

MALHEUR COUNTY COURT MINUTES
November 19, 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 was Administrative Officer Lorinda DuBois, Economic and Community Development Coordinator Taylor Rembowski, Planning Manager Kelsie Haueter and Surveyor Derrick McKrola. 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 # 2025-3708

GOODFELLOW BUILDING – WINDOW IN ASD OFFICE

Maintenance Supervisor Don Dalton met with the Court. Mr. Dalton obtained a quote for installation of a window and a door window in the ASD (Ambulance Service District) Coordinator's office. Both the window and door window will be approximately \$8,200 (\$1,000 for a 22x28 door window and \$7,200 for a 4x3 window in the wall). The door currently has a slit window in it (and the door can be left open); and the wall window would view into the hallway. The Court took the matter under advisement.

REGIONAL PLANNER PROGRAM

Mr. Rembowski discussed an opportunity to participate in a pilot program with the Rural Engagement and Vitality (REV) Center and GEODC (Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation) for a regional planner and answered various questions from the Court and those present in the room. Present electronically for the discussion were Grace Donovan with REV and Dawn Hert with Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). The regional planner would assist participating entities in Eastern Oregon with land use planning matters. The pilot program area will include Malheur County, Harney County, and the Burns-Paiute Tribe with a three-year timeline and financial commitment from the participating entities. Approximately \$300,000 is needed for the position for the three-year period and recruitment for the position will begin after the financial need is secured. (A job description has been prepared.) Mr. Rembowski said that there is buy-in from the Burns-Paiute Tribe and the City of Vale; discussing with the City of Nyssa and the City of Adrian; and the Eastern Oregon Border Board has granted \$100,000 to the program. It is hoped that after the three-year effort there will be proven success and legislative support to fund the program will be sought. Mr. Rembowski requested the County consider funding the position and suggested that funding in the technical assistance line-item in the Economic Development budget or the contracted services line-item in the Planning and Zoning budget could be used.

The services of the regional planner will only be available to those cities/counties/tribe that contribute funding to the program; and the amount of funding contributed will correspond to the hours of service received. Burns-Paiute Tribe has committed \$20,000. The City of Ontario has

indicated it does not have a need to participate in the program. Possible grant funding opportunities through the Ford Foundation and Business Oregon are also being sought.

Rural Engagement and Vitality (REV) Center Executive Director Grace Donovan visited with the Court. The REV Center is a nonprofit based in La Grande and serves 10 Eastern Oregon counties. The contract for the regional planner would be held by the REV Center. Land use planning has been a consistent difficulty for many small rural communities.

DLCD Eastern Oregon Regional Representative Dawn Hert expressed support for the program and confirmed that there is a deficit in planning capacity in the region. Ms. Hert suggested this position could potentially assist communities with getting their development codes up-to-date.

The Court took the request for financial support for the regional planner under advisement.

COURT MINUTES

Commissioner Mendiola moved to approve Court Minutes of November 12, 2025 as written. Commissioner Jacobs seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

UPDATED COUNTY POLICY 311 – RETIREMENT/EMPLOYMENT OF PERS RETIREES

Commissioner Jacobs moved to approve updated County Policy 311 – Retirement/Employment of PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) Retirees. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Language in paragraph 5 of the policy regarding sick leave is revised. See instrument # 2025-3709

AMENDMENT – LETTER OF INTENT

Commissioner Jacobs moved to authorize Judge Joyce to sign an amendment to the Addendum to Binding Letter of Intent (LOI) between Malheur County, Malheur County Development Corporation (MCDC), and JTH LLC (Jaguar Transport Holdings Inc) extending the date to execute a purchase and sale agreement or lease purchase agreement to January 30, 2026. Commissioner Mendiola seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

CANCELATION OF COURT MEETINGS

The Court will not meet on November 26, December 24, or December 31, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

COURT ADJOURNMENT

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

** Oregon Department of Emergency Management Statewide Preparedness and Incident Response Equipment Grant Agreement Number SP25-165 for a sandbagging trailer is recorded as instrument # 2025-3828