

MINUTES
UMATILLA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Meeting of March 18, 2026
9:00 am, Room 130, Umatilla County Courthouse
Pendleton, Oregon

Commissioners Present: Chair Dan Dorran, Vice-Chair John Shafer and Commissioner Cindy Timmons

County Counsels: Doug Olsen, Nicholas Warner

Guests Present: Robert Pahl, Umatilla County Chief Financial Officer; Jason Jensen, CFO; Bob Waldher, Community Development Director; Joseph Fiumara, UCo Health Director; Morgan Linder, UCo Health Community Health Supervisor; Megan Davchevski, Planning Manager; Luke Dynes, Addie's Alternative President; Lucas Wagner, Echo OR Resident; Denise Hodson, Pendleton Sanitary Service; Kevin Miracle, Sanitary Disposal; Jan Wheelhouse, McKay Creek Rd Resident; Jay Wheelhouse, McKay Creek Road Resident; Greg Wheelhouse, McKay Creek Road Resident; Jimmy Doherty, Eastern Oregon Waste Management; Mike McHenry, SWAC Chair; Katy King, Humbert Refuse; Brandon King, Humbert Refuse; Tanner Gillespie, One Energy Associate Director; Cameron Krebs, Krebs Solar Grazing; Tim Rust, Landowner Solar Site; Bobby Wenger, One Energy Associate Developer; Elaine Albrich, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP;

Video link or Calling in: Jennifer Blake, HR Director;

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Dorran called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. He reminded all that the meeting is a public forum and there is a call-in option provided. There is time on the agenda to provide input (or for hearings) to provide comment. The meeting is being video and audio recorded and minutes will be taken. Also, meetings are now live-streaming. Comments will become part of the meeting record and ask that they be three minutes or under. If persons wish to speak before the Board, please identify yourself and state where you live in order to be heard on the record – also note if you are speaking on behalf of others.

Pledge of Allegiance - led by Chair Dorran.

Awards/Correspondence/Recognitions - None

Minutes – Commissioner Shafer moved to approve the minutes from the March 4, 2026 Board meeting and the March 5, 2026 Board meeting – Work Session. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.

Additions to Agenda – None

Public Comments and Recognition of Visitors – None

Business Items

1. **Gate Permit Application** – Presented by Doug Olsen, County Counsel. The County received an application for the placement of a gate on County Road. No. 1049 (N. Fork McKay Creek Road).

The application has been signed by two of the impacted property owners. A gate would be placed near the entrance to the Randall & Marie Martin Scout Camp. The CTUIR owns property that uses this road for access to the easement to the property. A copy of the easement was provided by the applicant. The CTUIR has not signed the application. The county received an email confirming that so long as the CTUIR continues to have access through the gate for administrative/management purposes, the CTUIR will not oppose the application. All were notified of this item and no one is present to object or make comment. **Commissioner Shafer moved to approve the application and allow Chair to sign the permit. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**

2. Curbside Recycling Rate - Presented by Bob Waldher, Community Development Director. Beginning July 1, 2026, as part of Oregon's Recycling Modernization Act, cities with a population over 4,000 people are required to provide curbside recycling service for residents inside city limits and urban growth areas. Waste Connections (DBA Sanitary Disposal, Inc. and Pendleton Sanitary, Inc.), having a solid waste franchise in Umatilla County, proposes to establish a rate for new curbside recycling services within the respective franchise service areas. If approved, the rate would be effective July 1, 2026 and would apply to all customers within the franchise service area, regardless of whether or not the customer participates in curbside recycling. The following rate for curbside recycling was recommended for approval by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee at their meeting on February 23, 2026:

Sanitary Disposal, Inc.

\$8.00 per month for every-other-week residential (single-family) curbside recycling service

\$24.00 per month for every-other-week multi-family curbside recycling service

Pendleton Sanitary, Inc.

\$8.00 per month for every-other-week residential (single-family) curbside recycling service

Public awareness of recycling opportunities along with education on proper preparation of recyclable materials is required by the Recycling Modernization Act. There will be multiple forms of information being distributed including mailers and QR codes. The recycling depots will remain in place and will have this information available also.

Kevin Miracle, Sanitary Disposal 81144 N Hwy 395, Hermiston and Denise Hodson, 5500 NW Reith Road, Pendleton, stood to answer additional questions. There will be a one-time assist in capital for startup costs funded by producer fees. This will aid in the purchase of additional trucks needed for the recycling materials, the recycle carts, and to fund continued education. The monthly fees to residents will pay for drivers' wages, truck maintenance and future costs.

Commissioner Dorran recommends excluding residents outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), they are not included in the mandate. Many of these residents have already had the location for receptacle pickup moved to a main road, farther away from their home for easier retrieval due to safety issues with the newer, larger disposal trucks traveling down small lanes. The concern arises when residents don't want to comply and cancel their garbage service.

There were questions regarding what constitutes multi-family, a duplex or triplex versus an apartment complex. A stronger definition of multi-family was encouraged.

Mike McHenry, SWAC Chair, 54328 Upper Dry Creek Road, Weston, offered additional input. SWAC recommends including the area outside of the UGB. There has not been a survey completed to determine the preference for those outside of the UGB. If it is determined to add the service for customers outside of the UGB later, it would not be at the reduced rate that is being offered today because the upfront capital fund is a one-time opportunity for the communities that do not have recycling service. There were only 11 communities in the state that do not have the comingle service and this is an attempt to catch those communities up. **Commissioner Dorran moved to table the issue until there is clarification of additional information. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**

3. New Collection Franchise Request - Presented by Bob Waldher, Community Development Director. The applicant, Addie's Alternative, LLC, requests approval of a Solid Waste Collection Franchise. The proposed franchise would focus on the collection and recovery of organic materials generated by commercial and industrial customers in the unincorporated areas of Umatilla County. The applicant's proposed business model includes collecting organic wastes, composting the materials, and then marketing the compost to farms in the region for use as soil amendments and organic fertilizer. A Conditional Use Permit for the composting operation has been tentatively approved by Umatilla County Planning and is not considered part of this application for a collection franchise. During a special meeting of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) held February 23, 2026, the committee recommended denial of the request to establish a new collection franchise.

Luke Dynes, applicant, PO Box 696, Hermiston. Mr. Dynes shared a presentation providing background information, intent and operational objectives. The intent is to launch a new compost facility to reduce food waste in Umatilla County. With an oversupply of low-end feed materials, they feel making organic waste into compost is a viable option, it will create local jobs and increase tax revenue in Umatilla County. Addie's is a for-profit National company that has worked with companies like Waste Management, Republic and Waste Connections to move organic products. They handle contracts with Lamb Weston, ConAgra, McCain Foods, Mars, General Mills, Frito-Lay and others. Reasons a hauling franchise is necessary include; having direct contact with generators allows for education/training, reduced contamination, increased cleanliness and protection from spikes in hauling costs. Other haulers could not guarantee delivery of the products to the new composting site. Addie's is requesting to haul only organics, not trash and they are not seeking to compete with the existing franchises. Addie's argues that it is more efficient for them to backhaul the organic waste since they are already hauling product to these companies. In addition, this will assist in maintaining profitability for the business.

Mr. McHenry, SWAC chair, explained the reasons SWAC recommended denial of the application unanimously. Pendleton Sanitary Service has run a composting operation since 1997 with all of the products that have been discussed. It does not have the capacity to accept the volume of product the applicant has proposed to, but there could be options to expand. The material that Addie's has already been hauling the organic materials for 20 years is under an agricultural use exclusion (AUE) therefore it was not necessary to have a franchise.

Mr. McHenry expresses concern that the application allows for Addie's to infringe on the other franchises already in place. Lastly, the county code requires a new franchise to provide service at least equal to that presently being provided, which is not what the applicant is proposing. He is concerned that other franchises will come about with specific service requests and attempt to

continue creating specific niches that undermine the current franchisees. **Commissioner Dorrان moved to approve Order No. BCC2026-013 on the application of Addie’s Alternative, LLC for a solid waste collection franchise in the unincorporated area (outside the limits of any city) of the county subject to and contingent on the following conditions: Applicant must apply for, obtain and maintain any necessary permits to provide the franchise collection services for the products identified in the application and the applicant’s presentation, including DEQ and County permits for a solid waste disposal site; The only place that the franchise can haul the identified products to is Addie’s Alternative, LLC approved disposal site. The product hauled under the franchise cannot involve any of the current waste or product being hauled by the other solid waste collection franchisees. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 2-1.**

4. Planning Commission Appointment – Presented by Megan Davchevski, Planning Manager. The Umatilla County Planning Division requests board approval to appoint Andrew Brown as a member of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has two vacancies and Mr. Brown has applied for the position and interviewed with staff and the department’s liaison Commissioner. The term would begin immediately and end on December 31, 2029. **Commissioner Shafer moved to adopt Order No. BCC2026-012. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**
5. BMCC Agreement - Presented by Doug Olsen, County Counsel. In 2023, BMCC and the County entered into agreement to supply funding to the college for workforce training to offer language development courses. The college is seeking to expand the program into high schools, utilizing existing funding. President Browning gave a presentation on the request at the March 4 meeting. The matter is before the Board to determine if the county is willing to expand the scope of the program. **Commissioner Shafer moved to approve addendum agreement and add high schools and authorize Chair to sign. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**
6. PATH Contract - Presented by Doug Olsen, County Counsel. The Board previously approved a contract with Knerr Construction for the installation of a gas line at the PATH project. Due to the federal funding for the project, prevailing wage is required for the work, which was not utilized for the original quote. The revised proposal is before the Board for approval. **Commissioner Shafer moved to approve the contract with Knerr Construction for propane line installation at the PATH facility in the amount of \$25,210.00. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**
7. IRZ Contract – Presented by Doug Olsen, County Counsel. As part of the Central Pipeline project, it was necessary to cross the West Extension Irrigation District’s canal. This required construction of new retaining walls. The Bureau of Reclamation and WEID reviewed the design prior to the project. Following construction, the BOR notified the county that the slope of the crossing was too steep for some of the district’s equipment. To reduce the slope, the crossing will need to be redesigned. The current request is for the contract with IRZ to redesign the crossing to meet the needs of the BOR and WEID. **Commissioner Shafer moved to approve contact with IRZ for engineering services in the amount of \$25,000.00. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**

8. Health Purchase – Community Garden Planters - Presented by Morgan Linder, Community Health Supervisor, UCo Public Health. The community garden being built will need to construct several different garden boxes and gardens. UCo Health previously received approval for payment to another contractor that is no longer able to complete the project. Three additional quotes from contractors were obtained to construct the gardens and garden boxes. UCo Health received EOCCO SHARE funding with \$8,361 allocated to raised bed construction based on estimates received when the grant application was submitted. OSU Master Gardeners has received additional funding to cover additional expenses reflected in the bid. **Commissioner Timmons moved to approve payment for materials and labor for construction of several different garden boxes, demonstration garden and children’s garden in the amount of \$8,361.00. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**

9. Land Use Hearing – Fourmile Solar – Chair Dorran called the public hearing to order at 10:24 am. Chair Dorran read the opening statement. He then called for abstentions, bias, conflict of interest, declaration of ex parte contact and objections to jurisdiction. There were none. Chair Dorran read the declaration into the record.

Chair Dorran then called for the staff report, which was presented by Megan Davchevski, Umatilla County Planning Manager. The applicant requests approval to develop a photovoltaic solar generation facility and associated components. The proposed site is located approximately 11 miles south west of the City of Echo and east of Highway 207. The site is identified on Assessor’s Map as Township 2 North, Range 27 East, Tax Lots 800 and 900. The applicant wishes to microsite the solar generation facility, battery storage and other ancillary components up to 450 acres within the Project Area Extent of 626 acres. The proposed site subject to the Goal 3 Exception is approximately 450 acres and is zoned Exclusive Farm Use (EFU). The Planning Commission made a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to approve the Goal 3 Exception and Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment. The Planning Commission has approved the conditional use permit, this is not before the Board for decision today.

Chair Dorran called for proponents; applicant and/or representative. Tanner Gillespie, One Energy Renewables, Associate Director, 2003 Western Ave, Seattle WA and Elaine Albrich, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, 560 SW 10 Suite 700, Portland OR stood for comment. Mr. Gillespie explained that there are three criteria when selecting a site for solar projects. First, identifying existing infrastructure (transmission lines, distribution lines and substations) with capacity to transmit additional power; second, selecting a suitable flat or south-facing site with limited existing development or resource impacts; and third, engaging willing landowners for a long-term commitment of 30 to 40 years. The proposed final permanent project footprint will be up to 450 acres. The location is a flat, unirrigated site with proximity to existing infrastructure and high solar energy resources. There will be no impact to high value habitat, irrigated soils, wetlands or floodplains. The majority of the soils are class 3 or 4.

The utility interconnection will be with Umatilla Electric Cooperative and Bonneville Power Administration. The system size is 90 megawatt AC solar with optional battery storage. The system type is a single-axis tracking, it is a ground mounted system tracking the sun from East to West. The projected annual output is about 140,000 megawatt hours (MWh) per year, enough to power approximately 12,000 average homes. It is estimated that it will begin providing power in the 3rd quarter of 2028.

The panels have an anti-reflective coating to help absorb sunlight equaling more energy production and reducing glare. The 20 foot wide roads will allow access for emergency vehicles to reach the site and have the ability to turn around in the event that they are needed. All studies are completed and the project proves to be feasible.

Ms. Albrich rounded out the presentation with the review and recommendation of the Planning Commission to approve the Goal 3 Exception request. She highlighted the work done by the Planning Commission to cover not only the plans but implementation of plans including weed control, vegetation management, decommissioning and financial assurance of decommissioning, with a high level of detail included. The project is obligated to be decommissioned at its end of life, which is anticipated to be about 30 years at which point the land will be returned to its current or better conditions. The criteria for the exception was reviewed and this location was identified as the only reasonable location. In regards to long-term environmental, economic, social or energy (ESEE) consequences, there are no adverse impacts expected. The proposed use is compatible, with adjacent uses, the landowner will continue to cultivate their surrounding farmland. A sheep grazing concept will be used for vegetation management that will also be covered in today's discussion.

Commissioner Shafer asks whether the energy generated will be used as for Carbon Credit trading project - the electricity generated will go to Umatilla Electric Cooperative and Bonneville Power and will be distributed to users from there.

Commissioner Dorrان asked about water usage to clean the solar panels – in this area they typically do not have to clean the panels on a consistent basis, only in the event of uncommon weather activity.

Chair Dorrان called for a five minute recess at 11:06 am. The meeting resumed at 11:12 am with Chair Dorrان calling for other proponents. Cameron Krebs, 68171 Kunze Lane, Boardman OR, Krebs Solar Grazing approached the podium. Krebs Solar Grazing currently treats around 5,000 acres of utility-scale solar panels throughout the Columbia Basin. The sheep grazing concept allows agriculture to continue under the panels by converting plant activity into a food source. There is not a concern of sheep damaging, nibbling or jumping on the panels.

Tim Rust, 77252 Mader Rust Lane, Echo OR, landowner of the proposed site, spoke about his initial concerns with weeds, fire suppression, and decommissioning. These concerns were all addressed to his and his family's satisfaction. He is a proponent for developing a photovoltaic solar generation facility of up to 450 acres on his land.

Chair Dorrان called for other proponents. There were none. He called for opponents. There were none. Call for comment from public agencies. There were none. No rebuttals. Call for request for continuance or to leave the record open. There were none. **Commissioner Shafer moved to add the applicant's Goal 3 Exception Request PowerPoint Presentation into the record as exhibit 5. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.** Chair Dorrان closed the public hearing at 11:25 am. There was no deliberation. **Commissioner Shafer moved to adopt the proposed Goal 3 Exception and Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment as presented and adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-01. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**

10. Position Re-classifications – Presented by Jennifer Blake, Human Resources Director. The process for budgeting for fiscal year 2026-27 has begun. As part of that process, each department was given the opportunity to request additional positions or position reclassifications. After a review of those requests, those receiving positive feedback totaled approximately \$756,000. The matter is before the Board to authorize the Finance Department to incorporate the requests into the proposed budget. **Commissioner Shafer moved to authorize inclusion in the proposed budget for the 2026-27 potential position impacts up to \$756,000 to the extent possible and still maintain a balanced budget. Seconded by Commissioner Timmons. Carried, 3-0.**
11. Pinkie Update – Presented by Doug Olsen, County Counsel. Across the county there are many departments that use different or outdated versions of our pinkie for board meetings. An updated version of the pinkie is before the Board for approval. **Commissioner Timmons moved to approve the new pinkie format. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
12. Grazing Contract – Presented by Doug Olsen, County Counsel. The County issued a request for proposals for the goat grazing of two parcels under contract with the weed department. One proposal was received. The recommendation is to award the contract to that proposal. **Commissioner Timmons moved to approve contract with Jerry Kropf for goat grazing in the amount of \$18,350. Seconded by Commissioner Shafer. Carried, 3-0.**
13. Executive Session – Employment/Real Property – ORS 192.660(2)(a,b,e,h) – None

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Shafer: None

Commissioner Dorran: None

Commissioner Timmons: The community lost Vern Rodighero, he was a community asset, always showing up to help out. He was instrumental in water issues on the North end of the county. He will be missed.

Meeting adjourned by Chair Dorran at 11:37 am.

Kelsey Bailey

Executive Secretary – Board of Commissioners