



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

# BOCC MEETING MINUTES

1:00 PM

**MONDAY February 24, 2025**

Allen Room  
Live Streamed Video

Present were Commissioners Anthony DeBone, Patti Adair and Phil Chang. Also present were Nick Lelack, County Administrator; Kim Riley, Senior Assistant County Counsel; and Brenda Fritsvold, BOCC Executive Assistant.

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 1:00 pm.

### **CITIZEN INPUT:**

- Tina Colleen Smith stated that she has experienced some medical issues and was homeless for three years. Although she is currently housed at the Old Mill shelter, she was concerned with the significant amount of drug use occurring at this facility as well as on public transit in the area.

### **AGENDA ITEMS:**

#### **1. Pacific Power Future Transmission Line Project Update**

Derik Vowels, Senior Project Manager with Power Engineers, shared that Pacific Power is planning for a 500kV transmission line which is expected to traverse properties in Deschutes County. The proposal is for approximately 180 miles of

new high-voltage transmission line connecting existing and proposed substations in a five-county area (Deschutes, Crook, Klamath, Lake, and Harney).

John Aniello, Pacific Power and Light Project Manager, said while the exact route is not yet known, the transmission line would most likely cross federal lands, state land, and privately owned lands. The route is expected to be determined soon, followed by the permitting process which will include an Environmental Impact Statement. Aniello referenced a map and said a new transmission line is needed to meet current peak load demands and estimated future demands.

In response to Commissioner Adair, Aniello said this project will not deliver power to any community which is not currently served.

Vowels reviewed the timeline of the routing study, which includes consideration of alternate routes. Aniello referred to topographical considerations such as floodplains and narrated a graph showing the various evaluation factors being assessed.

Vowels and Aniello described the potential routes identified for public input and said four open houses have been scheduled in March to take comments. Ideally, permitting would be done from 2025 to 2028 with construction starting in 2029 and being completed in 2031.

Responding to Commissioner Adair, Aniello said this project will not directly impact the Lakeview area.

Commissioner Chang asked if the new line would be able to intake power from renewable power units such as wind generation or solar. Aniello said while it may be possible to connect these at substations, whether this is done would depend in part on the cost of the equipment.

Discussion ensued of the pros and cons of co-locating lines in proximity and the general practice to not place lines less than 250 feet apart.

## **2. Draft Presentation for Annual State of South Deschutes County Breakfast**

Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager, reviewed changes to the draft presentation made at the Board's direction.

## **3. Treasury Report for January 2025**

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

#### **4. Finance Report for January 2025**

Robert Tintle, Chief Financial Officer, and Jana Cain, Controller, presented the Finance Report for January 2025. In addition, Tintle reviewed deadlines and noted planned meetings in preparation for the FY2026 budget process.

With regard to the revenues and expenditures of the Sheriff's Office, Adair said these appear headed in the right direction, in particular expenditures connected to the ranch.

Commissioner Adair noted that the Solid Waste Department is currently down six FTE, which is two more FTE than reported last month. Tim Brownell, Solid Waste Director, said three new staff were just hired and the department is in the process of filling another position.

In response to Tintle, Brownell said the department's revenue in January was almost 21% above projections. Tintle said the department's revenues are expected to be about \$175,000 above ending fund balance at the end of this fiscal year.

#### **5. Wildfire Mapping Discussion**

With regard to the State's Wildfire Hazard Map, Commissioner DeBone spoke to the opportunity to submit a bulk appeal on behalf of all properties in Deschutes County sited within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and classified as high hazard for wildfire.

In response to Commissioner Chang, County Counsel Dave Doyle said it appears that local governments may appeal classifications on behalf of property owners, although it is unknown what kind of proof may be required. He stressed that property owners should not rely on the filing of an appeal by the County and should individually file an appeal for their properties. He added that the Wildfire Hazard Map may be withdrawn by the State.

Noting that widespread pushback against Measure 110 resulted in its repeal, Commissioner Adair said the message sent with a bulk appeal of the wildfire hazard classifications would be important and may have the desired impact. She noted the deadline of March 7<sup>th</sup> for appeals to be filed.

Commissioner DeBone spoke to preserving appeal rights in this matter and said some people struggle with possibly setting themselves up for a violation if they don't respond to the notice issued by the State which involves how they manage their private property.

Commissioner Adair said it is concerning that some people have had trouble getting property insurance coverage, even with the number of Firewise communities across the county. She said the Wildfire Hazard Map is questionable as far as which properties are rated as moderate and which are high.

Commissioner Chang said focusing on the map and appealing classifications does not help people protect their homes. He advocated for people to create defensible space, saying that this would actually make a difference as far as protecting against fire. He further supported providing clear guidance as to which property owners are subject to requirements and which are not, saying this necessitates the development of some kind of map.

Commissioner DeBone referred to hard work done to develop resiliency to wildfire and asked if people should be fined if they do not reduce fuels on their property, or whether private property rights should prevail.

Commissioner Chang said some people will not do the necessary work unless required. He distributed information from a resident who shared that their two properties are both rated as moderate hazard, yet the insurance premium for one of them was raised by 39% and the other by just 10%. Commissioner Chang stressed that insurance companies have their own risk models and do not base premium amounts on the State's Wildfire Hazard Map.

Commissioner DeBone supported moving forward with submitting a bulk appeal. Commissioner Adair agreed with the need to help protect private property rights and said more than 100 individual property owners have already filed an appeal.

DEBONE: Move to submit an appeal of the classification of 21,258 tax lots in Deschutes County as WUI/high hazard on the State's Wildfire Hazard Map  
ADAIR: Second  
VOTE: ADAIR: Yes  
CHANG: No  
DEBONE: Chair votes yes. Motion Carried 2 - 1

Commissioner DeBone stated his support for a vibrant discussion in the Legislature on this issue.

Commissioner Chang objected to attempts to repeal SB 762, which requires power utility companies to shut off power during high winds, offers assistance to property owners to aid in helping to establish defensible space, boosts firefighting capacity, and provides other public benefits.

Commissioner DeBone said public investment is needed in logging activities as these help protect against wildfire events.

Commissioner Adair referred to a letter received by the Board from four persons retired from the US Forest Service who own property in the vicinity of Sisters, noting they had written to urge that the County appeal the Wildfire Hazard Map.

**OTHER ITEMS:** None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 2:54 pm, the Board entered executive session under ORS 192.660 (2) (e) Real Property Negotiations.

At 3:14 pm, the executive session concluded and the public was invited to return to the room. The Board then directed staff to proceed as discussed during the executive session.

**ADJOURN:**

Being no further items to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:14 pm.

DATED this 16<sup>th</sup> day of April 2025 for the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.

  
ANTHONY DEBONE, CHAIR

**ATTEST:**

  
RECORDING SECRETARY

  
PATTI ADAIR, VICE CHAIR

  
PHIL CHANG, COMMISSIONER