

Union County Board of Commissioners

Joseph Building Annex Conference Room

Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 5, 2026

Present: Commissioner R. Matthew Scarfo, Chair
Commissioner Paul Anderes
Commissioner Jake Seavert

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

AGENDA REVIEW

There were no revisions to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Scarfo opened the public comment period and reminded the audience to limit their time to 3 minutes.

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, read out loud a public comment received from Beverly Beach regarding the funding request for Cat Utopia. She reminded the Commissioners if the funding request is approved all funds will go to a local veterinarian and utilized in \$20 and \$30 increment to assist Union County citizens with TNR (Trap Neuter and Return) of feral cats. Cat Utopia also offers funds for TNR; which is money from donations as they are not funded. Ms. Beach provided ordinances for cats and was told she would be included in a work session, but has not heard when that would be held.

Commissioner Scarfo closed the public comment period.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Seavert moved approval of the consent agenda which included the July 15 & 22, 2026 claims journals and July 15, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Anderes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Secure Transport Provider

Shelley Burgess, Administrative Officer, presented the Secure Transport Provider request to the Commissioners for their consideration.

This is a request for a letter to be sent to the Oregon Health Authority to acknowledge Greater Oregon Secure Transport, LLC as a provider of secure transport within Union County. The transport referred to in this request is the mental health secure transport and has been reviewed by the Mental Health Director with CHD, Daisy Thompson.

The Greater Oregon Secure Transport has been in operation by Doug Dalton who recently sold the business to Daniel (DJ) Petz and Katherine Povondra who are applying for the appropriate license through

Commissioner Anderes thanked Administrative Officer Burgess for the additional information from the applications. He appreciates the impact that Cat Utopia has had in the county. After reviewing both applications, these are requests that won't need to be funded each year, it is a one-time thing. He also stated that the City of North Powder is doing great things to attract travelers in their community.

Commissioner Anderes made a motion to approve both Discretionary Grant applications as presented. Commissioner Seavert seconded.

Commissioner Seavert sits on the Transient Tax Advisory Committee and the review/score sheet is very helpful in determining the process. He is in favor of funding both applications.

Commissioner Anderes referred to number 6 under criteria, "will the funds be used for a program/project that makes the community more inviting and attractive to visitors and/or those looking to develop". He would suggest that both applications do just that.

Commissioner Scarfo indicated it is very rare that we see the advisory committee come back not unanimous.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Scarfo called a recess until the 9:30 am public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application for Housing Program

Staff Report

Kale Elmer, Community Connection of NE Oregon, presented the Community Development Block Grant application for a housing program to the Commissioners for their consideration. He thanked Union County for sponsoring the grant.

As a Community Development Block Grant, only municipalities are eligible to apply and need a non-profit partner in that application; and that is where Community Connection of NE Oregon (CCNO) comes in. The specific block grant that they are applying for is a housing rehabilitation project for low- or moderate-income owners. They have operated these grants in all four of the counties that CCNO serves; Wallowa County, Union County, Baker County and Grant County.

Community Development Block Grants are not limited to housing rehabilitation, it is just the specific funding that will be applied for through Department of Housing and Urban Development. There is approximately \$11 million that will be awarded to Oregon, and the maximum amount that Union County qualifies for is \$500,000. The program is estimated to serve about 36 persons with this new grant funding. Owner occupied residents in the four-county area will be eligible.

They already have applications on file that would be considered. They are also looking for more funding to be able to fund those grants. This is a home repair loan program for low-to moderate income homeowners up to \$24,999 and is a federal limit. He noted that the loans are meant for the homeowner to stay in the homes with no monthly payments or interest.

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Commissioner Seavert made a motion to accept the application as presented for the Community Development Block Grant for Housing Program through Community Connection. Commissioner Anderes seconded.

Commissioner Anderes indicated he is in support of any program that keeps folks in their homes.

Motion carried unanimously.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Anderes has been working with folks on the local fires and advocated for Anthony Lakes to get the 73 Road open as soon as possible so they can get back to building a new building and getting their summer program back up and going. He has also been in touch with the Incident Commander on the Hagen fire.

Commissioner Seavert echoed Commissioner Anderes' comment regarding the Anthony Lakes fire. He stated he was very pleased with the Anthony Lakes fire management; they did a really good job. With his involvement in the county Cattlemen's, was approached by a gentleman from Elgin that was concerned that he didn't have transportation for his livestock if he were to be evacuated. He reached out to the Cattlemen and gathered up a list of available people with equipment if someone was faced with being evacuated with livestock. Lastly, he reported that the sale at the Union County Fair went really well and the kids received good prices and there was a great turnout.

Commissioner Scarfo toured the fire camp at the Elgin Stampede grounds where there are 600 firefighters being housed. They are not utilizing the Stampede Hall because of its condition. He is going to work with Elgin to obtain grant funding to address that issue.

Commissioner Scarfo attended the fair and the first thing he did was check out the newly finished bathrooms. He met with the fair board and they are going to continue improvements at the fairgrounds. Fair patrons were pleased with the availability of warm water for hand washing.

Executive Session

The Chair called an executive session at 9:39 am pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions and ORS 192.660(2)(h) Legal Counsel.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled to be held Wednesday, August 19, 2026 at 9 am.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Scarfo adjourned the meeting at 9:58 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Allison Moore
Senior Department Specialist