

Crook County Board of County Commissioners Minutes of December 5, 2025, Special Session Agenda

Be It Remembered that the Crook County Board of County Commissioners met in a Special Session Agenda on December 5, 2025, at 1:00 PM in the Crook Annex Meeting Room, located at County Annex Meeting Room 320 NE Court Street, Prineville, OR 97754.

Special Session Agenda

Board Members Present: Seth Crawford, Susan Hermreck, Brian Barney

Board Members Absent:

Others Present in Person or Via Zoom: County Counsel Eric Blaine; County Manager Will Van Vactor; Executive Assistant Breyanna Cupp; Administrative Division Manager Stephanie Wilson; Budget Manager Jamie Berger; Finance Director Christina Haron; Legal Assistant Alex Solterbeck; County Clerk Cheryl Seely; HR Director Meghan McKee; IT Director Blaine Cheney; Account Manager Lisa Neuberger; Systems Engineer Chelsea Watson; Undersheriff Bill Elliott; Human Resources; and members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 01:00 PM.

Public Comment

None.

Discussion

1. Review of Core Services for the Administration, Finance, Legal, and Human Resources Departments

Details:

Will Van Vactor opened the meeting by explaining the concept of core services in the public sector. He described core services as the essential and mission-critical functions that government departments must provide to serve the community and meet legal and operational responsibilities. These services ensure public welfare, security, and effective administration. He noted that core services are typically legally mandated, essential to mission fulfillment, and necessary for operational sustainability. Key characteristics include alignment with community needs, high public expectation, prioritization in strategic and financial planning, and their role as the foundation of public trust and accountability.

Finance Director Christina Haron presented an overview of its mission, essential functions, and core services, emphasizing its role in ensuring the County's fiscal health, transparency, and compliance. The department provides countywide financial management, including revenue collection, accounts payable, budgeting and long-term

financial planning, payroll and benefits administration, asset and debt management, and financial reporting, audit coordination, and policy development. Christina highlighted how these services support Board of Commissioners goals related to financial sustainability, transparency, service continuity, workforce support, and long-term infrastructure planning. Performance metrics were outlined for revenue collection, vendor payments, budgeting, payroll, investments, debt compliance, audits, and internal customer satisfaction. Key partnerships with county departments, auditors, agencies, vendors, and investment advisors were noted, along with potential budget considerations related to staffing capacity, technology upgrades, training needs, and changing economic conditions.

Commissioner Hermreck commended the Finance team on receiving the recent GFOA award and asked for an update on how the new financial system transition is progressing. Christina reported that the system's functions are working well and that the transition has gone smoothly. She noted the new system is already improving workflow, helping streamline contracts, and is expected to increase overall efficiency. Commissioner Barney noted that the system transition will take time and expressed appreciation that the Finance Department is doing well through the process. Commissioner Crawford agreed and also commended the Finance team on receiving their recent award.

County Counsel Eric Blaine presented an overview of the Office of Legal Counsel's mission, essential functions, and core services, emphasizing the department's role in providing timely, strategic, and cost-effective legal support to the Board of Commissioners, county departments, and commissions. The presentation outlined six core service areas: general civil legal representation and advice; contract, ordinance, and policy review; public records, public meetings, and governance compliance; employment, ethics, and personnel law; code enforcement, litigation, and county representation; and preventive legal services, risk management, and training. Eric explained that these services help ensure legal compliance, reduce risk and liability, promote transparency and accountability, and support effective county operations. Performance metrics, key partnerships, and budget considerations were also reviewed, including staffing levels, service standards, and funding through internal service charges.

Eric discussed the potential use of outside counsel and outlined how he would like that process to function if outside legal services are needed due to the loss of an employee in the office. Commissioner Hermreck asked questions regarding the partnerships and performance targets shown on the presentation slide. Eric explained that these targets are intended to be tracked and that upcoming budget goal-setting efforts will make them easier to measure.

Meghan McKee presented an overview of the Human Resources Department's mission, essential functions, and core services, emphasizing HR's role in supporting County operations, employee welfare, and legal compliance. She explained that HR is

responsible for recruitment and staffing, employee compensation and benefits, training and professional development, employee relations and conflict resolution, performance management, compliance with labor and safety laws, workforce planning, and management of HR information systems. Meghan highlighted performance measures used to evaluate HR effectiveness, including employee satisfaction, retention, diversity and inclusion outcomes, competitive pay and benefits, risk mitigation, and timely resolution of employee issues. She also reviewed key partnerships with Finance, Legal, IT, and elected officials, and discussed potential budget considerations such as increased service demand, compliance requirements, and costs associated with attrition and turnover.

Commissioner Hermreck asked for an update on the new HRIS system. Meghan McKee reported that implementation is nearly complete and that the department hopes to roll it out next month. She noted that NeoGov provides an improved platform, particularly for recruitment efforts. Commissioner Hermreck commended Meghan for her dedication and continued service to the County. Meghan expressed appreciation for her colleagues and the collaborative working environment. Commissioner Barney and Commissioner Crawford echoed Commissioner Hermreck's comments and also expressed their appreciation for Meghan and the HR team.

County Manager Will Van Vactor presented an overview of the Administration and Board of Commissioners' mission, essential functions, and core services, emphasizing executive leadership, strategic direction, fiscal stewardship, and accountability in serving Crook County residents. He outlined key service areas including county governance and strategic leadership, executive oversight of departments, budget and long-range financial planning, internal services and organizational support, and communications and public engagement. The presentation highlighted how these functions support Board goals related to outstanding service, financial sustainability, collaboration, transparency, quality of life, and long-term facilities planning. Performance measures, key partnerships, and potential budget considerations were reviewed, including the importance of competitive compensation, managing inflation and revenue changes, and balancing immediate operational needs with long-term strategic investments.

Commissioner Barney commended Will for his strong administrative leadership and stated that he is doing a great job. Commissioner Hermreck and Seth echoed Commissioner Barney's comments and also expressed their appreciation for Will's work.

Will emphasized that the review of core service descriptions is progressing well and will serve as a key tool for both budget planning and strategic decision-making. Feedback from commissioners will be incorporated into a final package to be presented at a regular board meeting. These core service descriptions will also provide a reference point for annual updates to reflect changes in state mandates, board priorities, or

service needs. Will noted that the process ensures the county can make informed, transparent, and strategic decisions moving forward.

Executive Session

2. None scheduled.

MOTION: Seth Crawford moved to adjourn the meeting. Susan Hermreck seconded. No discussion. Seth Crawford votes Aye, Susan Hermreck votes Aye, Brian Barney votes Aye. Motion Passed 3-0.

There being no further business before the Board of Commissioners, the meeting was **adjourned at 01:52 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Breyanna Cupp, Executive Assistant