

**BENEWAH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF MEETING
November 24, 2025**

Be it remembered that at this time the Board of County Commissioners met in regular session. The meeting was opened by Commissioner Lampert.

Present:	Philip R. Lampert	Chairman
	Robert Short	Commissioner
	Mark Reynolds	Commissioner
	Janeen LeWan	Clerk
	Mariah Dunham	Attorney
	Jim Roletto	Public Works Director

The Board met at 8:00 a.m., whereupon the following proceedings were had to-wit.

1. Approve the minutes of the previous meeting(s) (ACTION): A motion to approve this item was made by Commissioner Short, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Juvenile Justice Annual Financial Report (ACTION): A motion to approve this item as presented was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections Passthrough of State Funds (ACTION): A motion to approve this item as presented was made by Commissioner Short, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried unanimously.
4. County Annual Juvenile Justice Report for Idaho Dept of Juvenile Corrections (ACTION): Commissioners noted that they would like to have a representative from the Probation department explain some of the information presented. A motion to approve this item as presented was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Hughes House Historical Society Expansion Project Approval (ACTION): A motion to approve the Historical Society’s efforts in getting grants and moving forward with this project was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried unanimously.
6. Benewah County Credit Card Usage Policy – Resolution 2025-12 (ACTION): Commissioner Reynolds noted he would investigate getting a credit card for the road districts to assist with costs. Attorney Dunham explained this policy was approved at the last meeting and this resolution formalizes the policy. A motion to approve this item was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried unanimously.
7. BCH Board Member Appointment – Wendy Stansbury – Resolution 2025-13 (ACTION): Attorney Dunham noted this was to formalize the appointment made at the last meeting. A motion to approve this item was made by Commissioner Short, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried unanimously.
8. Public Defender’s Office Lease Agreement (ACTION): Attorney Dunham noted this was the same agreement as presented in the last meeting with the exception of a 12 month agreement as requested by the Commissioners. Commissioner Reynolds noted for the first year 12 months is a good timeline and they can reevaluate price and length next year. A motion was

made to approve this item by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Benewah County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Agreement w/ City of St. Maries (ACTION): Attorney Dunham reported that some revisions were made to the agreement at the city's request. Sheriff Eells confirmed his agreement with the updated changes. The group also reviewed the payment timeline, and Attorney Dunham noted that payments have historically been made on an annual basis. A motion was made to approve this item by Commissioner Short, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried unanimously.
10. Benewah County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Agreement w/ City of Plummer (ACTION): Attorney Dunham noted that similar changes were made to this agreement. Pricing is different due to size and use. A motion was made to approve this item was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried unanimously.
11. Discussion of the Budget Workshop on November 12th – (ACTION): Clerk LeWan noted that additional reductions were still needed in order for the county to balance the budget. Discussions continued on which departments might require further cuts, and Commissioner Reynolds stated that they would continue reviewing the general road budget to identify additional areas for reduction. Discussion also took place regarding past budgets, expenditures, and reserve levels to better understand the need for the current requested cuts.
12. Treasurer Financial Update Letter – Review: Clerk LeWan noted a correction to the total amount. Review of the hospital standing was also discussed.
13. Minimum Amount for Cost Associated with Emergencies, Breakdowns, or Unexpected Problems – per Chairman Lampert: The commissioners reviewed significant recent equipment repairs and noted winter conditions often require sending machinery out, limiting road crew capacity. A large share of mechanic time is spent on solid waste trucks, which already have substantial repair costs budgeted. Emergency repair costs were noted as unpredictable.
14. City of St. Maries Area of Impact (ACTION): Attorney Dunham provided an overview of the Area of Impact (AOI) process, noting that a city must propose an AOI to the county, followed by a commissioner-level hearing and adoption by ordinance. While the City of Plummer is not requesting an AOI, the City of St. Maries is proposing one. Each affected property owner must receive notice, and the city is responsible for associated costs. Attorney Dunham explained that the AOI being proposed is extensive despite recent changes in state law that limit AOIs to areas likely to be annexed within five years. A recommendation for county officials to meet with city officials to clarify their intentions, as areas unlikely to be annexed should not be included under the new criteria was made. A motion to table this item until such discussion can take place was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried unanimously.
15. Idaho Dept. of Lands Update on Forest Legacy Program – Review: The Commissioners noted this was for the remaining acreage owned by Stimson on the west side of the county. Assessor Spier noted there is another large chunk of land being sold to the tribe. No details have been disclosed to her office yet but did note they will have zero ownership on the reservation.
16. Plummer Dumpsters (ACTION): Chairman Lampert noted the city has not utilized the old site as approved in the last meeting. Jim Roletto noted staff can only be out there now and then to monitor the dumpsters.
17. Fernwood Water and Sewer District RV Dump Upgrade (ACTION): A motion was made to approve sending a letter of support for this project was made by Commissioner Short, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried unanimously.

JIM ROLETTO, BENEWAH COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR:

Emergency Management: LEPC Meeting, all hazardous plan started.

Road Projects: Road inventory has started. They are utilizing maps from the transportation department and Sheriff's Office. District 1 & 2 will try out salt for the asphalt roads this year. LTAHC grant due December 2nd and they are making sure a shared road in Shoshone County is listed.

Sewer System: New pumps have arrived and will be installed this week. Discussion over refurbished, new, and used was discussed. Also noted they cannot get any grants due to the tie in with the city and would like to open that discussion at some point.

Airport: There were issues with the card reader they have worked through. Grant for the airport is on reimbursement basis. Looking to purchase equipment for the airport and will bring actuals to the next meeting.

Solid Waste: Meeting to tour the Spokane incinerator is scheduled for December 3rd.

Planning & Zoning: They had a public hearing for a preliminary plat and scheduled another public hearing for a preliminary plat and some code changing in December. There is another subdivision in the works.

9:00 A.M. University of Idaho Extension Office Update & University of Idaho Extension Cooperative Agreement FY 26 (ACTION): - Lauren King

Lauren King and Madison Sotin of the 4-H reported strong participation and program growth in Benewah County, including new youth activities, steady enrollment, and expanded community events. The program continues to add certified leaders and develop new offerings while working to fill an educator position to support Tribal programming. Commissioners acknowledged the significant progress and ongoing efforts to enhance 4-H opportunities countywide.

The Cooperative Agreement for FY26 was discussed, along with the confusion from last year's agreements. A motion was made to approve this item as presented by Commissioner Short, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried unanimously.

9:15 A.M. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jen Izzarelli noted that sharing credit cards is not a recommended practice, citing a lack of proper controls and comparing it to the importance of not sharing passwords.

Cheryl Blake agreed that credit cards should not be shared. Ms. Blake posed a question regarding commissioners' use of county vehicles. Chairman Lampert & Commissioner Short noted they use personal vehicles. Commissioner Reynolds clarified that while he uses a county vehicle, it is not for personal use; he works seven days a week and uses it to check roads. Cheryl raised questions about budget impacts, such as fuel costs, and Commissioner Reynolds noted that using the county vehicle is more cost-effective than claiming mileage.

9:45 A.M. BENEWAH COUNTY ASSESSOR (ACTION)

The board reviewed several tax cancellations, including: (1) three parcels involved in a land trade with the state that must be re-cancelled for 2025 after being cancelled in 2024; (2) Upriver Community United, due to a missed exemption code; (3) a mobile home with a collapsed roof; and (4) the Benewah County Free Library District, which had a missed parcel for an additional lot. On behalf of Treasurer Sexton, Assessor Spier also requested a solid waste tax cancellation and a Tribe-related cancellation for the City of Plummer. A motion to approve all cancellations was made by Commissioner Short, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Commissioner Reynolds to enter executive session @ 9:46 am pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(a)(b); to consider items exempt from disclosure; seconded by Chairman Short. Motion carried unanimously. Present: Commissioners Lampert, Reynolds, and Short, Clerk Janeen LeWan, Attorney Mariah Dunham, Public Works Director Jim Roletto.

Exited executive session & meeting adjourned at 10:25 am.

Minutes read and approved this 8th day of December, 2025.

By the Board of Benewah County Commissioners:

 /s/ /s/ /s/
Philip R. Lampert, Chairman Robert Short, Commissioner Mark Reynolds, Commissioner

Attest:

 /s/
Janeen LeWan, Clerk