Bear Lake County Commissioners' Meeting

August 24, 2026
Commissioners' Chambers – Paris, Idaho

The Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners met in its regular meeting at 9 a.m. Monday, August 24, 2026, in the Commissioners' Chambers in Paris, Idaho. Video access to the meeting was available via Zoom. Members present were Commissioner Wynn S. Olsen, Commissioner Alan P. Eborn, and Clerk of the Board Amy Bishop. Board Chairman Rex L. Payne was excused. Prosecutor Ronnie Keller was present via Zoom. Also in attendance were various staff and members of the public.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Board reviewed the agenda. Commissioner Olsen noted that the agenda needed a correction to make the Approval of Agenda an action item.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the agenda with the correction noted. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

GENERAL BUSINESS

SALE OF 94 FORD DUMP TRUCK WITH PLOW TO IDAWY

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to table the sale of the dump truck until the next meeting. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

SURPLUS MOWING TRACTOR AND FAIR TRACTOR

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to move the mowing tractor and fair tractor to surplus. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

CERTIFICATE OF RESIDENCY

Maria V. Ramos submitted a Certificate of Residency to the Board. She will be attending College of Southern Idaho.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the Certificate of Residency for Maria V. Ramos. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

PLANNING AND ZONING APPOINTMENT

Commissioner Olsen reported that Eric Bomsta had stepped down from his position on the Planning and Zoning Commission. Clerk Amy Bishop provided information regarding the term for the new appointee.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to appoint Brad Jensen to serve on the Planning and Zoning Commission, with his term beginning January 2027. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

BEAR LAKE WATCH AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES WASH STATION DISCUSSION

Brady Long, executive director of Bear Lake Watch, reported that he had reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding provided by the prosecutor. Long will have an attorney review it before signing. Long reported that Bear Lake Watch had leased land on North Beach Road for the wash station. He reported that the leased land will need some surface work and fencing work done to be ready for next spring. Long reported that he will contact law enforcement about traffic control. He explained his concept of the traffic control for the station.

Prosecutor Ronnie Keller explained the reasoning behind having two Memoranda of Understanding. He explained how the parties arrived at the current version of the Memoranda.

Commissioner Eborn expressed concern about the time to hire and train employees. He expressed disappointment with the Idaho Department of Agriculture and their level of involvement with this project despite having money allocated by the legislature for projects like this.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Bear Lake Watch as presented based on the review of the county attorney, effective at the end of this meeting, recognizing that the whole plan may not be put into place until next spring. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Idaho Department of Agriculture for the invasive species wash station, effective at the end of this meeting, recognizing that the whole plan may not be put into effect until next spring. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

Commissioner Eborn directed Brady Long to contact Todd Boehme to get the work done on the parking lot.

ROGER SORENSON – ROAD GRANT ASSISTANCE

Roger Sorenson reported that he met with Idaho Transportation Department District Five and they are fully on board with the plan for the FLAP grant application. Sorenson inquired if the Board was agreeable to him making the same proposal to the cities of St. Charles and Montpelier.

The Board held a discussion with Sorenson and Road and Bridge Supervisor, Todd Boehme, about an ongoing project on Merkley Lake Road that may preclude the county from receiving additional grant funds.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to authorize Roger Sorenson to continue to pursue the FLAP grant and to determine if the county is able to move forward with additional FLAP grant funding. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

Commissioner Olsen directed Sorenson to look at the intersection on Hwy 30 and Boise Street for high school traffic.

NIC HIGGINS – FUELS REDUCTION IN BAILEY CREEK AND WEST SIDE OF THE VALLEY

Nic Higgins, Emergency Management Coordinator and Snow Manager for Bear Lake County, reported on work completed on the snowmobile parking lot in Mill Canyon. He reported that bid specifications were available for a new snow groomer. The groomer will be paid for by Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Commissioner Olsen indicated that the Road and Bridge Department may be interested in obtaining the used groomer. Higgins reported that he is interested in acquiring one of the police vehicles at the end of its lease.

Higgins reported on efforts to keep patrons safe during rainstorms during the Bear Lake County Fair the previous week. He reported that one event was shut down due to lightning and another due to high winds. Higgins reported on meetings regarding radio communication and grants for hazardous material response. He reported that he has been working with Caribou County on fire suppression management in Bailey Creek. Caribou County has been working on fuels reduction on private property. Higgins reported on grant money available from Southeast Idaho Council of Governments (SICOG) for the purpose of fuels reduction. Charity Staggs from SICOG was present at the meeting and explained how the grant program works.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to pursue the technical assistance agreement between SICOG and the county for fuels reduction in Bailey Creek and in the south end of the valley, and to authorize Nic Higgins to sign on the county's behalf. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

MICHAEL BIRD- REQUEST FOR SPECIAL CANCELLATION, PER IDAHO CODE § 63-707(6) AND § 63-711 (HARDSHIP)

Michael Bird presented letters he received from the Idaho State Tax Commission. He explained that he is not asking for a tax cancellation but wants to receive relief through the Property Tax Reduction program (PTR). Prosecutor Ronnie Keller pointed out that the PTR program is administered by the state not the county. He explained that state statute allows a candidate to petition the county for relief after being denied by the state.

Commissioner Eborn read aloud the letter sent to Bird from the Idaho State Tax Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to deny the request from Mr. Bird based on the Idaho Board of Tax Appeals decision to deny. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

MITCH POULSEN- STUART CRANE REZONE RECOMMENDATION

Mitch Poulsen, administrator for the Planning and Zoning Commission, reported that he recommends approval of the application from Stuart Crane for a rezone on Lower Bern Road. Poulsen reported that the notice requirements have been met, and that Crane is seeking approval to rezone with the intention to split the lot after the approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the Stuart Crane rezone recommendation from Planning and Zoning. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 am.

Rex L. Payne, Chairman

9/14/26
Date Approved

ATTEST: _____
Amy Bishop, Clerk

AUDITOR AND RECORDER
BEAR LAKE
COUNTY
STATE OF IDAHO