

Crook County Board of County Commissioners Minutes of May 27, 2026, Work Session

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of County Commissioners met in a Work Session on May 27, 2026, at 9:00 AM in the Administration Conference Room, located at 203 NE Court Street, Prineville, OR 97754.

Work Session Agenda

Board Members Present: Seth Crawford, Susan Hermreck, Brian Barney

Board Members Absent:

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: County Manager Will Van Vactor; Executive Assistant Breyanna Cupp; County Counsel Eric Blaine; Legal Assistant Alex Solterbeck; Finance Director Christina Haron; Community Development Director John Eisler; Building Official Randy Davis; Health and Human Services Director Katie Plumb; Assessment Technician Elsie Ray; Public Health Modernization Manager Stephanie O'Neal; Undersheriff Bill Elliott; Fairgrounds Manager Casey Daly; Natural Resources Manager Tim Deboodt; Assessor Jon Soliz; Library Manager Kim Bales; Emergency Manager AJ Crawford; and members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 09:00 AM.

Public Comment

None

Discussion

1. Recommendation for the Appointment of Alexis Webb to the Library Board of Trustees

Requester:

Kim Bales, Library Manager

Presenter(s):

Kim Bales, Library Manager

Details: Library Manager Kim Bales attended the Work Session to present a recommendation for the appointment of Alexis Webb to the Library Board of Trustees. After reviewing applications and considering the current needs of the board, the trustees unanimously supported Webb's appointment. Kim stated that Webb demonstrates a strong commitment to public service, an understanding of the community, and an interest in supporting the library's mission and long-term success. Alexis is recommended to fill the remainder of a vacated term ending June 30, 2028.

Commissioners expressed appreciation that multiple applications were received for the position. Kim also noted there is an additional upcoming board vacancy, with applications currently being accepted through June 11. The current term for that position expires June 30. Commissioners indicated the appointment recommendation

would be placed on a future consent agenda.

2. Consider Amendment 8 to the Oregon Health Authority 2025-2027 Intergovernmental Agreement

Requester:

Camille Day, Health and Human Services Deputy Director

Presenter(s):

Katie Plumb, Health and Human Services Director

Details: Health and Human Services Director Katie Plumb attended the Work Session to present an agreement amendment with the Oregon Health Authority related to the Rural Health Transformation Program through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The funding is a designated allocation specifically for local public health authorities and is separate from the statewide competitive grant process. Crook County is proposed to receive approximately \$204,031 through the program.

Katie explained that although the funding became available in December, delays in the allocation process postponed execution of the contract. The funds are included in the County's FY 2027 budget proposal, with expenditures planned to begin July 1 and continue through June 30, 2027, although flexibility exists to spend beyond that timeframe if necessary.

The proposed project focuses on prevention efforts, including chronic disease prevention, substance use prevention, transportation assistance, health navigation services, and improving connections to existing community resources. Katie emphasized that the County does not intend to create new programs or hire additional staff, but instead will leverage existing staff and Community Health Advisory Council priorities to improve referral pathways and access to services.

Additional focus areas include identifying gaps in specialty care access, advocating for expanded local healthcare services, assisting residents with navigating transportation and assistance programs, and dedicating staff support for veteran-related services and needs assessments.

Commissioners expressed appreciation for the planning and indicated the amendment would be placed on the consent agenda for next week.

3. Community Development Monthly Update for April 2026

Requester:

John Eisler, Community Development Director

Presenter(s):

John Eisler, Community Development Director

Randy Davis, Building Official

Details: Building Official Randy Davis provided an update on current building activity within the County. Randy reported that permit activity has remained steady over the past three years, with 13 new houses permitted last month, 156 total permits issued during the reporting period, approximately 621 active permits currently being managed, and nearly 1,000 inspections conducted monthly. Randy noted there are no major construction projects currently underway, although there is discussion of a potential future large-scale project.

Randy also informed Commissioners about recent actions by Deschutes County, the City of Bend, and other nearby jurisdictions related to adoption of Residential Code R327, which addresses wildfire hardening requirements for homes located in designated wildfire hazard areas. He explained that the code includes requirements related to fire-resistant materials, vents, decks, siding, and other construction standards intended to reduce wildfire risk. Randy stated that Crook County is not required to adopt the code provisions and indicated that previous Board direction has been to avoid adding additional regulatory requirements for homeowners and builders. Commissioners discussed concerns regarding increased construction costs, implementation challenges, and the effectiveness of the requirements.

Additionally, Randy discussed upcoming statewide changes to snow load requirements resulting from adoption of a new national model standard. He explained that some areas within Crook County may see significant increases in required snow load design standards, particularly affecting commercial construction immediately and residential construction in a future code cycle. Randy noted the changes could increase construction costs due to additional structural requirements such as larger trusses and framing components. Commissioners and Randy discussed the broader impact of increasing building regulations and costs on housing affordability.

Community Development Director John Eisler provided an update on activity within the department's four divisions, noting that workloads remain steady and generally consistent with the previous two years. John reported that planning activity increased slightly from the prior year, with 37 applications received in April compared to 29 during the same period last year, although year-to-date totals remain somewhat lower overall.

John updated Commissioners on several ongoing land use applications and projects, including the upcoming conditional use permit hearing for the Hegele Mine application. He also reported that the Planning Commission approved the Hidden Canyon application, with the written decision expected to be finalized at the Commission's first meeting in June. During discussion, John noted there was limited public comment regarding Hidden Canyon, including concerns expressed about continued growth and development in the area, though no issues were identified that directly impacted the application under review.

Additional updates included scheduling efforts for the Knife River hearings officer proceedings and a conditional use permit application related to the GP LLC aggregate

operation, which is anticipated to be scheduled in June. John also reported that a new cell tower application had been submitted but was currently incomplete.

John informed Commissioners that the County had received correspondence from the Department of Land Conservation and Development regarding the Goal 5 grant. Staff are currently reviewing one remaining contract provision, but otherwise preparations are underway to begin the project in the coming weeks.

Discussion also included updates related to the City's Economic Opportunities Analysis hearing and ongoing compliance concerns involving a hemp processing facility and odor complaints. John explained that enforcement authority depends on local code provisions and permit conditions associated with the operation.

John concluded with updates on onsite permitting and code enforcement activity, noting onsite permit numbers remain consistent with prior years. Code enforcement activity was lower during April due in part to staff vacation. Commissioners thanked John for the departmental update.

Manager Report

None

Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Hermreck provided an update regarding ongoing holiday decoration and beautification planning for the Courthouse and surrounding downtown area. Susan reported that planning efforts are moving forward for seasonal banners, winter snowflake lighting, and additional holiday decorations focused primarily on the Courthouse and plaza area. Susan stated that the proposed summer banners may include recreation-themed images such as hiking, fishing, and outdoor activities, while winter banners and décor will feature snowflake themes, courthouse imagery, and winter scenes representative of the community. She noted that the project is intended to reflect broad community representation rather than highlighting any one specific event or organization. Susan also discussed plans for courthouse garland decorations and coordination with Facilities staff regarding installation and holiday activities. She explained that a phased "Tier 1" approach is being considered, initially focusing on the Courthouse and plaza area before potentially expanding decorations throughout additional downtown areas in partnership with the City and Chamber of Commerce. Commissioners discussed community interest in expanding holiday decorations and expressed appreciation for the effort to enhance the community spirit and seasonal atmosphere throughout the County.

Commissioner Barney reported no updates.

Commissioner Crawford reported no updates.

Public Comment

None

Executive Session

4. None scheduled.

MOTION: Brian Barney moved to Adjourn. Susan Hermreck seconded. No discussion. Seth Crawford votes Aye, Susan Hermreck votes Aye, Brian Barney votes Aye. Motion Passed 3-0.

There being no further business before the Board of Commissioners, the meeting was **adjourned at 09:29 AM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Breyanna Cupp, Executive Assistant