

**BENEWAH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 22nd, 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
	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 and seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
2. Benewah Community Hospital – Board Member Vacancy: This was an email from Rebecca Plante at BCH informing the commissioners of the vacancy and their recommendations will follow their next board meeting.
3. Benewah County Equipment Lease Confirmation & Inquiry (ACTION): Discussion held on payoff for one piece of equipment and possibility of taking another lease to decrease payoff for FY 2026. Approximately \$180,000 is the final payoff. Income expected soon and in December/January. Board agreed to table discussion until additional funds are received.
4. Designate Polling Locations for November 4, 2025 Election (ACTION): Commissioners reviewed the polling locations. Motion to approve the locations was made by Commissioner Reynolds and seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried.
5. Idaho Dept. of Juvenile Corrections – Passthrough Funds Recipient Agreement (ACTION): Motion to approve the agreement was made by Commissioner Short and seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
6. Idaho Dept. of Water Resources – Farrell Ranch Project (ACTION): Project involves riprap and large wood on Bond Creek, adjacent to county property. Determined to be a good project. Motion to approve letter of support made by Commissioner Short and seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
7. Idaho Dept. of Transportation – Jacot Creek Bridge Findings: Bridge issue identified by the inspector and was repaired the next day. Bridge still needs long-term updates. State not recommending load limit change currently.
8. LHTAC Curve & Roadway Safety Pay Req. #20 (ACTION): Motion to approve the invoice was made by Commissioner Short and seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
9. Two Saints Brewing Co. – Application for Liquor Catering Permit (ACTION): Motion to approve the permit was made by Commissioner Reynolds and seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried.
10. Benewah County L2 Review and Status: Clerk provided an update on the L2, noting how much from the trust accounts was used to help balance the FY2026 budget. When asked if these reserves could be replenished, it was clarified that yes, they can be rebuilt with careful spending

controls during FY2026. Clerk also presented data for solid waste in preparation for the next agenda item showing how much the fund was supported by property tax, income, and sales tax currently. With the two proposed options affecting the L2 the commissioners noted there was not a large difference in the bottom line of the two plans.

11. Proposed Fee Changes – Solid Waste (Effective October 1, 2025) (ACTION): Discussion on increasing the scale fees was initiated by Commissioner Short. During the discussion on the two fee schedules for solid waste the commissioners noted that they would like to review the fee only scale again during the FY2027 budget discussions. They would like more information on fees collected, commercial fees, and tribe collaboration. A motion to increase the scale weight fee and implement the fee increase with the levy option for FY2026 was made by Commissioner Short and seconded by Chairman Lampert. Commissioner Reynolds was opposed. Motion carried.
12. Magistrate Commission Appointment (ACTION): Chairman Lampert has requested to step down from the commission. A motion to appoint Commissioner Short in his stead was made by Commissioner Reynolds and seconded by Chairman Lampert. Motion carried.

8:45 A.M. JIM ROLETTO, BENEWAH COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Emergency Management	Road Projects Sewer System	Public Works Airport	Solid Waste Planning & Zoning
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- **Emergency Management:** LEPC meeting scheduled for October 15; emergency manager training also in October. Emida ambulance building progressing.
- **Planning & Zoning:** Awaiting corrections for preliminary plat.
- **Road Projects:** Crushing halfway complete. Danielson, invoice for rock – held by Jim and he wants to review further, noted a rider for rock in the future. Bond Creek bridge completed. Salt storage the shed is ready, budgeted \$10k; county to match ITD pricing. Culverts are in for the Brebner & Whitetail projects. Whitetail planning in coordination with Tribe and Avista.
- **Sewer System:** New pump installation underway. Funds reallocation for storage building being reviewed.
- **Airport:** Tanks require some cleaning, scheduled to begin in October. Looking into a snowplow for this location

9:00 A.M. PUBLIC COMMENT

Hari Heath – Reached out to legislators Heather Scott and Dale Hawkins as well as senator Phil Hart to arrange a meeting with the commissioners at the commissioners’ request. The commissioners would like this during a public meeting soon. Hari also noted during the meeting he is a proponent for the opt in/out building permit plan to be discussed later. Hari also noted that if there is an opportunity for a citizen to serve on the Magistrate Commission he would like to be considered.

Maureen Hodgson – Follow up question on the culverts at Whitetail and shared her relief that it was being fixed and shared a scary experience she had there. Looking forward to the improvement.

Joseph Maimone – Shared his appreciation for the commissioner room layout and increased seating.

James O’Neill – Mr. O’Neill just had his property surveyed and would like to know who owns a road that is going through his property, he has been notified by the title company it is a “ghost property.” Jim Roletto will go out to the property to investigate ownership and will follow up.

9:20 A.M. Joel Newland – Sewer Connection (ACTION)

Mr. Newland informed the commissioners that his property at 747 Riverdale Dr. previously had two sewer connections for RVs from the previous owner. He has since built a home and only has one line going into the septic tank. He noted that he could not find the end of the second line as it did not land at the tank but he has since covered and buried the second access. He ensured the commissioners he is unable, and unwilling to utilize a second connection. A motion to eliminate the second hook up based upon inspection by Jim Roletto was made by Commissioner Reynolds and seconded by Commissioner Short. Motion carried.

9:30 A.M. Jen Izzarelli – Fraud Risk for BCH

Mrs. Izzarelli presented concerns about BCH’s significant fraud risk, with findings showing management override of controls and prior-period material weaknesses—each rated at the highest severity level. It was noted that even one such weakness makes financial statements unreliable. She noted the board members suggested waiting for the audit to conclude. Mrs. Izzarelli’s concerns were expressed that action should not be delayed. Her recommendations included adding new board members, adopting a whistleblower policy, speaking directly with the CFO rather than only the CEO, and requesting a state inspection. A fraud audit was discussed as a valuable but costly step that could be performed independently by qualified professionals.

Suzy Epler was given an opportunity to speak. She clarified the distinction between two boards: one that manages daily operations and the governing board, which does not handle daily tasks. BCH is a governing board that follows recommendations and hires firms to audit the financials. To maintain objectivity, the auditing firms are rotated to avoid overlooked errors. The firm reported that nothing severe was identified in this audit, only notable items. The full audit is still in progress and is expected to be presented on Thursday. It was also noted that the hospital goes through three other audits throughout the year with different entities.

10:00 A.M. Jen Izzarelli – Optional /Eliminate Building Permits

Mrs. Izzarelli requested more information on the concern for creating an opt in/out building permit process. The commissioners and Jim noted they would work with Mariah to see if there is an Idaho code that give clarification. The understanding currently for the commissioners is either you have them or not at all, with no opt in/out for other counties. The commissioners noted not having a building permit process in the county would not evade other permits like electrical, plumbing, DEQ, and others.

BENEWAH COUNTY TREASURER (ACTION)

Treasurer Sara Sexton appeared before the board regarding the following item(s):

- Financial Review/Cash Balance Review: Reviewed account balancing. It was also noted that the hospital bond payment remains outstanding.
- The window air conditioning unit above her office is causing notable damage to the windowsill which may need replacing in the future. She would like the commissioners to work on getting the 3rd floor AC repaired to prevent the use of the window units. The commissioners asked Jim to investigate the information provided.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Commissioner Short to enter executive session at 10:24 am pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(d)(a)(b); To consider records that are exempt from disclosure and personnel; seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried. Present: Commissioners Lampert, Reynolds and Short, Clerk Janeen LeWan, and Public Works Director Jim Roletto. Exited executive session at 10:54 am.

Minutes read and approved this 14th day of October, 2025.

By the Board of Benewah County Commissioners:

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

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Janeen LeWan, Clerk