

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

In the Matter of Censure of Columbia  
County Commissioner, Casey Garrett

RESOLUTION NO. 1-2026

WHEREAS, in response to complaints about Commissioner Garrett's conduct the County conducted a thorough, independent workplace investigation into Commissioner Garrett's conduct in 2025; and

WHEREAS, the investigator found that Commissioner Garrett violated the County's workplace bullying policy with respect to the Columbia County General Services Director and that he retaliated or attempted to retaliate against him after becoming aware of the complaints and investigation; and

WHEREAS, on July 17, 2025, the Board of County Commissioners set forth its expectations for Commissioner Garrett's future conduct to address the workplace bullying findings; and

WHEREAS, Expectation #1 provided that Commissioner Garrett will have no communication with General Services Department Staff outside of a Board meeting in any way related to County or General Services operations, and further that Commissioner Garrett was to have no communication with contractors/vendors or other partners working with the General Services Department about General Services projects, operations or personnel related issues; and

WHEREAS, Expectation #5 provided that Commissioner Garrett will comply with all Personnel Rules and other County Policies; and

WHEREAS, on or about October 20, 2025, Commissioner Garrett was present at the Holce Trailhead Park project, made contact with a Park employee in the General Services Department at the site and "reminded" the employee that a trail leading to a bench and table were needed, leading the employee to direct the purchase of materials for the bench and table, said improvements not being part of the current scope of work; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Garrett's discussion with Park staff leading to acquisition of the bench and table was done without Board approval and without the General Services Director's input or approval; and

WHEREAS, the cost of the additional materials was \$890; and

WHEREAS, on or about November 14, 2025, Commissioner Garrett contacted the architectural firm designing this same project to inquire about a redesign of a structure at the site and told the architect to contact a Park employee to coordinate the work; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Garrett's direction to the contractor was not approved by the Board of Commissioners and was done without the input of or approval of the General Services Director; and

WHEREAS, the architect re-designed the structure without talking to the Park employee or General Services Director and thereafter billed the Parks Department in the amount of \$6,955.75; and

WHEREAS, individual Commissioners do not have authority to bind the County, all such decisions requiring a majority of a quorum of the Board; and

WHEREAS, individual Commissioners do not have purchasing authority over the Park budget; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Order No. 21-2025, In the Matter of Adopting a Policy on Board Direction, individual Commissioners "will not direct staff, contractors, employees, or volunteers without first discussing the matter with the Department Head who supervises that individual"; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Garrett was for several years, the County's General Services Director; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Garrett is no longer the County's General Services Director and has no more authority over the General Services programs than any other Commissioner; and

WHEREAS, the County has a qualified and capable General Services Director and staff to make decisions within their authority about projects, and to bring other decisions to the full Board of Commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the conduct outlined above is similar to the type of conduct found to violate the County's Workplace Bullying Policy; and

WHEREAS, the conduct outlined above directly conflicts with the Board's expectations for Commissioner Garrett's conduct; and

WHEREAS, workplace bullying, including the incidents outlined in the Investigation Report, and the incidents outlined above, have damaged the reputation of the County both as an organization and a governmental entity; and

WHEREAS, such workplace bullying has caused an emotional toll on County employees and the unnecessary expenditure of its limited funds and staff time; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Garrett's conduct is detrimental to the trust and confidence of the residents of Columbia County and the Board of Commissioners' ability to ensure the delivery of services to the County's residents; and

WHEREAS, as a result of this conduct, the Board of County Commissioners has lost trust and confidence in Commissioner Garrett and his ability to continue to provide leadership;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners hereby publicly censures Commissioner Garrett for his conduct deemed inappropriate and unbecoming of a Commissioner, which has been detrimental to the effective and respectful governance of the County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Commissioner Garrett is hereby admonished to adhere strictly to the expected standards of conduct in all future dealings, both with the County Board, and in representation of the County- at large, including but not limited to following the Board's expectations as outlined in its July 17, 2025 letter; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Commissioner Garrett shall refrain from taking any adverse, punitive, or other retaliatory action against any person who participated in the investigation of on-going complaints or this censure or who he perceives participated in the process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be entered into the official minutes of the County with a signed copy delivered to Commissioner Garrett, a copy be posted on the County's website and a place of public prominence by the County Clerk; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

DATED this 14<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By:   
Kellie Jo Smith, Chair

By:   
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

By:   
Casey Garrett, Commissioner

Approved as to form

By:   
[Redacted]  
Office of County Counsel