

MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES
February 25, 2026

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Court was called to order by Judge Dan Joyce at 9:00 a.m. with Commissioner Ron Jacobs and Commissioner Jim Mendiola present. Judge Joyce led the Pledge of Allegiance. Members of the media, public and staff had the opportunity to join the meeting electronically or in person. Present in the meeting room were Administrative Officer Lorinda DuBois and Economic and Community Development Coordinator Taylor Rembowski. Notice of the meeting was posted on the County website, Courthouse bulletin board, and emailed to the Argus Observer and those persons who have requested notice. The agenda is recorded as instrument # 2026-0701

STIF PLAN AMENDMENT

Malheur Council on Aging & Community Services (MCOA&CS) Transportation Manager Brittany White met with the Court. Ms. White requested approval of an amendment to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Plan. The proposed amendment reallocates prior biennium rollover reserve funds from the 2023-2025 biennium into existing eligible projects within the 2025-2027 STIF Plan as follows:

\$88,486 – Contractor staffing

\$100,000 – Veteran Transportation Program

\$89,468 – MCOA operations (senior and disabled transportation)

\$166,593 – Purchase of additional transit vehicles

\$444,547 TOTAL allocation in prior biennium rollover funds

The STIF Advisory Committee has approved the proposed amendment of the STIF Plan. Ms. White answered questions from the Court members. Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve the amendment to the STIF Plan. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The amendment will be submitted to ODOT (Department of Transportation) for approval. See instrument # 2026-0702

Vote: RJ/JM/DJ in favor. Approved.

CROSSING PERMITS

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Crossing Permit #05-26 to Idaho Power for installation of a pole and overhead bank of transformers on Clark Blvd. #857; Permit #06-26 to Idaho Power to upgrade an existing pole and bank of overhead transformers on King Avenue #866; Permit #07-26 to Rally Networks to bury fiber optic communications cable on Fog Road #1029; and Permit #08-26 to Rally Networks to bury fiber optic communications cable on Ripple Road #949. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The original permits will be kept on file at the Road Department.

Vote: RJ/JM/DJ in favor. Approved.

COURT MINUTES

Commissioner Mendiola moved to approve Court Minutes of February 18, 2026 as written. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Vote: JM/RJ/DJ in favor. Approved.

LETTER OF SUPPORT – INVASIVE SPECIES CHECKPOINT

Mr. Rembowski requested a letter of support for Community Initiated Project (CIP) funding to establish an invasive species checkpoint along Lake Owyhee Road. Commissioner Jacobs moved to sign a letter of support for Community Initiated Project (CIP) funding as requested. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. ODFW (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) will setup a temporary checkpoint at the same location as last year. A permanent, staffed checkpoint along this road would provide a consistent point of inspection and decontamination for watercraft entering the lake. See instrument #2026-0703

Vote: RJ/JM/DJ in favor. Approved.

COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE

Commissioner Jacobs moved to appoint Lance King to the Malheur County Budget Committee. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. King fills the position previously vacated by Bob Skinner.

Vote: RJ/JM/DJ in favor. Approved.

LEASE AMENDMENT – ERLEBACH

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Seventh Amendment to Lease Agreement with Bruce and Teresa Erlebach. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The lease agreement is for the Justice Court facility. See instrument # 2026-0704

Vote: RJ/JM/DJ in favor. Approved.

ASD ADVISORY BOARD

Commissioner Mendiola moved to appoint Kathy Ross to the Ambulance Service District (ASD) Advisory Board as the Dispatch Center representative. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Vote: JM/RJ/DJ in favor. Approved.

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET RESOLUTION

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Supplemental Budget Resolution R26-10: In the Matter of Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Supplemental Budget by Resolution Under Local Budget Law ORS 294.471. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The purpose of the supplemental budget is to allocate additional gas tax apportionment funds that are transferred

to the Major Bridge Fund that were not anticipated when the budget was adopted; these funds go to contractual costs for major bridges. See instrument # 2026-0705

Vote: RJ/JM/DJ in favor. Approved.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Jacobs noted he attended the recent Malheur Rangeland Partnership team meeting. The partners are currently working on fire rehabilitation efforts to include funding opportunities for fencing and reseeded.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Judge Joyce asked for comments from the public. Mark Bennett spoke with the Court about the potential transfer of the Idaho Power territory in Oregon to Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative (OTEC). Mr. Bennett encouraged the Court to form a workgroup to explore the sale and start a dialogue with Idaho Power and OTEC. Mr. Bennett also offered to participate and assist the Court with the matter. Commissioner Jacobs affirmed Mr. Bennett's comments and suggestions and noted that a member of the County Court should take the lead in the matter.

COURT ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jacobs moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Vote: RJ/JM/DJ in favor. Approved.

Clerks Note: Letter to Oregon Health Authority (OHA) requesting that OHA contract directly with Lifeways for community mental health services recorded as instrument # 2026-0749