

## **Bear Lake County Commissioners' Meeting**

**February 23, 2026**

**Commissioners' Chambers – Paris, Idaho**

The Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners met in its regular meeting at 9 a.m. Monday, February 23, 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 was Treasurer Tricia Poulsen, Assessor, Jannelle Jensen, Sheriff Bart Heslington, and various staff and members of the public.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Board reviewed the agenda.

**MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

**MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2026, meeting of the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

Clerk Bishop advised the Board about an upcoming Board of Equalization training.

### **MATT LUCIA – GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION**

Matt Lucia appeared before the Board on behalf of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. The Coalition is working statewide to gain a better understanding about how public lands are used. Commissioner Olsen stated he believes public lands benefit the citizens of Bear Lake County through grazing, harvesting timber for heating homes, and recreational uses. Commissioner Eborn mentioned the jobs created at the local lumber mill from timber harvested from public lands. He believes public lands are an asset to Bear Lake County, but not knowing how much PILT money the county will receive from year to year makes it hard to create a yearly budget. Commissioner Payne explained how PILT and SRS funds work. He mentioned using public lands for agriculture and recreation.

Lucia asked about challenges the county faces with public lands. Commissioner Olsen reported that off-road vehicles are a challenge for the Sheriff's Office, Emergency Services, and Search and Rescue. The number of visitors increases every year and the county infrastructure is affected. Commissioner Eborn reported that the county is seeing increased numbers of visitors

in the summer coming north from Cache County. He would like to see more help from federal partners for enforcement. Commissioner Payne reported that the forests are dying due to lack of pesticides and pest control. Commissioner Olsen stated he would like to see more help for law enforcement.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING – Sheriff’s Fees**

**MOTION: At 9:17 am, Commissioner Olsen made a motion to enter a public hearing to discuss Sheriff’s fees. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

Commissioner Payne gave the rules for a public hearing.

Sheriff Bart Heslington outlined the proposed increase in fees and the reasons for the proposed increases. He reported that the Sheriff’s Office acts as a vendor for the State of Idaho; and the state has increased their fees. In addition to fees charged by the State, Heslington proposed adding two fees. He would like to add an hourly Sheriff’s Keeper fee in order to charge for civil standbys on court orders. He would also like to add a fingerprinting fee for providing fingerprinting services for non-Idaho residents. Heslington added that he is proposing fees to make sure services are being paid for by those who are using the services.

**MOTION: At 9:27 am, Commissioner Eborn made a motion to close the public hearing and return to the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

**MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the resolution to increase the fees as presented by Sheriff Heslington. The fee for civil paper service will increase from \$55 to \$60; the fee for an initial Concealed Weapon License will increase from \$56.10 to \$65.00; the fee for a renewed Concealed Weapon License will increase from \$37.80 to \$40; the fee for the Sex Offender Registry will increase from \$80 to \$85. The Sheriff’s Office will add a Sheriff’s Keeper fee of \$45 per hour for civil standbys and a fingerprint fee of \$10 for non-residents. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

#### **COUNTY BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

Clerk Amy Bishop reported that Todd Transtrum would like to continue serving on the Planning and Zoning Board. She suggested making his term shorter so all the appointments aren’t due at the same time. Commissioner Payne suggested appointing Transtrum for two years.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to reappoint Todd Transtrum to the Planning and Zoning Board for two years. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

Clerk Bishop reported that the Translator District would like to appoint Dennis Bills to serve on its board.

**MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to appoint Dennis Bills to a three-year term for the Translator District. He publicly thanked Virgil Johnson for his time and dedication to the Translator District. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

Clerk Bishop reported that the Snowmobile Committee would like to keep a larger committee. Those appointments don't have a term limit, but it would be helpful to get the members on set terms in order to keep track of the time they have served.

Commissioner Eborn stated he would like to review the Snowmobile Committee appointments each January.

### **MONTPELIER AREA OF IMPACT**

Commissioners Eborn and Olson reported they were comfortable with the proposed map for the Montpelier Area of Impact.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to accept the proposed map for the Montpelier Area of Impact. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

Clerk Bishop read the ordinance which included some minor edits for clarity that had been made by Ronnie.

**MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the City of Montpelier Impact Ordinance 2026-1. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

Commissioner Payne reported that Mitch Poulsen, the Planning & Zoning administrator, wants to do the Georgetown Area of Impact next. Commissioner Payne would like to see the cities hold their own public hearings. He asked that Poulsen notify the Board when a date was set for that meeting.

### **PAYROLL SCHEDULE DISCUSSION**

Clerk Bishop informed the Board that the county has been paying employees monthly, but is facing increasing complications. She proposed changing to a bi-weekly pay period. Chief Deputy Clerk Mindy Williamson explained the difficulties she has with calculating time for sheriff deputies. She indicated that switching to bi-weekly pay periods will alleviate these difficulties and simplify the process for deputies.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to change the payroll schedule as presented by Williamson and Bishop. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

### **JUNETEENTH/JUDICIAL HOLIDAYS**

Clerk Bishop reported on the problems faced with the State of Idaho implements holidays but the county calendar doesn't mirror those holidays. She asked if the Board would consider altering the county holidays to match with state holidays.

Commissioner Olsen mentioned he would like to revisit the yearly holiday schedule.

Commissioner Payne suggested that this matter be tabled until it could be discussed in the four-county meeting scheduled for March 4, 2026.

#### **ITAFOS CONDA SCOPING**

Commissioner Payne reported that Itafos has asked for a letter of support for the Dry Ridge Extension Exploration Project.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to send a letter of support for the Dry Ridge Extension Exploration Project DOI-BLM-ID-I000-2026-0003-EA. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

#### **ARPA FUND**

Clerk Bishop reported that the LACTF funds were a second round of ARPA funding. She would like to get the money used up so the county doesn't run up against any deadlines. There is about \$9,000 remaining in the fund due to some projects that came in under budget. Additionally, the county has earned approximately \$100,000 in interest on the ARPA money. Clerk Bishop asked what process the Board would like to follow to get the money allocated.

Clerk Bishop reported on some needs that have already been expressed by the Sheriff's Office, Bear Lake Memorial Hospital, and Bear Lake Ambulance Service. Commissioner Olsen reported needs of the Road and Bridge Department. He asked that an email be sent to each department regarding their needs.

**MOTION: At 10:24 am, Commissioner Olsen made a motion for a six-minute break. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

**MOTION: At 10:30 am, Commissioner Olsen made a motion to resume the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION – Idaho Code §74-206(1)(d)**

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to enter executive session under Idaho Code §74-206(1)(d) To consider records that are exempt for disclosure as provided in chapter 1, title 74, Idaho Code. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.**

**Roll call vote: Commissioner Payne, aye. Commissioner Eborn, aye. Commissioner Olsen, aye.**

**The Board was in executive session at 10:31 am.**

**MOTION:** At 10:46 am, Commissioner Olsen made a motion to leave executive session and return to the regular meeting. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn.

**DECISION ON INDIGENT MATTER**

Commissioner Payne explained how the indigent program and medical liens are handled.

**MOTION:** Alan made a motion to approve Bear Lake County to take second priority on case 2010-11 and 2010-4, and to approve Commissioner Payne to sign a letter on behalf of the Board of Commissioners upon approval of the bank's loan conditions. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

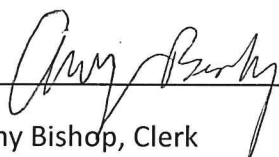
**MOTION:** At 10:48 am, Commissioner Olsen made a motion to adjourn. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

  
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Rex L. Payne, Chairman

3-9-2026

Date Approved

ATTEST:   
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Amy Bishop, Clerk

