

Union County Budget Committee Meeting
Budget Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 21, 2025
Joseph Building Annex Conference Room

Present: Paul Anderes, Commissioner
R. Matthew Scarfo, Commissioner
Jake Seavert, Commissioner
Matthew Goodwin, Budget Committee Member
Audrey Cant, Budget Committee Member
Mathew Miles, Budget Committee Member
Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer/Budget Officer
Allison Moore, Senior Department Specialist/Recording Secretary

Call to Order

The Chair Audrey Cant called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Special Funds Presentations

Buffalo Peak Golf Course Fund

Dana Londin, Buffalo Peak Golf Course General Manager, presented the proposed budget for the Buffalo Peak Golf Course to the budget committee for their consideration.

Major objectives for FY 2025-26 are to increase play at the course, focus on efficient outreach/advertising including attendance at the Boise Golf Show the last couple of years, cart path repairs and exploring options for additional uses/revenue generation.

General Manager Londin is extremely excited to get the cart path repairs going; which will bring more revenue in in the end.

Commissioner Anderes visited with a gentleman at another golf course locally and relayed he is very happy to see the golf cart path repairs beginning. General Manager Londin indicated that previous management patched up what they could at the time; but was a temporary fix.

General Manager Londin noted that there is big change happening at the 18th green (sand bunker) and he is excited to see it happening. The bunker will be filled with red cinder that is purchased through a seller in Union.

Commissioner Seavert asked if the cart paths would be funded under his Maintenance line item. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated that it was included under ARPA funds.

AMERA (Mt. Emily Recreation Area)

Josh Ford, Union County Parks Coordinator, introduced himself and provided background on AMERA to the committee for their information.

Revenues this year included a \$281,653 grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department ATV Operations and Maintenance Grant Program. Revenue for the Parking Program is anticipated to be \$16,000.

Capital Outlay purchases include a one-ton truck with the installation of a flatbed and a seasonal fire skid in the amount of \$102,620. The flatbed tilt-deck trailer is an additional \$10,000.

Personnel Services which will increase due to merit increases, COLA and the cost for insurance is rising. Weed Control and Fire Control are always a big chunk of the budget, which is expected to increase this year. The hope is that ARPA will cover some of those costs.

Mr. Ford briefed the committee on the status of the parking permit program, which began in March 2025. As of today, there has been \$8,189 in parking permit sales.

Commissioner Anderes asked if it was possible to make parking permits available at local bike shops for sale. Mr. Ford indicated the only way that would be possible is if the shop purchased the tickets outright and provided them to the shop for resale.

Commissioner Anderes asked if there is any fire training planned for him to utilize the fire skid. Mr. Ford indicated that he is half way through the training.

Commissioner Scarfo is surprised to see that parking permit revenue is as high as it is; he wasn't expecting that much. Mr. Ford said it is turning out to be more work than he anticipated.

Commissioner Anderes asked if the ticketing system tracks the location the user is traveling from. Mr. Ford indicated if the user purchased an annual pass he only gets the information one time. However, he mails the passes, so he sees where the user resides. He will be gathering data.

Audrey Cant inquired about the abandoned vehicle problem on AMERA that began last year. Mr. Ford indicated that there aren't as many as last year.

Mathew Miles referred to Sheriff Bowen's comment about the cost of towing RV's and asked if there are any abandoned on AMERA. Mr. Ford indicated it happens all of the time.

Parks Fund

Josh Ford, Parks Coordinator, provided a brief staff report to the budget committee for their information.

Union County Parks developed and maintains four (4) parks; Thief Valley Reservoir, Wolf Creek Reservoir, Pilcher Creek Reservoir and Perry Swimming Hole.

The major objectives are to apply dust abatement, improve campgrounds, maintain boat docks, and maintain a high standard of restroom cleanliness. There are no major projects planned for FY 2025-26.

Staffing is a part-time Parks Coordinator and a quarter-time employee who removes garbage, cleans restrooms, maintains the grounds, and at times may act as a camp host.

The revenue from RV receipts is anticipated to be \$50,000 while the Marine Board portion of the revenue is anticipated to be \$9,537.

Public Works

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, provided a brief staff report to the budget committee for their information.

Director Wright indicated that the beginning fund balance is down due to the absence of SRS funding this year, which is depending on federal approval. The budget shows revenue of \$102,110 which is based on the volume of timber cut on United State Forest Service land.

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) represents federal gas revenue which is in the amount of \$335,057. These funds allow him to exchange federal dollars for state dollars, which allows his crew to be able to do work as far as chip seal, paving, patching and bridge work.

State Highway funds has increased due to additional gas tax revenue approved by HB2017, bringing total revenue to \$7,890,756.

The Public Work Department consists of eighteen (18) positions, and one (1) temporary position utilized as needed. There is one full-time vacant position due to a retirement that may be filled if the Oregon gas tax increases and SRS funding is re-authorized. Personnel services totals \$2,093,290.

Materials and Services is in the amount of \$3,678,383 with Road Maintenance approximately \$2,000,000 of that amount.

Director Wright discussed projects under Capital Outlay which total \$490,000.

Road Rehabilitation consists of widening shoulders on Summerville Road from Sanderson Road to Tollgate Highway. Chip seal will be done on the following roads; Summerville Road, Sanderson to Tollgate, River Road, Ellis Lane to Tucker Flat, Old Oregon Trail and Booth Lane.

Airport Operations

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, provided a brief staff report to the budget committee for their information.

Revenue includes fuel sales, hangar rent, forest service rent, and other miscellaneous sales in the amount of \$3,567,412.

The airport supports one full-time employee, one-half employee and one part-time employee totaling \$222,125 in Personnel services.

Materials and Services is in the amount of \$2,247,003 for fuel purchase and other expenditures needed to operate the airport.

Commissioner Anderes asked for clarification on consolidating rental of facilities for the rappel base. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated when the county built the building, the contract was airtight. Meaning, if they shut down, or relocate, they would still have to pay.

Airport Capital Improvement Fund

Doug Wright, Public Works Director, presented the proposed budget to the budget committee for their information.

Major accomplishments in 2024-25 is the completed design work on the SW Hangar Development Taxiway and RW 12-30 shoulder project. Also started, is the Connect Oregon grant project which includes new aviation storage hangars, backup generator and fuel system upgrade.

Major objectives include completing the Connect Oregon grant and begin construction on the taxiway project.

The budget committee thanked Director Wright for all of his efforts in keeping the budget in line.

Weed Control Fund

Brian Clapp, Weed Supervisor, presented the proposed budget to the committee for their information.

Operating revenues from the tax levy are estimated to increase 3 percent from the budgeted \$245,000 in FY 2023-24 to \$267,800 due to land values increasing. Grant revenue is expected to be roughly \$73,644 with grant agreements in place with Union Pacific and OSU, along with shop space rental is expected to bring in \$27,400 in FY 2025-26.

There is also an anticipated carryover of \$150,000 due to grant and weed treatment season not aligning with county fiscal year. Total revenues are in the amount of \$518,844.

Seasonal help will be contracted through Tri-County Weed CWMA or a local spray contractor.

Materials and Services line item are projected to be down from \$215,207 to \$208,000 in large part due to using up supplies of herbicides purchased in previous fiscal years.

Commissioner Anderes is very thankful for the work of the Weed Department. Mr. Clapp indicated that he could not do it without the help of Shonda of Tri County Weed.

Other Special Funds

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, went over each individual Special Fund that wasn't previously discussed as requested by Chair Cant. Below is the summary of discussions on those funds on which there were questions.

Bicycle Path/Project Fund

Administrative Officer Burgess explained the fundamentals of the Bicycle Path/Project Fund. The amount received for this purpose annually is approximately \$25,000. The county intends to accumulate that until there is enough to be impactful along with a project.

Another line item included in this fund is the EOCA Project Fund. Membership dues are received from participating counties and spent in accordance with approval of the members. The EOCA is also staffed by a part-time Coordinator employed by Union County.

Matthew Goodwin asked what a bicycle path project would typically look like. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated bicycle funds were last used when Island City did Walton Road. The county put forth funds into the project to make the bicycle paths on each side of the road.

Commissioner Anderes asked for clarification on the portion that Union County puts into EOCA. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated that the county writes a check to EOCA that is then deposited into the fund.

Wind Project Fund

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, went over the Wind Project Fund to the budget committee for their information.

The only funding that the county received this fiscal year is called "shared revenue" from the state, and it was based on the employment taxes paid by individuals who work within the project area. There have been talks about it ending; but still continues. Commissioner Anderes believes it was a full session ago, and hasn't heard anything else since.

Sheriff Reserve Fund

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, went over the Sheriff Reserve Program Fund.

Commissioner Scarfo asked if the Sheriff's percentage of transient room tax funding will go in this fund if the second reading of the TRT ordinance is approved. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated that she included it in the Sheriff's budget.

Economic Development

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, explained the Economic Development Fund to the budget committee.

Audrey Cant asked if the Buffalo Peak transfer is to help mitigate the loss and also referred to the fairgrounds. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated the hope is that they would use it to maintain the facilities and continue to be a place that attract people.

Community Development Loan Fund

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, explained the Community Development Loan fund to the budget committee.

Union County has been asked to apply for a \$400,000 grant to replenish the program in 2025-26 on behalf of Community Connection. If awarded, Union County will enter into a contract for administration of the program.

Agri Services

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, explained the Watermaster fund to the budget committee for their information.

Commissioner Seavert asked if there is a Watermaster for Union County. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated his name is Shad Hatten. He is a state employee housed at the Ag Services building.

Non-Medical Transportation Fund

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, explained the Non-Med Transportation Fund to the budget committee.

Commissioner Seavert asked why funding for the program has gone down. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated that ridership is down, however the grant is still open so the fund remains open.

Law Library Fund

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, explained the Law Library Fund to the budget committee for their consideration. There is a plan to move from hard copy documents to digital.

Audrey Cant asked if there is a fee to convert from print to digital resources. Administrative Officer indicated that they have had digital before as well as subscriptions of books available in the library.

Surveyor

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, explained the Union County Surveyor proposed budget to the budget committee for their information.

Commissioner Anderes clarified that the Surveyor, Jeff Hsu, is an elected official; he is not a county employee. He is paid through a contract for services provided.

Public Comment

An opportunity for public comments was allowed by the Chair.

There were no public comments.

Budget Committee Discussion & Deliberation

Commissioner Scarfo asked if Travis Miller, Community Corrections, priced out the cost of the trailer. Administrative Officer Burgess indicated that he did price it out and is shopping local.

Commissioner Scarfo also thanked Administrative Officer Burgess for her efforts and commented that this has been the cleanest budget he has seen in 8 years.

Approval of Union County Budget for Publication

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve the Union County Budget for publication in the amount of \$70,365,199 as amended. Matthew Goodwin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Good of the Order

Commissioner Scarfo thanked the budget committee members for their volunteerism on the committee.

Adjournment

The chair adjourned the meeting at 6:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Moore



Senior Department Specialist