

Union County Board of Commissioners
Joseph Building Annex Conference Room
Special Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2026

Present: Commissioner Paul Anderes
Commissioner Jake Seavert

Absent: Commissioner R. Matthew Scarfo

Commissioner Seavert opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was given with two Commissioners present.

STAFF REPORT

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, read out loud a staff report regarding Ballot Measure 31-101.

The staff report stated that Ballot Measure 31-101 was referred to the voters of Union County on November 3, 2020 as a result of an initiative petition. The measure was passed by voters with 7,435 yes votes and 6,753 no votes, a difference of 682 total votes. The measure requires the Commissioners to meet on the 2nd Wednesday of every February, June and October to discuss how to promote the interest of Union County in any negotiations regarding relocating the state border of Idaho to include Union County.

Civil penalties are provided for anyone who willfully prohibits, cancels or hinders any of the prescribed meetings of the Board of Commissioners. A civil offense against this measure is punishable as a class D violation, subject to a maximum fine of up to \$125 and is enforceable by any peace officer. In accordance with the approved measure, meetings have previously been held by the Board of Commissioners on February 10, June 9 and October 13, 2021, February 9, June 8, October 12, 2022, February 8, June 14, October 11, 2023, February 14, June 12 October 9, 2024, February 12, June 11, October 8, 2025 and February 11, 2026.

Public comment opportunities have been offered at each of the previous meetings and written public comments have been accepted.

At the February 8, 2023 meeting, a motion was passed by the Commissioners to send a letter memorializing the Greater Idaho Movement ballot measure results to State Representatives.

On February 9, 2023, a letter was sent by the Commissioners to Representative Bobby Levy and Senator Bill Hansell officially informing them of the November 3, 2020 Ballot Measure results.

The 2025 Legislative Session did see bills introduced requesting a state level task force be formed to explore what would be involved in a border change. The bills did not receive hearings, so did not move forward. There was also a bill introduced that would have required counties to sign affidavits stating they would remain part of the State of Oregon if they received state funding. That bill did not move forward either.

No written testimony has been received for the meeting today.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commissioner Seavert asked that those providing public comment limit their comment time to 3 to 5 minutes.

Vivian Young, La Grande, addressed the Commissioners with her comments related to relocating the Idaho border. Ms. Young is not in favor of moving the border. She met with two of the Greater Idaho Movement members who are in favor of moving the border and realized they are on the same page on some things. They are angry with Salem, but haven't looked at what's available and what is happening in Idaho. They don't like the taxes and regulations. Ms. Young is very encouraged with the vote in Wallowa ending the requirement for meetings and would like to see that happen here. These meetings have been going on for far too long, and it is a waste of time. The ballot measure says that we need to discuss the benefits of moving the border to Idaho, and that does not happen.

Ms. Young wore a shirt that read, "97850" because she herself feels unseen by the west side of the state. She attempted to purchase Dolly Parton tickets for an event in Portland, she was unable to do so. She made a call to the company in charge of the ticket sales and they told her that her zip code was not allowed. She was also unable to purchase tickets for the Alberta Rose theater in Oregon to participate in a fundraiser for a library and it angered her. This encouraged her to make t-shirts to parade around in and no one was impressed. To attend the event, a family member who lives in Portland had to buy the tickets. She also noted that one of the performers at the event is a resident from Union County.

Mike McCarter, Greater Idaho Movement, addressed the Commissioners with his comments related to the Greater Idaho Movement. The Citizens of Greater Idaho are continuing to work on trying to make sure that Eastern Oregon is not being abused by Western Oregon. Right now if you look at initiative petition 28 and think it'll never happen, he doesn't look at it that way anymore because the vote out of Portland is pretty strong and can move a lot of things. He is working with Representative Bentz's office on issues there and collaborating with other states that are trying to look at the same urban rural clash that is going on in their states. A joint group would be created to get action going on the national level.

Mr. McCarter understands that these meetings are taking up the Commissioners time. It was no their desire to require meetings by the Secretary of State initiative petitions rules forced them to include that in their petition.

COMMISSIONER REMARKS

Commissioner Anderes referred to Ms. Young's comments and finds it disturbing the volume of dollars of state legislator or state tax money into the waterfront in Portland, the Moda Center or Rose Garden and continually bolstering their economy while our languishes.

Commissioner Seavert thanked Ms. Young for getting together with the two parties and bringing them together to have a conversation. It is a crucial step in moving forward in this process. The outcome of that conversation was what he thought, that they have more in line with each other than they thought.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next special Commission meeting on this topic will be held on Wednesday, October 14, 2026 at 9 am.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Seavert adjourned the meeting at 9:14 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore
Senior Department Specialist