

Bear Lake County Commissioners' Meeting

January 12, 2026

Commissioners' Chambers – Paris, Idaho

The Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners met in its regular meeting at 9 a.m. Monday, January 12, 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, Chief Deputy Sheriff Wes Barnhill, Prosecutor Ronnie Keller, and various staff and members of the public.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The board reviewed the agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the agenda for the December 22, 2025, meeting of the Board of County Commissioners. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

TREASURER TRICIA POULSEN

Tricia Poulsen presented a report for the month of December, including tax cancellations in the amount of \$2,637.44 for Homeowner's Exemptions and \$990.00 for garbage. Commissioner Alan Eborn made a motion to approve the cancellation of taxes. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion.

ASSESSOR JANNELLE JENSEN

Jannelle Jensen presented a report for the month of December. She notified the board that the county is without a state consulting appraiser for the third time since she took office. Her office will be inspecting Fish Haven this year.

CLERK AMY BISHOP

Amy Bishop reported that the Election Conference was held the week prior. There has been a proposal to eliminate the May election in odd years. She had concerns with staffing if that change is made. She is still working on the transparency report, as the state continues to request revisions.

CHIEF DEPUTY SHERIFF WES BARNHILL

Wes Barnhill gave the sheriff's office monthly report. He reported that the new dispatch center is up and running. He indicated that there were redundancies in place to keep dispatch working. The Sheriff's Office has one position open. Two applicants will be tested.

PROSECUTOR RONNIE KELLER

Ronnie Keller updated the board about the prosecutor's office. Last month they were looking for a Deputy Prosecutor. Keller's position in Cache County was eliminated. He will now be working for Bear Lake County full time. He stressed that he will not be running a private practice and that Bear Lake County is his priority. He will not be hiring a deputy at this point.

BUILDING INSPECTOR WAYNE DAVIDSON

Wayne Davidson reported that the county has for one more Pictometry flight that was already paid for. That will occur in June. He had additional items on the agenda later in the morning and will address those issues then.

REVIEW COMMISSIONERS ASSIGNMENTS

Commissioners Eborn and Olsen were satisfied with the way things were going.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to keep the current assignments the same. Commissioner Olsen seconded. The motion carried.

COUNTY BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Clerk Bishop reviewed the appointments that will expire this year. She requested each Commissioner speak with the members whose terms will expire to determine if they would like to continue to serve. She indicated that motions could be made in the next meeting regarding appointments. Commissioner Olsen reported they would be getting a new member on the fair board this month. He commented about the statutes for fair board members.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Commissioner Olsen reported that the high school would be holding two rodeos in the arena this spring. The Bear Lake County Fair will be held August 10-15, 2026. There was a brief discussion regarding storage in the fair buildings during the off season. Olsen reported that Road and Bridge was working on controlling beavers building dams in culverts. Olsen also reported that all of the material being hauled to the new Utah marina is coming out of Worm Creek and the road has been damaged. Repairs to the road will need to be discussed in the spring. Olsen praised the Road and Bridge Department for the good work they are doing.

Commissioner Eborn reported the Historical Society has been trying to locate the Pegram Cemetery. They are having some success. Eborn reported that the snowmobile grooming team has started grooming. There was 3 feet of new snow recently. There are ongoing problems with the parking lots for snowmobilers. Eborn reported that the communications team needs to hold coordination meetings to get on the same page. He deferred any additional comments until later in the morning when agenda items were addressed.

Commissioner Payne reported that the public health board isn't updated. Clerk Bishop said that board is under the direction of Maggie Mann. Payne reported that that Dell Transtrum is taking over as forester. He reported that the Impact Zones around Joe's Gap were going to be addressed in a public meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

RATIFY CLAIMS

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to ratify the claims before the Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes were presented to the Board for approval from the December 8 and 22, 2025, meetings. Commissioner Olsen made a correction regarding who seconded a motion.

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

SNOWCAT GRANT LETTER

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the grants for a new truck, trailer, and a letter of support for a snowcat. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

CDBG GRANT AMENDMENT-SENIOR CENTER

The CDBG grant was increased by \$8,500.00.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to accept the additional funds and to ratify the grant amendment. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SUMMARY

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Alternative Energy Ordinance Summary for publication. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

COUNTY VESSEL RETENTION FORM

Clerk Bishop provided an explanation about the form. She reported the county was looking for a new boat and carryover funds may be used to match future grants.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the form, to carryover the surplus money for emergency repairs, and to offset the cost of a new boat. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

AUDIT ENGAGEMENT LETTER

Clerk Bishop suggested this item may need to be tabled. She had spoken to the auditor but had not received the letter. They determined a single audit will be required next year for federal funds received.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to authorize Clerk Bishop to sign the letter when it arrives. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion for a ten-minute recess. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

The meeting was in recess at 10:02 am.

MOTION: At 10:15 am, Commissioner Olsen made a motion to resume the meeting. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING- RIVERVIEW SUBDIVISION

MOTION: At 10:16 am, Commissioner Eborn made a motion to go into a public hearing. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

Commissioner Payne outlined the rules for a public hearing and gathering information. Mitch Poulsen, Planning and Zoning Director, provided information about the proposed subdivision. Applicants Tiffany and Ephraim Hoge commented about Poulsen's report. Devin Boehme, Mark Ipsen, and Cooper Jensen gave comments in opposition to the subdivision. Concerns cited were the need for agricultural protection, potential issues with the Stuart Dam, and a new statute that places restrictions on use of water for outdoor watering. Kathi Izatt commented in support of the subdivision. She talked about the need for affordable housing and mentioned that flooding was not a concern. Ms. Izatt read a statement from Roy Bunderson in support of the subdivision. Mr. Bunderson believes the subdivision is compatible with agricultural use. He disagrees with the statement from the stockyard association. Tiffany and Ephraim Hoge provided a rebuttal to the public comments. They felt like the decision of the Planning and Zoning Board was based on emotion rather than fact. They noted that three members of the Planning and Zoning Board are members of the stockyard association, creating a conflict of interest. The Hoges addressed concerns with flooding. They reported that the property is the high ground; flooding occurs around but not on the property in question. The pink circles show where perc tests were done in 2023. They indicated that no basements will be allowed in the subdivision. Regarding the stockyard being so close, the Hoges asserted that having homes near the stockyard will provide extra sets of eyes, adding an extra measure of security. They reported that fences will be required in the subdivision.

MOTION: At 11:11 am, Commissioner Olsen made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

Comments were heard from Commissioners Eborn, Olsen, and Payne; Prosecutor Ronnie Keller, and Building Inspector Wayne Davidson.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to conditionally approve the application conditioned on obtaining a conditional use permit and adding language to the agricultural easement regarding flood potential. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

Tiffany Hoge was directed to contact the prosecuting attorney to review the wording.

ADJUSTMENT OF PRECINCT BOUNDARY

Clerk Bishop explained that the Secretary of State had requested to include Bear Lake in the county boundary. It was added to the St. Charles precinct.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to include the lake area in the precinct boundary. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

SHERIFF'S OFFICE FEE ADJUSTMENTS

Chief Deputy Sheriff Wes Barnhill outlined proposed increases in processing fees. Commissioner Payne explained that increases must be done in a public hearing. This matter will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

County Superintendent Todd Boehme reported on ongoing repairs and upkeep throughout the county. The Hill Climb Association sent their appreciation for help in past years and have requested help from the Road and Bridge Department to keep the parking lot plowed during the hill climb this year. A tentative date is February 6-7, 2026, but it may be postponed if there is not enough snow.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the Road and Bridge Department to clear snow from the roads and parking lot during the hill climbs. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

Boehme requested to add two 1-way snowplows to the surplus list.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to add the two items to the surplus list. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

Jake Poulsen from Keller Engineering addressed the Board, outlining the retainer agreement. It will be \$20,000 for the year. Prosecutor Keller commented on the agreement. Clerk Bishop reminded the Board that the budget for this had been increased.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the agreement for professional services from Keller Associates. The motion received a second from Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

Poulsen provided updates about the current grants. The Local highway safety investment grant has recommended a 1.5 million dollar award, which began with reviewing the guardrails after the North Beach fatality. LHTAC will complete a Request for Proposal. Keller Associates plans to submit a proposal. A selection committee will be chosen. A match of 7.34% is committed. Last year there was an application to the Leading Highway Local Bridge Program for Camp Stewart Bridge, but was not awarded. This year there is a federal aid bridge program which does not require local match. However, the cost to replace the Camp Stewart Bridge is 6.3 million dollars and the maximum award is 3 million dollars. Rehabilitation for the bridge could be done instead, but it is 110 years old. Poulsen still thinks replacement is the better option but that this may not

be the right time to apply. Applications are accepted every two years. They will look to apply for the grant in 2028 and seek other grant money to supplement.

CHRISTIN WAHLER-REQUEST TO WAIVE PENALTY AND INTEREST

Ms. Wahler appeared before the Board to request the penalty and interest for past-due taxes be waived for parcels 24279.00 and 00402.00. She will make arrangements to make monthly payments for the remainder. Commissioner Payne explained the procedure for payments.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to approve the waiver of the penalty and interest for 2022 if Ms. Wahler paid the 2022 taxes today. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

SCOTT NELSON-BUILDING A SHED NORTH OF PARIS ON HIGHWAY 89

Mr. Nelson appeared before the Board to request the Commissioners determine how the ordinance regulating setbacks should be applied to a shed he was building north of Paris along the highway. The ordinance was unclear regarding how the setbacks applied to barns in the same footprint of the one being replaced. Comments were made by Commissioners Payne, Eborn, and Olsen.

MOTION: Commissioner Eborn made a motion to allow Mr. Nelson to continue to build the shed in the same footprint of the one being replaced. Eborn requested that the Board review the code for clarification. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

RON SKINNER-REQUEST TO WAIVE PENALTY AND INTEREST

Mr. Skinner appeared before the board to request the penalty and interest for past-due taxes be waived. Commissioner Payne explained the procedure for payments. Assessor Jannelle Jensen directed Mr. Skinner to stop by her office to sign up for property tax reduction. Treasurer Tricia Poulsen clarified that Mr. Skinner was asking for a waiver for the 2023 fees.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve a waiver of the 2023 penalties and interest and set Mr. Skinner up on a payment plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION FOR OCCUPANCY ROLL

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen moved to open a Board of Equalization meeting after a 5-minute break. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

Assessor Jannelle Jensen reported that the roll was completed and she received no appeals. She outlined the taxable value in the county.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen moved to close the Board of Equalization meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen moved to accept the Occupancy Roll. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eborn. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 12:43 pm.

Rex L. Payne
Rex L. Payne, Chairman

2-9-2026
Date approved

Attest: *Amy Bishop*
Amy Bishop, Clerk

