

Crook County Board of County Commissioners Minutes of August 19, 2026, Regular Session

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of County Commissioners met in a Regular Session on August 19, 2026, at 9:00 AM in the Crook County Annex Meeting Room, located at 320 NE Court Street, Prineville, OR 97754.

Regular Session Agenda

Board Members Present: Seth Crawford, Susan Hermreck

Board Members Absent: Brian Barney

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; Assessor Jon Soliz; Fairgrounds Manager Casey Daly; HR Director Meghan McKee; IT Director Blaine Cheney; Lorian Maxham; Jessica; Justin Alderman; Michael Miller; Mike Warren; and members of the public.

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

Public Comment

Justin Alderman, Managing Editor of the Prineville Review addressed the Board regarding ongoing concerns surrounding the County's efforts to obtain information and records from the Vector Control District. He noted the District's repeated failure to respond to requests from the Board and raised concerns about the County's oversight responsibilities. In response, the Board indicated that the matter would be placed on the following week's agenda for further discussion. The Board discussed the possibility of requesting a third-party review of the Vector Control District's operations, including its organizational processes, public records practices, and interactions with government officials, the media, and the public. Commissioners expressed agreement with moving forward with further discussion of the matter.

Lorian Maxham asked about elk migration patterns near existing and proposed solar farm developments and whether wildlife crossings were being considered. The Board discussed the County's outdated wildlife map and the ongoing Goal 5 planning process, which is intended to update wildlife information. Commissioners explained that wildlife impacts and mitigation are considered during the land-use approval process, with input from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and noted that mitigation measures have been required for previous solar projects. The discussion also addressed public participation in land-use decisions. Commissioners explained that the County follows state land-use requirements and that public input is an important part of the process, but decisions must be based on applicable criteria and evidence. Lorian expressed concern that additional public outreach, particularly

through the newspaper, could help residents become more aware of planning and land-use matters before decisions are made. Commissioners explained the distinction between City and County planning processes and offered to ensure Lorian receives information regarding upcoming County Planning Commission meetings.

Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes
2. Approve Order No. 2026-37 In the Matter of Distributing Funds from the Oregon Department of Agriculture Wolf Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant

MOTION: Susan Hermreck moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seth Crawford seconded. No discussion. Seth Crawford votes Aye, Susan Hermreck votes Aye. Motion Passed 2-0.

Discussion

3. None scheduled.

Manager Report

There was no manager report presented.

Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Hermreck reported that she was appointed by the National Association of Counties (NACo) to serve as Second Vice President of the Public Lands Committee. She noted that the appointment reflects her work on issues related to Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT).

Commissioner Crawford announced that Congressman Cliff Bentz will be in the area on August 27th from 2:00–4:00 p.m. at Barnes Butte Elementary School to discuss firefighting techniques, fire prevention, post-fire recovery, and available recovery resources. The event will provide an opportunity for residents affected by the fires to discuss their experiences and for community members to share ideas regarding forest management and fire prevention that can be taken back to Washington, D.C. Commissioner Crawford also provided an update on County College, noting that the program will begin on Wednesday, September 2nd. He encouraged community members to apply and share information about the program with friends and neighbors, as the County is hoping to have strong participation.

Public Comment

None

Executive Session

At 9:19AM the Board of Commissioners convened into Executive Session under the following statute(s): ORS 192.660(2)(e) To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

4. ORS 192.660(2)(e) To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board of Commissioners convened back into Open Session, inviting members of the public into the meeting room.

No decisions were made in executive session. Staff will gather additional information and return the matter to the Board for future deliberation.

MOTION: Susan Hermreck moved to adjourn. Seth Crawford seconded. No discussion. Seth Crawford votes Aye, Susan Hermreck votes Aye. Motion Passed 2-0.

There being no further business before the Board of Commissioners, the meeting was **adjourned at 09:48 AM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Breyanna Cupp, Executive Assistant