Homeland Security and Emergency Management Commission (HSEMC)

12 May 2026
14:00 – 15:00 In Person CC Public Works/Zoom Meeting
Meeting Minutes

Columbia County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Commission Membership Table		
Representation	**Primary Member**	**Alternate Member**
Law Enforcement	Chris Fluellen, Scappoose PD	Ryan Murphy, CCSD
Fire/EMS	Jeff Pricher, Scappoose Fire	Bruce Holsey, Clatskanie Fire
C911CD	Jeremy Hipes, C911	Dannell Hooper, C911
North County	Jeff VanNatta, Rainier	Greg Hinkelman, Clatskanie
South County	Mike De Roia, St. Helens	Benjamin Burgener, Scappoose
Mid County		
Public Health	Jaime Aanensen, Columbia County Public Health	Jessica Kosydar, Columbia County Public Health
Industry	Tracy Oliver, InRoads	Fran Erikson, Columbia River Nitrogen
Port of Columbia County	Miriam House, Port of CC	Lacey Tolles, Port of CC
Utilities	Kyle Boggs, Columbia River PUD	Sarah Johnson, Clatskanie PUD
Schools		Jim Helmen, Vernonia SD
At Large Position 1	Mike Russell, CC Public Works	
At Large Position 2	Lonny Welter, Retired Public Works	Terry Martin, ARC/SAR
Ex-Officio	Corey Padron	
County	Kellie Jo Smith, Margaret Magruder, Casey Garrett	
Guests	Josette Mitchell, Larry Hill, Kim Karber, Chandra Egan, Jerry Cole, Sherriff Brian Pixley, Grant Dejonjh, Amy Hansford, Spencer Parsons, Chris Wheatley	

KEY: **Member Present**
Member Not Present
Chair – Mike Russell
Vice Chair – Mike De Roia
Secretary – Sarah Johnson

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Topic	Desired Outcome
Called to Order	Call to Order by Mike Russell at 14:00 hrs. Quorum met. Quorum needed – 7 Voting Members. Present – 9
Amendments to Agenda	Approved as amended to cover the future of the Department of Emergency Management and table any financial decisions.
Welcome, Introductions, Minutes, and Guest Speakers	Welcome, flag salute, and Introductions - Conducted Minutes of the March 10, 2026 meeting were presented. Upon motion and second the minutes were approved. Motion passed unanimously. Chief Pricher asked to make a statement to clarify his vote at the March meeting regarding the funding for the Search and Rescue vehicle. He explained that his vote against spending the HSEMC funds for the SAR vehicle had nothing to do with SAR, as he and the fire districts he represents support SAR. His vote had to do with the lack of an executed IGA between the HSEMC agencies and Columbia County. No guest speaker.
Future of the Columbia County Department of Emergency Management **IGA Committee Clarification**	• Mike Russell asked Corey Padron and our Columbia County guests to report on the future of the Columbia County Department of Emergency Management due to the recent budget cut considerations for FY 26/27. • Corey Padron reported that his position has been eliminated as of June 30, 2026 due to the budget crisis. He has been asked to hand over the department files and information to Columbia County Public Health Department. • Margaret Magruder explained that they are not eliminating Emergency Management, it is being moved temporarily to the Public Health Department. • Columbia County Counsel Spencer Parsons stated that the county is required to have active operations for emergency response, and the state law requires the county to have a designated emergency manager to coordinate emergency situations. • Mike Russell clarified that HSEMC should continue to meet and be available in our advisory capacity to the County Commissioners as needed. • Mike Russell asked for an update on the status of the HSEMC IGA. Corey Padron explained that the last executed IGA expired June 30, 2019. The current IGA subcommittee has not met for the last few months and needs to schedule another meeting to continue their work on developing a revised IGA. • Mike De Roia noted some of the challenges with the IGA and how we use the funds that have been collected from the members. • Chief Pricher stated that HSEMC needs direction from the County Commissioners to be able to move forward with the IGA. • Josette Mitchell asked how many agencies would want to keep paying for a position that has been removed. • Kelly Jo Smith explained that emergency management has not been removed, it will be relocated. The position that HSEMC pays half the costs should still be there. They are trying to gain efficiency and save costs by relocating the emergency management duties and responsibilities. • Margaret Magruder clarified that is one proposal they are looking at during the budget workshops, and the final decision has not been made. The plan is to temporarily move Emergency Management under the Public Health Department until a permanent decision is made. • Chief Pricher shared his concerns over taking away a qualified person from the position and giving the responsibilities to an unqualified person.

	• Concerns were shared by several attendees regarding emergency plans that had not been updated and issues with not having an emergency management expert going into wildfire season. • Jessica Kosydar shared that she is working with the State of Oregon Emergency Management and Corey Padron to transition. She will be setting her public health duties aside to have more time for emergency management duties. She is also working with a small counties health and emergency management group to help provide support and information. • Jeremy Hipes expressed concern for lack of staffing for a large-scale emergency management response. • Jessica Kosydar stated that Mike Russell is the back up Emergency Manager when Corey Padron was not available. • Chief Pricher questioned the possible county liability for not having a qualified Emergency Manager. • Jessica Kosydar explained that OEM will set the bar for qualifications and lay out what is necessary. • County representatives explained that the decision has not been made yet on who will fill the role of Columbia County Emergency Manager. • Mike Russell noted that HSEMC had not been consulted and involved more in these important functions of the county. • Jerry Cole asked for clarification on Corey Padron's position going away. • Margaret Magruder stated the decision was made for efficiency and cost savings, and citizens will still have a functioning emergency response.
HSEMC Funds	• Mike Russell asked Amy Hansford to report on the current HSEMC funds status. • Amy Hansford reported that there is currently $85,432 in the HSEMC funds and it is being used to continue paying the ½ time cost of Jessica Kosydar's emergency management position. They did not budget for any funds being added to the HSEMC fund for next year. The fund would zero out next year after paying for the part time position. Amy offered to answer any additional financial questions regarding the HSEMC funds if members would like to her email her the questions. • A discussion was held regarding the legitimacy of spending funds without a current IGA in place and the importance of HSEMC and the County working together as a true partnership. HSEMC exists as subject matter experts to help advise the County Commissioners and a new IGA needs to be executed. • Josette Mitchell asked how much of the County's general funds are being used for Jessica's position. Amy Hansford answered that ½ of her position costs come from the general fund.
Member Updates Closing Comments	• Mike Russell had to leave the meeting, so Vice Chair Mike De Roia assumed the chair and presided over the remainder of the meeting. • Additional discussion regarding the expired IGA was held. It was decided that the subcommittee would schedule a meeting to be held before the July HSEMC meeting. • A discussion was held regarding several HSEMC member representative positions that need new appointments. • Margaret Magruder reported that they are struggling through a difficult budget process due to the cuts they must make. Kelly Jo Smith added that no one is showing up to the public budget meetings for input. • Jeremy Hipes also expressed concern with the budget issues, as last year they had 17 FTEs and this year they are at 13 FTEs.

	• Kyle Boggs reported that Columbia River PUD had been awarded funds through a Federal Grant to underground lines for wildfire mitigation. • Jessica Kosydar reported that there are upcoming wildfire education events planned for the County and work on the two-year process to develop an updated wildfire plan is underway. • Mike De Roia reported the City of St. Helens is also working through their budget process. • Fran Erickson reported that Columbia River Nitrogen will have an outage in June with contractors in town to complete safety improvements.
Meeting Adjourned	Adjourned by Mike De Roia at 14:58 hrs.

Next Meeting: July 14, 2026 14:00.