

## **MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES**

**August 20, 2025**

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. 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 # 2025-2780

### **BLM – UPDATE**

Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Acting Malheur Field Manager Dustin Wharton met with the Court. A public meeting was held by BLM last night regarding the Grassy Mountain mine project draft EIS (Environmental Impact Statement); approximately 25 persons attended in-person with another 25-30 attending on-line. The EIS is in the public comment period (closes September 8) and the final EIS is scheduled to publish in December. A Record of Decision (ROD) will then be published and there will be an appeal period. Depending on the decision, the project will either move forward or not.

The HiTech/Jindalee lithium exploration plan of operation environmental assessment is in progress. This project is in the McDermitt Caldera. The public comment period has closed; over 6,000 comments were received. The draft environmental assessment will be revised based on comments and the applicant's current plan of operation; the target date for publication of the environmental assessment and decision record is November 21, 2025.

The Louse Canyon EIS is in progress. The final EIS is scheduled to be published in October. This project will renew six grazing permits and includes some grazing improvements and sage grouse restoration work.

The Air Force has paused the Over the Horizon project due to staffing. BLM is a cooperating agency in the project. The project would encompass property in Malheur county near Whitehorse Ranch Road and property near Christmas Valley.

ESR plans are in place for fires experienced this season (some fire areas will be addressed through the grazing aspect rather than an ESR).

### **COURT MINUTES**

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Court Minutes of August 13, 2025 as written. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### **ORDER DESIGNATING NEWSPAPER**

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Order No. GO-07-25: In the Matter of the Designation of a Newspaper for the Publication of the 2025 Malheur County Tax Foreclosure List. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The Argus Observer is designated as the newspaper for publication of the list. See instrument # 2025-2781

### **FARMLAND LEASE – FARMERS**

Commissioner Jacobs moved that the County terminate the farmland lease with Farmers (Charles, James, and Margaret Farmer; original lease is recorded as instrument # 2020-0142) as the County is in negotiations with JTH, LLC (Limited Liability Company) to purchase the Arcadia Industrial Park. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### **PUBLIC HEARING – SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET**

Judge Joyce opened the public hearing for consideration of Resolution R25-26. The public hearing and supplemental budget were necessary in order to allocate funds from Bureau of Reclamation for a Recreation Resources Management Grant in the Marine & Park budget that were not anticipated when the budget was adopted – these funds are to be used to upgrade the Bully Creek Park irrigation system.

Additionally, the supplemental budget allocates funds from Bureau of Land Management for geothermal leases that were not anticipated when the budget was adopted – a portion of the funds will be used for building maintenance (for the Vale City Hall building) and the water system at Bully Creek Park; the balance will go into the General Fund Contingency.

There were no public comments. Judge Joyce closed the hearing. Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve Resolution R25-26: In the Matter of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Supplemental Budget by Resolution Under Local Budget Law ORS (Oregon Revised Statutes) 294.471. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. See instrument # 2025-2782

### **LYTLE BOULEVARD LANDFILL**

Environmental Health Director Evan Magner met with the Court regarding Lytle Boulevard Landfill. The gate on the fence at the landfill is in poor condition and not operating correctly. Three fencing companies were contacted regarding the gate/fence. Two companies proposed removal of the existing gate and replacement with a cantilever gate. The third company proposed repairs to the fence and gate. Consensus was to repair the gate at this time. Replacement of the gate can be budgeted for over the next several years.

The scale and scale house at the landfill need to be relocated and replaced. This project was discussed in budget meetings in April and is included in the budget as an LATCF (Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund) project. Quotes for the scale house are being obtained.

The recycling program at the landfill may need to be expanded and a recycling receptacle may be placed at the landfill. Oregon's recycling laws are changing. Mr. Magner is in contact with DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) and working to get the landfill up-to-date.

The power project is nearly complete; the meter box still needs installed.

The air conditioner in the scale house is not working; Mr. Magner will replace it.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Judge Joyce asked for comments from the public; no public comments were received.

### **ANNUAL JAIL INSPECTION**

The Court members conducted the annual jail inspection. See instrument # 2025-2785

### **COURT ADJOURNMENT**

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