

WALLOWA COUNTY  
BOARD of COMMISSIONERS  
STATE of OREGON

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TERA ELLIOTT E.A.

COMMISSIONER LISA COLLIER  
COMMISSIONER JOHN HILLOCK

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**August 4, 2025**

Wallowa County Board of Commissioners (BOC)  
Special Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes  
3:00 p.m. Thornton Conference Room  
VIA Zoom Meeting  
Wallowa County Courthouse

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Lisa Collier  
Commissioner John Hillock

STAFF PRESENT: Franz Goebel, Planning Director (ZOOM)  
Ashley Immoos, Assessor  
Sandy Lathrop, County Clerk  
Brenda Micka, Administrator  
Ryan Moody, Sheriff  
Susan Moody, 911 Director  
Katy Nesbitt, Natural Resource & Economic Development Director  
Amanda Piper, Admin. E.A., Policy Compliance Manager  
Cierra Radford, Bldg. Codes Administrator (ZOOM)  
Tera Elliott, BOC E.A.

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathleen Ackley                      Chris Geyer                      Senator Todd Nash  
Bruce Bliven                                  David Hayslip                      Everett Roberts  
Bill Bradshaw, WC Chieftain              Raider Heck                      Dana Roberts  
Candy Bunn                                  Andrew Huwe                      Paige Sully  
Maury Bunn                                  Stacy Karvoski                      Alicia Zinni  
Paul Flanders                                  John Lawrence

ZOOM: Commissioner Paul Anderes              Mike Eng  
Roger Averbek                                  Rita McCreesh  
David Brandt                                  Deena McFetridge  
Tracy Christopher                              Gail West  
Jolene Cox

3:00 p.m. – Commissioner Collier opened the meeting and advised the order of the Agenda would be amended to honor Commissioner Roberts first. Commissioner Collier noted that this would be the final occasion the flags in the conference room would be used, as they will be presented to the Roberts family for Commissioner Roberts' memorial service and subsequently laid to rest with her. Commissioner Collier then led in the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer.

**Agenda Items:**

**Commissioner Collier** noted Commissioner Susan Roberts passed away on July 30<sup>th</sup> at Wallowa Memorial Hospital and noted her amazing impact on all things. Commissioner Collier opened the floor for comments. Everett Roberts, Commissioner Roberts' brother shared the "honor bench" will be placed in the courthouse square and an unveiling/dedication will be scheduled.

Senator Todd Nash brought a copy of Oregon Senate Concurrent Resolution 33 celebrating the life and accomplishments of Susan Roberts and recognizing her contribution to the people of Oregon.

Senator Nash offered memories of his interactions with and respect for Commissioner Roberts, which was followed by Commissioner Hillock, Commissioner Collier, Commissioner Anderes of Union County and several members of the audience sharing their stories. Commissioner Roberts was well loved. It was noted the Marine flag is flying at the front of the courthouse, while the American Flag on the flagpole remains at full mast because this is what Commissioner Roberts would want.

The Memorial Service for Commissioner Roberts will be on August 22, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Enterprise Elks Lodge.

**Consideration of Action on Succession Process** – Commissioner Collier noted although Commissioner Roberts talked many times about retiring, she did not, so she was able to die as a commissioner, and we are more than okay with that. We will now move forward with the process of filling her vacancy. Commissioner Collier noted that several individuals have come forward expressing interest in the role prior to the vacancy. The floor was given to County Counsel, Attorney JoAnna Lyons-Antley who noted her appreciation of Commissioner Roberts. Ms. Lyons-Antley offered options for the commissioners to take going forward in filling the third commissioner role. State Law gives flexibility in this procedure. The commissioners may:

- Open a process, taking applications and creating a method of selecting a commissioner
- Or, if a qualified candidate is already known that person may be appointed directly

Discussion followed on the qualifications of prior commissioner Mike Hayward, with both commissioners noting the benefits of learning from a person with experience in this role. Commissioner Collier expressed her concerns about changing from the prior intent of taking applications as mentioned in previous meetings. County Counsel advised the redirection may be made to an appointment if the Commission so wishes.

*Commissioner Hillock moved to appoint Mike Hayward  
as Wallowa County Commissioner to fill the current vacancy  
Commissioner Collier seconded*

*The vote:*

*Commissioner Collier – aye  
Commissioner Hillock – aye*

*The motion passes*

It was noted that the term is set to end on December 31, 2026; however, this may be adjusted if Commissioner Hayward opts to resign prior to that date. This also places Commissioners 2 and 3 on the same election cycle. The Commissioners noted the people who have come forward showing interest in the position would all be good candidates, but the experience Mr. Hayward brings is invaluable. Those showing interest were encouraged to run for the commissioner position in next year's election.

**Restructure of Administrative roles within the Board of Commissioners** – County Counsel, JoAnna Lyons-Antley advised over the last years/decades, several counties have re-evaluated their structure with staff. Among the many roles commissioners have, one is to give guidance for policy, limitation and oversight to staff. Many counties have appointed an Administrative Officer, supervised and directed by the Commissioners, who is a central figure responsible for day-to-day management in offices not overseen by an elected official, such as the Planning Department and Public Works. This administrator would oversee daily

operations, implementing the policy objectives the Commissioners have asked for, managing the budget/finances, managing personnel hiring, supervision and firing. This administrator would coordinate operations between departments and advise the Commissioners of the functions.

The benefit of moving towards this function is it allows for one consistent voice for staffing, and is consistent over time, presumably lasting over the term of an elected official. One consistent voice reduces the risk of the County. The Commissioners would be delegating their authority to the Administrator with the understanding actions will be taken within the parameters given by the Commissioners. The Administrator will remain responsible to the Board of Commissioners. This allows for better fiscal responsibility, and consistent day-to-day operations.

Today's purpose is to cover the idea of what an Administrative Officer is. If interested, Ms. Lyons-Antley will come back with more information and more detailed job descriptions.

Commissioner Anderes of Union County stated although each of Oregon's 36 counties are unique. Commissioner Anderes is comfortable with the methodology of Union County but notes it is the only system he has used. Union County operates with a Strong Administrator, with County Commissioners having clear areas of liaison and cities of liaison. When a call comes in, it is clear which commissioner the call will be directed to. Union County's Strong Administrator also handles the membership of County committees. When asked, Commissioner Anderes advised that disciplinary actions are handled first by the Department Head, then the County Administrator who would get legal counsel from the County Counselor and CIS (City County Insurance Services) Risk Management. The Commissioners would be involved at the Department Head level. The Commissioners are a part of the interview process when hiring.

Discussion followed on the benefits of these levels of action and the benefits of implementing more finite layers of action.

If interested, a Work Session would be the next step in gaining more information on this type of structuring, allowing for more opportunities to ask questions that may come up as these changes are contemplated.

It was asked if the restructuring would cause a cost increase. The answer was "no" since there would be no additional staff, just a more formalized, consistent, concise restructuring of what we already have. More conversation took place regarding the clarity it could bring to the different positions involved.

**Public Comment:**

Mr. Roger Averbek thanked the Commissioners for their selection of Mike Hayward as a commissioner.

**Adjournment:**

With no further comment or discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:06 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted by:** Tera Elliott, Executive Assistant

WALLOWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



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Commissioner Lisa Collier



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Commissioner John Hillock



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ATTEST: Tera Elliott, Executive Assistant