Bear Lake County Commissioners' Meeting

July 13, 2026

Commissioners' Chambers- Paris, Idaho

The Board of County Commissioners met in its regular meeting at 9:00 am Monday, July 13, 2026, in the Commissioners' Chambers in Paris, Idaho. Video access to the meeting was available via Zoom. Members present were Commission Chairman Rex L. Payne, Commissioner Wynn S. Olsen, Commissioner Alan P. Eborn, and Clerk of the Board Amy Bishop. Also in attendance were Prosecutor Ronnie Keller, Treasurer Tricia Poulsen, Assessor Jannelle Jensen, Sheriff Bart Heslington, various staff, and members of the public.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Eborn reported that he received a telephone call from the Mayor of Bloomington requesting the action item for the city of Bloomington be removed from the agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the agenda with the Bloomington City item removed. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATE

TREASURER TRICIA POULSEN

Tricia Poulsen reported on the status of the county's investment accounts. She reported that there were no tax cancellations this month.

ASSESSOR JANNELLE JENSEN

Jannelle Jensen presented the amounts collected for the Idaho Transportation Department ($180,175.71) and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation ($7,964.00) for the month of June. She reported that the 2026 assessment drive is complete. She reported that this is the last year of the 5-year revaluation plan. A new revaluation plan is in progress.

SHERIFF BART HESLINGTON

Bart Heslington reported that his department spent significant time at Bear Lake this weekend after a severe boating accident and another boat capsized. He reported his department is seeing unprecedented activity at the lake. Heslington reported that he is working on getting more law enforcement help for the 24th of July holiday as well as Raspberry Days.

Heslington reported that the upgrade of dispatch equipment and software is ongoing. The new software will have translation capabilities to allow dispatch to communicate with callers who don't speak English. Heslington reported that the open dispatch position may be filled by the end

of the week. Discussion was held regarding traffic control during the LOTOJA race and the Montpelier Temple open house.

CLERK AMY BISHOP

Amy Bishop reported that the L2 forms are ready to be distributed to the taxing districts. Her office staff has been busy working on documenting election processes, cleaning up past grants, and ensuring all tax districts are compliant with the State Controller's Office Registry. Bishop reported on continuing efforts by the Idaho Supreme Court to get all court technology onto the state's IT network. Bishop reported that a power outage during the previous week rendered an amplifier in the court room useless. A plan was developed to get the amplifier replaced.

PROSECUTOR RONNIE KELLER

Ronnie Keller reported that two Preliminary Hearings were held in the Magistrate Court last month. Both cases moved on to the District Court. Keller voiced his appreciation for county law enforcement.

BUILDING INSPECTOR REPORT

Mason Garbett reported that the year-to-date total for building permits is $81,469.26. He reported that three projects were red tagged in May. He reported that the homes in the 7-Mile Ranch subdivision now have water.

INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE LAND CONVEYANCES TO COUNTY

The Board held a discussion with County Fire Chief Mark Parker regarding possible land conveyances from the Bureau of Land Management. They discussed the location and accessibility of transmitters and repeaters around the county. Commissioner Payne assigned Commissioner Eborn to work on the land conveyance project.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT REPORTS

Commissioner Olsen reported that he attended the 5-County Transportation Coalition meeting in Pocatello. He reported on the progress of each of the Idaho Transportation District projects in the county. Commissioner Olsen reported that Idaho State Police have been bringing in extra officers for traffic patrol on the weekends. A homeowner approached Commissioner Olsen about the county having its own electrical inspector.

Commissioner Eborn reported that the land conveyance for the snowmobile parking lot in Mill Canyon is nearly complete. He reported that the Senior Citizen Center had a board member resign. They are working on cross-training board members so others can take over during an absence or vacancy. He reported on the rifle raffle, Mother's Day breakfast, and recent donations to the center.

Commissioner Payne requested that the Pocatello Regional Transit representative be added to a future meeting agenda to explain what services are offered to Bear Lake County residents. He reported that there will be a kickoff meeting with Planning and Zoning this month for the Comprehensive Plan project. Commissioner Payne reported that he recorded an interview with a reporter from Idaho Public Television regarding the county's decision to build a new courthouse rather than remodel the original building. He reported that interview will air July 31, 2026.

GENERAL BUSINESS

RATIFY CLAIMS

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to ratify the claims as presented to the Board. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 8, 2026, and June 22, 2026, Commissioners' Meetings. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

CERTIFICATES OF RESIDENCY

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the Certificates of Residency for Bentley Price and Mylie Johnson. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

COMPUTER ARTS DATA CONVERSION AND TRAINING AGREEMENT

Clerk Amy Bishop reported that Computer Arts will be ready to begin implementation of the data conversion project in September. She reported that the costs for conversion and employee training have been included in this year's budget.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Computer Arts Data and Training Agreement as presented. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEMBER OPENING

Commissioner Payne reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission has an empty seat. Clerk Bishop reported that one individual interested. All seats on the commission are at-large seats, but the Board of Commissioners have tried to disburse the seats across the county. Commissioner Payne directed the members of the Board to have suggestions for someone to fill the seat by the next meeting.

JCA/CIGARETTE AND TOBACCO PASSTHROUGH FUNDS AGREEMENT

Clerk Amy Bishop outlined the JCA/Cigarette and Tobacco Passthrough Funds Agreement and the purpose for the funding. She noted that the funds are to be used for Juvenile Corrections only.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to accept the pass-through funds agreement for Juvenile Corrections. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

GUN RANGE MOU

Commissioner Payne reported that the county has been working for many years on a Memorandum of Understanding for the gun range property near the landfill in Montpelier Canyon. Clerk Bishop explained that one member of the Board is needed to act as a liaison with the gun club. Commissioner Eborn volunteered to act as the liaison.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the gun club, and to send the Memorandum to the Bear River Riflemen for their signature. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

FOREST SERVICE COOPERATIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGREEMENT MODIFICATION FOR FY2026 FUNDING

Clerk Amy Bishop reported that the annual agreement with the United States Forest Service allows the Bear Lake County Sheriff's Office to patrol on public lands. The amount of the agreement is $5,000.00.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Forest Service Cooperative Law Enforcement Agreement Modification for Fiscal Year 2026 Funding. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

BRANDEE WELLS – BEAR LAKE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Brandee Wells provided an update on the programs sponsored by the Bear Lake Soil and Water Conservation District. Brady Long, representative from Bear Lake Watch, reported that Bear Lake Watch is still working on a solution to place a decontamination station on North Beach. Long reiterated Bear Lake Watch's commitment to getting the decontamination station operating. The Board discussed possible solutions. Commissioner Eborn requested the issue be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

TODD BOEHME – COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

Todd Boehme reported on the ongoing projects for the Road and Bridge Department. Roads in the north end of the valley have been oiled, and chip sealing projects are nearly completed for the year. Boehme reported that the Road and Bridge Department would like to purchase a new tractor. The Board discussed the purchase of a new truck and trailer. Clerk Bishop stated the purchase would need to be handled through the formal bid process. Boehme indicated the

purchases would be made through Sourcewell, eliminating the need for formal bids. Boehme notified the Board about the progress on the Merkley Lake Road project.

JAMISON MCPHERSON – BEER GARDEN AT COUNTY FAIR

Jamison McPherson, chairman of the Bear lake County Fair Board, reported that his board contacted three counties to inquire about their procedure for having a beer garden at their county fairs. He reviewed the licensing, liability, and compliance measures that the VFW will implement. The Board discussed the pros and cons of having a beer garden at the county fair.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to deny the request for a beer garden at the county fair. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Jamison McPherson presented the proposed budget for the Bear Lake County Fair Board. It is similar to last year's budget. The Board discussed the new tractor lease with McPherson.

Todd Boehme presented the proposed budget for the Road and Bridge Department. Commissioner Olsen stated that hiring a mechanic for the county has been a great benefit.

Assessor Jannelle Jensen outlined the proposed changes to the budget for her office. She discussed building permits, keeping up with property upgrades, and short-term rental appraisals with the Board.

Sheriff Bart Heslington and Chief Deputy Sheriff Wes Barnhill presented a Power Point to the Board and explained the reasons for his budget requests.

Jennifer Burnham and Jeff Forsberg presented the proposed budget for the Bear Lake County Ambulance Service. Clerk Amy Bishop reported that the Ambulance Service revenue was up last year and will cover the requested budget increase. Commissioner Eborn stated that the Ambulance Service is doing a wonderful job.

Dennis Duehren presented the proposed budget for the Montpelier Golf Course. He reviewed the requests for extra funding. Duehren reported that the golf course is seeing increased numbers of patrons from out of town. Commissioner Eborn stated that the golf course is doing a great job. Commissioner Payne stated that he has heard many comments about how friendly people are in Bear Lake County.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Clerk Amy Bishop requested money from the consolidated election fund to purchase a ballot tabulator. She explained how the pre-election process works, the pros and cons of hand counting versus tabulation, and the preliminary costs for the tabulator. She asked to purchase the tabulator in August to be prepared for the November election.

Clerk Bishop discussed the possibility of adding an additional vehicle to the county fleet. She reviewed the lease amounts for several makes and models of vehicles.

Clerk Bishop recommended the Board adopt the per diem rates set by the State of Idaho. She indicated this adoption would mean each department would need to increase their budgets accordingly.

Clerk Bishop reviewed two proposals for a new county website that will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. She has received proposals from Revise and Civic Plus.

Clerk Bishop held a discussion with the Board regarding a 3% pay increase versus a one-time bonus for employees. She reported that the county health insurance plan would have a significant increase in premiums this year.

Clerk Bishop and the Board discussed the need for a justice fund for the Sheriff's Department and how it would be used. Commissioner Olsen stated that the justice fund is a good idea.

Clerk Bishop relayed information from the IDAWY director regarding an increase that would be significantly more than past years. She indicated she would have more information at the next Commissioners' meeting.

Clerk Bishop addressed the Fair Board's purchase of a new tractor. She reported that if their budget is increased, the tractor can be paid for out of the budget rather than asking for a tax increase.

The Board held a brief discussion about salary incentives, raises, and bonuses. The Board discussed pros and cons of each.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 1:50 pm.

Rex L. Payne, Chairman

8-10-26
Date Approved

ATTEST: Amy Bishop, Clerk

AUDITOR AND RECORDER BEAR LAKE COUNTY STATE OF IDAHO