

WALLOWA COUNTY  
BOARD of COMMISSIONERS  
STATE of OREGON

541-426-7730  
FAX: 541-426-0582  
TERA ELLIOTT E.A.

COMMISSIONER LISA COLLIER  
COMMISSIONER MIKE HAYWARD  
COMMISSIONER JOHN HILLOCK

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[commissioners@co.wallowa.or.us](mailto:commissioners@co.wallowa.or.us)

**September 3, 2025**

Wallowa County Board of Commissioners (BOC)  
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes  
9:00 a.m. Thornton Conference Room  
VIA Zoom Meeting  
Wallowa County Courthouse

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Lisa Collier  
Commissioner Mike Hayward  
Commissioner John Hillock

STAFF PRESENT: Brenda Micka, Administrator  
Amanda Piper, Admin. E.A., Policy Compliance Manager  
Katy Nesbitt, NRAC/ERAC Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Stephen Bartlow, City of Joseph  
Bill Bradshaw, Chieftain  
Tracy Christopher, Elkhorn Media  
Raider Heck  
David Hurley  
Paul Flanders  
Rita McCresh, Joseph Rail Consortium

ZOOM: Andy Huwe

9:00 a.m. – Commissioner Hillock opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer

**Consideration and/or approval of Consent Agenda**

Consisting of:

**1. Payment of Claims on County Funds**

**2. Minutes:**

**August 13, 2025** - BOC Work Session, WC Wolf Plan

**August 20, 2025** – BOC Regular Meeting

~~**August 27, 2025** – BOC Oregon Boarders Meeting~~

~~**August 27, 2025** – BOC Work Session, WC Wolf Plan~~

**3. Employee Action Notice(s):**

**Mat Kassahn** – Separation of Service, Facility Management

**4. Resolution(s):**

**None**

**5. Order(s):**

**Order 2025-2504** - Adopting Intrafund Transfer,  
Courthouse Sinking, \$6,500

**6. Contract(s):**

**None**

**7. Easement(s):**

**Keith & Amy Wellens** – Boring Under Road to Run Power  
from Pole, Dobbin Road, Joseph

**Avilon Zokovsky, Ziply** – Aerial Placement & Trench, Pine Tree Road, Enterprise

**Avilon Zokovsky, Ziply** – Fiber Placement, Reavis Lane, Enterprise

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|---|-------------|
| <b>8. Permit Application(s):</b>        | <b>None</b> |
| <b>9. Agreement(s):</b>                 | <b>None</b> |
| <b>10. Grant Initiation(s)</b>          | <b>None</b> |
| <b>11. Letter(s)</b>                    | <b>None</b> |
| <b>12. Policy/Plan</b>                  | <b>None</b> |
| <b>13. Capital Expenditure Approval</b> | <b>None</b> |

Commissioner Hayward asked if there was any item on the Consent Agenda the Commissioners would like to pull for further discussion. Lisa requested that the minutes for the two meetings on August 27<sup>th</sup> be removed as the minutes were not available yet.

Commissioner Hillock read the consent agent less the meeting minutes from the BOC Oregon Boarders Meeting and the BOC Work Session – WC Wolf Plan as requested and agreed.

*Commissioner Collier moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented  
Commissioner Hayward seconded*

*The vote:*

*Commissioner Collier – aye  
Commissioner Hayward – aye  
Commissioner Hillock – aye*

*The motion passes*

**Agenda Items:**

**Inter-Government Agreement, OR Dept. of Forestry, and W.C. Public Works – For Cooperative Wildland Fire Support – Revisit** – Commissioner Hillock reiterated that the discussion is a revisit following questions during the last meeting. Additional information was obtained regarding insurance coverage including the certificate of insurance liability. Commissioner Hillock and Hayward voiced concern regarding individual coverages for all individual pieces of heavy equipment and tools associated with Public Works vehicles as historically there was an issue with a vehicle that caught fire and the contents of the vehicle including additional equipment were not insured at the time. Brenda Micka clarified that an audit has been completed by The Partners Group and all equipment, including equipment housed in/on vehicles and on heavy equipment, are insured. Leased equipment is insured as a requirement of the lease agreement.

*Commissioner Collier moved to approve the Inter-Governmental Agreement, OR Dept. of Forestry and  
Wallowa County Public Works  
Commissioner Hayward seconded*

*The vote:*

*Commissioner Collier – aye  
Commissioner Hayward – aye  
Commissioner Hillock – aye*

*The motion passes*

**Morgan Nesbitt Project Consideration for Approval** – Commissioner Hillock explained that the Commissioners protested the project, specifically the road closures included in the project. The US Forest Service conceded to the protest so a letter has been drafted by Katy Nesbitt documenting that the WC Commissioners have dropped their protest of the Morgan Nesbitt Project.

Commissioner Hayward moved to approve the letter drafted by Katy Nesbit withdrawing objection to the Morgan Nesbitt Project following the USFS agreement to drop all road closures from the project.  
Commissioner Collier seconded

The vote:  
Commissioner Collier – aye  
Commissioner Hayward – aye  
Commissioner Hillock – aye

The motion passes

**Other Business:**

None.

**Public Comment:**

**Mayor Steven Bartlow** stated that he had three items to discuss. The first was the intergovernmental agreement between the City of Joseph and Wallowa County regarding the sewage treatment. Per Steven, there was a meeting three months ago and it was differed to the attorneys without further discussion. Brenda Micka addressed the concern stating that it was her understanding following hearing back from Joanna (County's Legal Counsel) and Jake that it had been referred back to City of Joseph and their legal counsel. Brenda recommended scheduling a follow up meeting, with both entities legal counsel, to finalize the details. Brenda will work on scheduling a meeting and Steven will connect with Levi. Once Jake Thompson is back from vacation, a meeting will be scheduled for further discussion.

Second item: Oregon DOT budget cuts and what the County will be doing to handle the additional load. Commissioner Collier indicated that we won't know until the current legislation is finished and Commissioner Hillock indicated that there hasn't been any discussion. Mayor Bartlow stated concern for citizen access to necessities such as medical care and road accessibility. He would like to discuss an intergovernmental agreement between the City of Joseph and WC to ensure the roads are cared for.

Third item: Mayor Bartlow wanted to make sure the Commissioners were aware of the entity called The Oregon Psychedelic Institute registered in the county. Is there a moratorium from the county regarding psilocybin usage. Commissioner Hillock and Commissioner Collier clarified that the ruling against the usage applies to the unincorporated areas in the county. Mayor Bartlow states they are registered in an unincorporated area however they plan to do their "little thingie" in the City of Joseph. Mayor Bartlow requests that the Commissioners look into it as the entity registered with the address of Wallowa Lake Lodge. Commissioner Hillock will speak with the owner of the Wallowa Lake Lodge. Mayor Bartlow is hoping the County has some recourse regarding the entity being registered in the county. Commissioner Hillock will follow up with Steven.

**Rita McCresch** wanted to provide the Commissioners with an update following the Community Dinner in Wallowa last Tuesday, August 26<sup>th</sup> hosted by the City of Wallowa and the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium. They hosted 109 people for a spaghetti dinner. Rita said that the majority of the attendees expressed support with only three individuals voicing opposition. Rita provided figures for specific supporters and supporting groups. Questions did come up and they are working on addressing the questions. Rita asked the Commissioners if letters to the Planning Commission are delivered also to the Commissioners or if they stay with the Planning Commission. Commissioner Collier stated that the letters are often also delivered to the Commissioners by the individuals who drop them off. Commissioner Hayward indicated that the Board of Commissioners is the decision maker and all documentation will be presented to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Hillock discussed the pros and cons of the Commissioners being informed ahead of time however the decision will ultimately come down to an impartial Board of Commissioners abiding by the law.

The follow up question from Rita asked if it would be out of line to ask for PJ to forward the letters received to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Hillock replied stating that the underlying problem is with WURA and they need to address their concerns with WURA and then come back to the Board of Commissioners. Rita stated that she understood however the Board of Commissioners meetings are the outlet she has right now due to limited WURA meetings.

**Adjournment:**

With no further comment or discussion, Commissioner Hillock adjourned the meeting at approximately 09:20 a.m.

**Respectfully submitted by:** *Amanda Piper, Executive Assistant*

WALLOWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Lisa Collier

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Commissioner John Hillock

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Commissioner Mike Hayward

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ATTEST: Amanda Piper, Executive Assistant