self-produced events would break even but not be profitable.

ADAIR: Move approval of Resolution No. 2025-044 increasing some appropriations and decreasing others within the fiscal year 2026 Deschutes County Budget  
CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

**17. Public hearing and consideration of Resolution 2025-046 adopting a supplemental budget and increasing or reducing Fiscal Year 2026 (FY 2026) beginning working capital**

Cam Sparks, Budget & Financial Planning Manager, explained the need to adjust all funds to replace the previous estimates of beginning working capital numbers with actual figures, now that actuals are known. She explained that making these adjustments ensures that no fund appropriates more resources than are available. At the same time, these adjustments also allow for using available resources that were not expended in prior years.

Sparks said because the supplemental budget for the following funds will change budgeted appropriations by more than 10%, a public hearing is required:

- Fund 020 Code Abatement

- Fund 155 Taylor Grazing
- Fund 240 Court Facilities
- Fund 327 Federal Forest Title III

She added that the resolution would also appropriate \$500,000 from the General Fund to the County's emergency reserve fund.

Commissioner Adair acknowledged the excellent news that the Health Benefits Fund currently has a balance of over \$12 million.

Responding to Commissioner Adair regarding revisions to the Courthouse expansion project budget, Sparks said those changes reflect the difference between what the project team anticipated spending by the end of the fiscal year and what was actually spent by that time.

Commissioner DeBone commented that at last Friday's Audit Committee meeting, the Annual Consolidated Financial Report was published.

*The public hearing was opened at 10:06 am. There being no one who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 10:06 am.*

CHANG: Move approval of Resolution No. 2025-046 increasing or reducing Beginning Working Capital and appropriations within the FY 2026 Deschutes County Budget

ADAIR: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

***Convening as the Governing Body for the Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District***

**18. Public hearing and consideration of Resolution 2025-049 adopting a supplemental budget which recognizes additional Fiscal Year 2026 Beginning Working Capital and increased appropriations within the Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District**

Budget & Financial Planning Manager Cam Sparks explained that because the ending fund balance in the Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District Fund was greater than estimated, this resolution would adjust the Fund's budget to increase beginning working capital by \$2,235,495, increase contingency appropriations by \$1,574,533, and increase reserves by \$660,962 within the Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District Fund.

*The public hearing was opened at 10:10 am. There being no one who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 10:10 am.*

ADAIR: Move approval of Resolution 2025-049 recognizing additional Beginning Working Capital and increasing appropriations within the FY 2026 Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District Budget

CHANG: Second

VOTE:                   ADAIR:       Yes  
                          CHANG:      Yes  
                         DEBONE:     Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

**19. Sales Agreement with Russ Bassett Corp. for 9-1-1 dispatch console replacements**

Sara Crosswhite, 9-1-1 Director, presented the proposed agreement to purchase new dispatch consoles from Russ Bassett Corp. Crosswhite said after the District budgeted \$700,000 for console replacements, the vendor submitted a proposal with a total cost of \$538,255.35. She added that Deschutes County will donate four of its removed consoles to Jefferson County.

Commissioner Adair commended Crosswhite on the fact that the District had used its current consoles for 15 years.

Responding to Commissioner DeBone, Crosswhite said the District will soon start training dispatchers at its back-up facility. In addition, all dispatchers will work out of the back-up facility when the consoles are being removed and replaced.

CHANG: Move approval of Document No. 2025-1128, a sales agreement with Russ Bassett Corp. for replacement of the 9-1-1 Service District dispatch consoles at a total price of \$538,355.35

ADAIR: Second

VOTE:                   ADAIR:       Yes  
                          CHANG:      Yes  
                         DEBONE:     Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

*Convening as the Governing Body for the Sunriver Service District*

**20. Public hearing and consideration of Resolution No. 2025-056 adopting a supplemental budget increasing and transferring appropriations in the Sunriver Service District Public Safety Building Fund**

Mindy Holliday, Administrator of the Sunriver Service District (SSD), explained the District's requested adjustments to its Fund 717 Budget to account for funds which were not expended in the previous fiscal year and allow the District to move forward with several deferred projects now that sufficient reserve funds are available.

*The public hearing was opened at 10:17 am. There being no one who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 10:17 am.*

ADAIR: Move approval of Resolution No. 2025-056 increasing and transferring appropriations within the Public Safety Building Fund within the Fiscal Year 2026 Sunriver Service District Budget

CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

***Reconvening as the Governing Body for Deschutes County***

**21. Public Hearing regarding the proposed temporary conveyance of real property commonly known as the Rease Cemetery located at 17799 Paulina Lake Road in La Pine to Deschutes Land Trust, and further authorize accepting said real property from Deschutes Land Trust**

Kristie Bollinger, Property Manager, explained the request from the Deschutes Land Trust that the County assist in the Trust's quest to perfect the title associated with the Rease Cemetery at 17799 Paulina Lake Road in La Pine, which was acquired by the County in 1993 through the property tax foreclosure process. Because the location of physical survey monuments on the ground differs from the legal description of the property, it has been difficult for the Trust to acquire title insurance on property it owns to the north, west and south.

*The public hearing was opened at 10:21 am. There being no one who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 10:21 am.*

CHANG: Move approval of Board Order No. 2025-058

ADAIR: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

**22. Consideration of Resolution 2025-053 adopting a supplemental budget for the Community Justice department and eliminating or reducing FTEs**

Deevy Holcomb, Community Justice Director, spoke to the process undertaken by staff to thoroughly and methodically assess constraints in the Community Justice budget as well as possible reductions.

Trevor Stephens, Community Justice Business Manager, said in addition to reducing the materials and services budget of the Adult Parole & Probation division by \$200,000, Community Justice also proposes to reduce its staff by 11.10 FTE which is about a 13% reduction.

Commissioner Adair expressed concern about the unintended consequences of having fewer staff in Community Justice. Commissioner Chang said the County's General Fund cannot sustain these positions in the face of inadequate State funding.

Stephens added that the department is also requesting authorization to accept a grant that would allow adding one limited duration family functional therapist position.

ADAIR: Move approval of Resolution 2025-053 which decreases appropriations and FTE within the Juvenile Community Justice Fund and the Adult Parole & Probation Fund and adds one 1.00 grant-funded Limited Duration position  
CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: Yes  
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

Agenda item #24 was taken before item #23.

**24. Consideration of Resolution 2025-052 eliminating 10.35 unfilled Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions in the Health Services Department and adopting a supplemental budget**

Health Services Director Holly Harris and Health Services Business Officer Cheryl Smallman presented an overview of significant fiscal pressures being experienced by Health Services as well as strategies developed to maintain core services by evaluating ways to reduce costs through position vacancies and other savings and by maximizing partnerships.

Specifically, Health Services has proposed eliminating select positions to reduce indirect charges and align to actual staffing at an estimated FY 2026 savings of approximately \$1.5 million, consisting of nearly \$1.3 million in direct personnel costs and about \$213,000-\$215,000 in indirect/contingency savings. All 10.35 FTE proposed for elimination are currently vacant positions. In addition, the department will reappropriate \$2 million previously anticipated for a possible facility purchase and instead conduct a comprehensive review of space needs.

Continuing, Harris described financial challenges relating to Medicaid enrollees, noting that some persons who fall off of Medicaid may yet have substantial healthcare needs and still require services for which the County would no longer be reimbursed.

Commissioner Adair spoke to the need to reduce the administrative burden placed on Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and announced that OHA Director Sejal Hathi would like to meet with her and Harris on this issue.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Harris confirmed that Health Services will retain other vacant positions which the department envisions filling.

Responding to Commissioner Adair, Smallman said 39.83 vacancies remain.

Discussion ensued of the impacts on the Behavioral Health and Public Health divisions expected to result from the position reductions.

Responding to Commissioner Chang, Public Health Director Heather Kaisner recounted the decision to close the County's Reproductive Health clinic and the ensuing reliance on community partners to provide reproductive health services.

Harris said in the same way, the County will lean on partners to continue harm reduction services.

Noting that some babies are born addicted to drugs, Commissioner Adair asked what Public Health is doing to instruct pregnant women not to use drugs. Kaisner explained the County's home visit nurse program and other programs which offer outreach and services to pregnant women.

Commissioner DeBone said legislative engagement will be important in the upcoming short session in terms of funding needed for health services.

**CHANG:** Move approval of Resolution 2025-052 to eliminate 10.35 unfilled full-time equivalent positions in the Health Services Department and adjust

appropriations in Funds 270 and 274  
ADAIR: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: Yes  
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

**23. Consideration of Resolution No. 2025-054, reducing 11.00 approved FTEs within the Sheriff's Office**

Regarding the proposal of the Sheriff's Office to reduce FTEs by 11.00, DCSO Business Manager Jeff Price said as of today, DCSO has 271 FTE positions, of which 237.5 are filled.

Sheriff Ty Rupert stated a sustainable funding ceiling near 254 FTE and described operational challenges including shifts when six deputies are on countywide patrol. He reviewed cost-containment measures such as discounts from vendors for paying invoices within ten days and the purchase of single-band instead of dual-band radios for the jail at a significant cost savings of \$30,000.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Sheriff Rupert said while he knew of no prescribed or advised ratio of FTE per capita, DCSO's staffing levels must accommodate absences due to vacation, illness, training, or the need to testify at a criminal trial. He spoke to efforts to reduce overtime costs and pledged that service to the community will not be reduced.

ADAIR: Move approval of Resolution No. 2025-054 reducing 11.00 approved FTEs within the Sheriff's Office budget  
CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: Yes  
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

Nick Lelack, County Administrator, praised County leadership for making the difficult decisions to eliminate 27.95 positions. Noting that such decisions can place additional burdens on existing staff and require finding efficiencies, he said although difficult, these kinds of good decisions benefit the organization and community.

*A break was announced at 11:27 am. The meeting resumed at 11:35 am.*

Agenda items #29 and #30 were taken before the lunch recess.

## **29. Treasury Report for November 2025**

Bill Kuhn, County Treasurer, presented the Treasury Report for November 2025.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Kuhn said the County's portfolio is set up very well for an economic slowdown, particularly due to a strong three-year investment ladder and the limited exposure to callable investments.

## **30. Finance Report for November 2025**

Robert Tintle, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Finance Report for November 2025.

Responding to Commissioner DeBone, Tintle confirmed that the County's accounts payable system recognizes payment arrangements which offer a discount for paying invoices within ten days of those being issued. Tintle added that paying within ten days can be challenging depending on how the invoice is sent and processed. In cases where a discount is offered, desired and expected, staff must be mindful of the timing and process approvals as termed.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Tintle said the federal Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program has been re-authorized by Congress. It is not yet known whether the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program will be re-authorized.

*A lunch recess was announced at 12:14 pm. The meeting reconvened at 1:00 pm.*

## **25. Presentation by Limitless Solutions & NorthRenew Energy for a potential solar project on County-owned property north of Ft. Thompson Lane, Bend**

Property Manager Kristie Bollinger introduced Joseph Mazone of Limitless Solutions and Mark Green of NorthRenew Energy who presented a concept for a utility-scale solar project of approximately 115 MW on roughly 529 acres of County-owned property north of Fort Thompson Lane outside of Bend's Urban Growth Boundary.

Mazone and Green outlined environmental due diligence, viewshed analysis, screening options, proximity to existing transmission lines, and a prospective project timeline with construction targeted for 2029, subject to permitting and community input.

Mazone listed anticipated benefits of the project, including local production of energy to meet new demand.

Discussion ensued of possible requests for naturally-landscaped setbacks from adjacent properties and whether those would be practical or accommodated, especially larger setbacks having no discernible impact on the visibility of the project from other areas. Discussion also ensued of the property's rare, close proximity to transmission lines and how this renders the proposal far more economically viable than others.

In response to Commissioner Chang, Planning Manager Will Groves described the process for applying for a conditional use permit and spoke to the requirement that projects so permitted be compatible with the surrounding area.

Commissioner Adair supported proceeding with gathering public feedback before any decisions are made. Referring to a solar farm along Highway 126, she objected that some solar farm operators do not take initiative to screen their projects.

Referring to prior community pushback on the proposal to use this property as a campground, Commissioner Chang advised that the community outreach make clear that this property will not remain open space in perpetuity. Commissioner Adair said conducting public outreach door-to-door enables sharing information in a more personal way.

The Board directed staff to proceed with community engagement via a listening session and to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding for Board consideration with the understanding that no lease will be entered into or negotiated before community outreach is conducted.

## **26. FY 2027 Budget Development – Limited Growth Strategies**

Budget Manager Cam Sparks and Chief Financial Officer Robert Tintle requested Board direction on General Fund expenditure growth, possible departmental special budget requests, and Internal Service Fund charges. Staff presented 4%, 5%, and 6% General Fund expenditure growth alternatives and an option to grant up to \$350,000 in departmental special requests, noting that updated modeling for Phase II of the Wage Equity Project reduces forecasted General Fund sustainability under a 5% limited growth scenario to seven years.

ADAIR: Move to direct that General Fund expenditure growth be limited to 4% in FY 2027

CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

With regard to whether to allow departments to submit special requests, Commissioner Chang noted the possibility that the State may allocate funding to community justice programs, public health modernization efforts, or other needs.

County Administrator Nick Lelack said any special requests would be submitted after the legislative session concludes.

ADAIR: Move to allow consideration of Special Requests for General Fund departments and departments receiving General Fund transfers for a combined total of up to \$350,000

CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

DEBONE: Move to cap Internal Service Fund charges at 8% with exceptions authorized by the Budget Officer

ADAIR: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes

CHANG: Yes

DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

## **27. Wage Equity Project Update: Phase II (Market Study for AFSCME and Non-Represented Positions)**

Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator, introduced the results of the study undertaken for Phase II of the County's Wage Equity Project, the goal of which is to ensure that compensation for AFSCME and non-represented positions is aligned with the County's compensation philosophy.

Susan DeJoode, Human Resources Director, said most of these positions were last analyzed in 2017. The recent survey of 254 classifications was completed using six comparables, with the result that 784 positions (519 AFSCME and 265 non-represented) are recommended for compensation adjustments. The Steering Committee recommended that the Board approve the identified adjustments for impacted classifications effective June 22, 2026.

Budget & Financial Planning Manager Cam Sparks said the total annual impact of nearly \$7.1 million has been included in the long-term forecast model of the General Fund.

Health Services Director Holly Harris and Community Development Director Peter Gutowsky shared their support for the adjustments. Commissioner Adair hoped that these adjustments would help the County retain excellent staff.

CHANG: Move approval of an implementation plan for Phase II of the County's Wage Equity Project as recommended by the project steering committee, with identified adjustments for impacted classifications having an effective date of June 22, 2026

ADAIR: Second

VOTE:                    ADAIR:        Yes  
                          CHANG:        Yes  
                          DEBONE:      Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

**28. Proposed Policy Updates: HR-5: Non-Wage and Salary Compensation and HR-17: Payroll Deductions for Health Club Membership Dues**

Deputy County Administrator Whitney Hale explained proposed updates to HR-5, which were driven by a recent opinion from the Oregon Ethics Commission, as well as the recommendation to sunset Policy HR-17 which is no longer relevant.

ADAIR: Move approval of County Administrator signature on proposed updates to HR-5 and move to sunset policy HR-17: Payroll Deductions for Health Club Membership Dues

CHANG: Second

VOTE:                    ADAIR:        Yes  
                          CHANG:        Yes  
                          DEBONE:      Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

**31. Board selection of Chair and Vice Chair for 2026**

Commissioner Chang said that Commissioners DeBone and Adair have denied him his rotation as Board Chair in several previous years.

Commissioner Adair observed that the world is very divided and said that every day, she hopes that people will reach across divides and in doing so end divisions.

ADAIR: Move that Commissioner Chang serve as Chair of the Board in 2026  
CHANG: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: Yes  
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

ADAIR: Move that Commissioner DeBone serve as Vice Chair of the Board in 2026  
DEBONE: Second

VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: Yes  
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 3 - 0

#### **OTHER ITEMS:**

- Commissioner DeBone reported on last Tuesday's meeting of the Sunriver-La Pine Economic Development Board.
- Commissioners DeBone and Chang met with leaders of Oregon's Military Department, including Brigadier General Alan Gronewold. Commissioner Chang noted that one item discussed was the possible consolidation of National Guard armories in the future.
- Commissioner DeBone attended last Thursday's Oregon Living With Fire meeting.
- Commissioner DeBone said at last week's Fair Board meeting was David Bishop's final meeting as a Board member after having served in that capacity for 25 years.
- Commissioner DeBone noted the annual Central Oregon Legislative Summit was this past Monday.
- Commissioner Chang reported on Monday's Regional Housing Council meeting, sharing that the group is working to identify its legislative advocacy agenda for the upcoming short session and saying he can advocate for those as authorized by the BOCC on its behalf or on his own.
- Commissioner Adair said the Festival of Trees event was very well-attended.
- Commissioner Adair said when she met with Dr. Greg Pereira, the new president of COCC, he relayed efforts to change the institution's name to "Central Oregon College."

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 3:12 pm, the Board *convened as the Governing Body for the Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District* and entered Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2) (d) Labor Negotiations.

The Board exited Executive Session at 3:28 pm and directed staff to proceed as discussed.

At 3:28 pm, the Board reconvened as the Governing Body for Deschutes County and entered Executive Session under ORS 192.660 (2) (e) Real Property Negotiations.

The Board exited Executive Session at 3:41 pm and directed staff to proceed as discussed.

**ADJOURN:**

Being no further items to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:41 pm.

DATED this 7<sup>th</sup> day of January 2026 for the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.

  
ANTHONY DEBONE, CHAIR

**ATTEST:**

Brenda Tritton  
RECORDING SECRETARY

Patti Adair  
PATTI ADAIR, VICE CHAIR

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PHIL CHANG, COMMISSIONER