

Columbia County Board of Commissioners
January 14, 2026, Board Meeting
Hybrid from the
John Gumm Building and Civic Center
St. Helens, OR. 97051.

Present: Commissioner Kellie Jo Smith, Commissioner Margaret Magruder, Commissioner Casey Garrett, Sarah Hanson, County Counsel, Jacyn Normine, Board Office Administrator.

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Smith called this meeting to order at 10:00 am and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Magruder moved to amend the agenda to add discussion item 4. Commissioner Garrett seconded. **Vote:** KJS/MM/CG all in favor. Motion Approved.

VISITOR COMMENTS - 3 MINUTE LIMIT

No comment

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Smith read the consent agenda in full. Commissioner Garrett moved, and Commissioner Magruder seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Vote: KJS/MM/CG in favor. Motion Approved.

- A. Ratify Approval for OLCC Licensing for a Special Event at the Columbia County Fair & Rodeo Coronation on January 17, 2026, and Authorize the Chair to Sign.
- B. Approve the Board Meeting Minutes for December 3rd, 23rd, and 30th, 2025.
- C. Approve 2026 Social Gaming License for the St. Helens Moose Lodge # 591, Warren, Oregon.
- D. Approve Select to Pay for January 7, 2026.

AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS/AMENDMENTS

Commissioner Smith read the Agreements, Contracts, and Amendments in full. Commissioner Garrett moved, and Commissioner Magruder seconded to approve the Agreements, Contracts, and Amendments as presented. **Vote:** KJS/MM/CG in favor. Motion Approved.

- A. Approve C82-2025-5, Amendment 5 to Intergovernmental Agreement #185805 for the Financing of Public Health Services and Authorize the Chair to Sign.
- B. Approve C160-2025-1, Change Order 001 to Prime Contract with 2KG Contractors for the Construction of a deflection Suite in the Columbia County Courthouse, Value Engineering Items, and Authorize Riley Baker to Sign.
- C. Approve C160-2025-2, Change Order 006 to Prime Contract with 2KG Contractors for the Construction of a deflection Suite in the Columbia County Courthouse, No Cost Schedule Extension, and Authorize Riley Baker to Sign.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1. Debbie Klug, County Clerk, is here asking for approval to use the Remake Station equipment provided by the Oregon Secretary of State for elections.

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- a. Commissioner Magruder moved, and Commissioner Garrett seconded the approval of C1-2026, with the State of Oregon for the Procurement of Enhanced Remake Hardware and software, and authorized Debbie Klug to sign. The motion carried unanimously. **Vote:** KJS/MM/CG all in favor. Motion Approved.
2. Madison Riethman, Assistant Public Health Director, is here requesting approval to apply for the 2026 Rural Population Health Funding through the Oregon Office of Rural Health.
 - a. After discussion, this will come back on the consent agenda.
3. Mike Russel, Public Works Director, and Corey Padron, Emergency Management Director, are here to ask that staff apply to the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant Program for \$35,000.
 - a. Commissioner Garrett moved for approval and authorized the Finance Director to sign. Commissioner Magruder seconded. **Vote:** KJS/MM/CG all in favor. Motion Approved.
4. Sarah Hanson, County Counsel, is here to give an update regarding a complaint regarding Commissioner Garrett. Commissioner Garrett commented on the findings. Commissioner Magruder read Resolution 1-2026 into the record in full.

Resolution 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 the 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 require 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 ongoing 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.

After the discussion, Commissioner Magruder moved to approve 1-2026 Resolution "In the Matter of Censure of Columbia County Commissioner, Casey Garrett". Commissioner Smith seconded. Commissioner Garrett voted nay. The motion carried. **Vote:** KJS/MM in favor and CG voted nayed. Motion carried.

BOARD ROUND TABLE

- Commissioner Magruder said that if anyone has a comment on the Forest Management Plan for the ODF, they are presenting a few more changes to comment on. She will also be preparing a letter from our board.
- Commissioner Magruder would like to say that we are hearing comments regarding the Road Department and satellite shops closing. Rumors are circulating, and we would like to wait until the Road Department comes with a plan to create efficiencies.
- Jacyn Normine asked if the Board would like to attend Legislative Reception and County Day at the capital on February 9th. All three said yes.
- Jacyn Normine also asked about the City County Dinner be on February 5th, and if all three would like to attend, and they all do.

COMMISSIONER MAGRUDER COMMENTS

The Columbia County Fair and Rodeo Queen will be crowned on Saturday at the Fairgrounds.

February 7th, the Grange Farm Museum fundraiser at the Yankton Grange Hall is a pie auction to raise money for upgrades to the Grange Building at the Fair Grounds.

We were at a HSEMC meeting yesterday, and management from Trojan gave a presentation. I'm looking forward to going on a tour of the site. I have been to Richland, Washington, where they store a lot of nuclear waste.

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COMMISSIONER GARRETT COMMENTS

No comment

COMMISSIONER SMITH COMMENTS

US Senator Merkley will be here at the John Gumm Building this Friday at 3:30 pm.

ADJOURN

With nothing further to come before this Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:58 AM.

The recording of this meeting is posted at www.columbiacountyor.gov/meetings

The next regular scheduled meeting is on January 21, 2026.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By: _____
Kellie Jo Smith, Chair

By: _____
Casey Garrett, Commissioner

By: _____
Jacyn Normine, Board Office Administrator

By: _____
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner