

BENEWAH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF MEETING
June 22, 2026

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

Present:	Robert Short	Chairman
	Mark Reynolds	Commissioner
	Scott Manes	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 Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
2. Expenditure Requests:
 - a) Benewah Soil & Water Conservation District FY2027 Request– Nick Elwell District Manager (ACTION): Nick Elwell discussed the request with the commissioners, noting the projects they have already completed. Noting the St. Joe, Shay Hill projects. Also noted the joint effort to assist with fire reduction in the Cassandra & Shay Hill areas with grant assistance from IDL. A motion to approve this item was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried. Clarification to the motion was to approve the \$4,000 payment for FY2026 and for consideration of the \$5,000 for FY2027 pending the budget process.
 - b) Federal Building Compressor Replacement – (ACTION): Public Works Director Roletto explained the compressor that was being replaced, and the need for the work to be completed. A motion to approve the \$8,702.52 expenditure was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
 - c) Travel Expense Request for Prosecuting Attorneys Association Summer Training Conference (ACTION): Attorney Dunham noted this was for the summer conference, she attended the winter conference and Aaron will attend this conference. Noting the importance of the training and the CE credits obtained by attending. A motion that they approve this was made by Commissioner Manes, Seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
3. DIVCO 2026-2027 Service Agreement Renewals (ACTION): Clerk LeWan discussed the increase requested and the reason for the maintenance agreement. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
4. Assignment, Assumption & Release Agreement with NEC National Security Systems – Sheriff Eells (ACTION): Sheriff Eells noted this was a name change only with in the agreement due to the previous company being acquired. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
5. ITD Office of Highway Safety FFY2027 Traffic Enforcement Grant Project Agreement – Sheriff Eells (ACTION): Sheriff Eells shared his department is applying for a grant for traffic safety enforcement. Requesting commissioner approval. A motion to apply for the grant was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.

6. USFS Enhanced Cooperative Law Enforcement Patrols Agreement – Sheriff Eells (ACTION): Sheriff noted this agreement has been renewed for over 20 years. They are paid per mile, roughly \$8,000 per year from the forest service. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
7. Flag Ceremony Event Scheduling Request – Sheriff Eells (ACTION): Discussion about the importance of the flag we are folding, and request to have a ceremony where employees and the public can attend. A motion to approve the date of July 27th was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
8. IOEM PW00087 Benewah County Reimbursement & Project Completion & Certification Report (ACTION): It was noted that the following IOEM projects were more of the FEMA projects from 2017 – 2018. A motion to accept the reimbursement was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
9. IOEM PW00090 Benewah County Reimbursement & Project Completion & Certification Report (ACTION): A motion to approve PW90 was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
10. IOEM PW00091 Benewah County Reimbursement & Project Completion & Certification Report (ACTION): A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
11. Computer Arts – Harris Idaho Project Phase 1 & 2 Proposal (ACTION): Clerk LeWan noted this proposal was for the system conversion for the programs used by the clerk and treasurer offices. This was previously approved and this is the paperwork with the conversion pricing. A motion to approve the action was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
12. Computer Arts – Harris Idaho Master Agreement Software & Support License (ACTION): Clerk LeWan explained this agreement and license is for the software used in multiple offices. A motion to approve the master agreement software & support license as presented by the clerk was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
13. Caterpillar Equipment Payment Proposals (ACTION): Commissioner Reynolds noted that Caterpillar is putting together some proposals and did not have the information ready in time for this meeting. A motion to table this item was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
14. FY2026 Forest Service Payment to States Election to Receive Payment & Election to Allocate State Payment (ACTION): Clerk LeWan explained the election process and due to funding the limited selection Benewah County has. A motion to accept the SRS election and to allocate it to Title 1 was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
15. BCH Hospital Board Recommendations Update: Clerk LeWan discussed the recommendations with the commissioners and the update to hold interviews on June 25th at 8:00 am in executive session.
16. Resolution NO. 2026-15 Donation of Black and White Cannon Copier to Clarkia Free Library District (ACTION): Clerk LeWan noted this was the request from the treasurer's office in the previous meeting. A motion to approve the donation to Clarkia Free Library District was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried. It was noted that the original resolution would be updated to reflect treasurer's office vs assessor's office.
Roll call vote: Manes – aye, Reynolds – aye, Short – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

17. Dumpster Change Over Locations & Contractor – Commissioner Reynolds: Commissioner Reynolds requested clarification on the process, noting more communication would be the best. Public Works Director noted signs would be orders, Milltown dumpsters and Hwy 3 dumpsters would be moving to the 1st street location. He will also reach out to the contractor to see what other proposal he presents for dumpster placements.

9:00 AM Public Hearing re: Proposed Dust Abatement Fee Schedule:

The public hearing was called to order by Chairman Short at 9:00 am. Clarification by Attorney Dunham that the public hearing is to consider the adoption or modification of a County fee. The purpose of this hearing is to establish the fee schedule for the County's Dust Abatement Program, including the amount to be charged to participating property owners. The proposed fee is calculated on a per-gallon basis but may also be converted to a cost per square foot for ease of application and billing.

Mike Sunkel: lives along the railroad grade on the St. Joe River spoke regarding the proposed Dust Abatement Program. He stated that dust is a significant issue in the area and noted that he has spoken with several of his neighbors, including some who own property but reside elsewhere. He indicated there is interest in participating in the program but expressed concern about coordinating participation so the entire area can be treated at the same time rather than on a piecemeal basis, particularly since payment is required in advance.

He also asked questions regarding the application process, including how the dust suppressant will be applied, the anticipated longevity and effectiveness of the treatment, and how the collected fees will be used by the County.

Ed Evans: Noted he wants to ensure this is a voluntary program only.

Charles Danielson: A resident asked how the Dust Abatement Program would work and how the treatment areas would be determined. He also questioned why logging companies and other contractors are not helping pay for the program, noting that they travel the roads at high speeds and create much of the dust.

He stated that he currently waters the road in front of his property and a nearby intersection to help control the dust. He asked if the County could work with the logging companies and other contractors to have them assist with dust control efforts.

Commissioner Reynolds: explained that the program is similar to a cost-share program. The County will continue to perform its regular road maintenance, and the dust abatement treatment is an additional service for those who choose to participate. The intent is to help reduce the dust in these areas and lessen the burden.

9:15 AM Public Hearing re: Lolo Creek Rural Subdivision Preliminary Plat:

This hearing was called to order at 9:18 a.m. by Chairman Short. Attorney Dunham opened the meeting explaining the hearing process and the purpose for the hearing. Emphasis was on the opportunity for the public to comment to the commissioners. Attorney Dunham noted all written comments presented to the commissioner, as well as the contents of the packets presented to the commissioners. The process of the applicant presenting, public comment, then the response of the applicant to the comments given.

Attorney of Record is Mariah Dunham, and Clerk of Record was Janeen LeWan.

Rand Wickman represented the applicant and presented an 11x17 copy of the plat for the commissioners. Lolo Creek Subdivision consists of 22 residential lots of varying sizes. Discussion included Benewah Creek Road, roadway slopes, and other items within the application. The applicant stated the road right-of-way would be corrected to 60 feet. Easements, water, and septic were also discussed. The groundwater report prepared by HMM Engineering is included in the record. A conceptual engineering plan showing the proposed road layout and profiles was introduced into the record. The applicant stated the proposal meets the requirements of the Benewah County Subdivision Ordinance.

Commissioner Short asked Sheena Derry, Panhandle Health District Representative, whether the lots had been evaluated for buildability. Ms. Derry explained that preliminary soils testing has been completed. Each property owner will be required to obtain an individual septic permit, which will address setbacks, site conditions, and groundwater on the property.

Commissioners moved forward with the public comment section of the hearing at 9:32 am.

Attorney Dunham discussed the process for public comment during the public hearing. Robin Stebbins: summarized his written comments and requested that the application be denied, citing concerns that the wetlands had not been adequately addressed. He requested an additional public hearing to allow time to review the newly submitted information added to the record. He also requested that a wetlands study be completed due to the proposed change in land use. He noted that wetlands were identified in the application but believed their locations should be more clearly defined. He further commented that the County Code does not require sufficient information regarding wetlands and suggested that the County's Land Use Plan be reviewed to determine whether it remains adequate.

Sheena Derry, Panhandle Health District Representative, noted that septic systems may be permitted in wetlands if they meet applicable regulatory requirements. Ms. Derry also stated that the proposed subdivision is similar to the Green Valley Subdivision, which was previously approved.

Attorney Dunham granted Mr. Stebbins the ability to review the conceptual engineering plans and let him know he would have another opportunity to speak again after the review.

Chuck Sanchez: lives approximately one mile from the proposed development stated that he believes the subdivision would have a negative impact on the area. While he acknowledged the need for additional housing, he did not believe developing farmland was the appropriate solution. He expressed concerns about increased road deterioration, impacts to rural areas, and potential effects on wildlife, nearby creeks, and forestry. He stated that he hopes the County will deny the application.

Clint Milner: stated he was firmly opposed to the proposed development. He referenced a previous town hall meeting regarding paving in the area, noting that the community consensus was against it. He also questioned what would prevent the County from imposing CC&Rs or other requirements on area residents in the future.

Michael Steffen: presented a photograph of the area and submitted a packet of information and a poster into the record. He stated that his primary concern is the creek and explained that his

company specializes in soil science, including soil testing and static groundwater evaluations for development projects. Based on his experience, he expressed concerns about the potential impacts of the proposed subdivision on the creek.

He noted that the culverts in the area have recently been cleaned and suggested several measures to address his concerns, including retention or detention ponds, a geotechnical report for roadway drainage, infiltration systems for homes, wetland buffers, and alternative culvert designs. He also expressed concern with portions of the creek being located on private property and stated that the preliminary plat does not identify the creek or proposed retention and detention ponds.

Robin Stebbins: after reviewing the plans, he noted there is no culvert shown where the proposed road crosses Benewah Creek and believes the plans are incomplete without that information. He expressed concern about how the crossing would function during winter conditions. He also noted that the C-3 plans identify parcels with agricultural access but questioned how that access would be provided without crossing other properties or impacting the creek. He discussed what he believes are several difficult access points within the proposed development.

David Shepp: expressed concern about the impact the proposed development would have on fire protection, EMS, and garbage services. He asked for comments from the Commissioners regarding these potential impacts and stated that he believes the development would place additional demands on emergency services.

Gordon Hoss: lives approximately one mile downstream from the proposed development and previously farmed the property stated that he was surprised the site passed perc testing. He expressed concern about potential impacts to the aquifer and water resources and suggested reducing the number of proposed lots by half.

Susan Waddell Chairman of the Benewah Valley Association: stated that she was speaking on her own behalf and not on behalf of the association. She expressed a desire to preserve the area and stated that she does not believe the decision should be based solely on financial considerations. She urged the Commissioners to consider the character of the Benewah Valley and the residents who live there, stating that she does not believe subdivisions are compatible with the area.

Rand Wickman: responded to several comments and concerns raised during the hearing. Regarding water quality and the creek, he stated that the County Code contains extensive site disturbance requirements intended to protect creeks and streams. He explained that the application is for a conceptual subdivision plan and that compliance with the site disturbance requirements will be addressed during later stages of development. Approval of the subdivision would not exempt the project from those requirements.

The applicant also explained that wetland crossings are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rather than the County. He stated that any necessary permits and approvals will be obtained through that process, which is why the application does not specifically address wetland crossings.

Regarding the request for a geotechnical report, the applicant stated that such a report is not required as part of the County's subdivision application process. He explained that geotechnical evaluations are completed during the road engineering phase and are addressed at that time.

The applicant stated that the subdivision application requirements were intentionally established by the County and that issues such as roadway engineering, wetlands, and other technical requirements are addressed later in the development process or by other regulatory agencies. He noted that subdivisions involve multiple reviewing agencies, including the local fire district, which has reviewed and approved the proposal. He concluded that the application meets the requirements of the County's subdivision ordinance.

When asked whether the developers had considered larger lots, Mr. Wickman stated that he joined the project approximately one month ago, while the property owners had been working on the subdivision for more than a year. He explained that, because the property is not zoned, the applicable standard is a minimum lot size of five acres. He stated that the proposed lots were designed to comply with that standard and emphasized that the intent was not to maximize the number of lots, but to create usable parcels.

Attorney Dunham explained that the Board could either continue or close the public hearing. She noted that continuing the hearing would allow for additional public comment, while closing the hearing would end the public comment period. She also discussed the decisions the Board would need to make following the close of the public hearing. The Commissioners discussed whether to close the public comment period.

A motion to close the public comment at this time was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.

A motion to deliberate at another point in time was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.

9:30 AM PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tim Grubham: asked whether there are requirements for dumpster surveillance cameras, including whether the Sheriff's Office or the Prosecuting Attorney would need access to the footage and what standards would apply to ensure the recordings are usable for enforcement purposes.

9:45 A.M. Doug Smith – Santa Marie Woods/Road Plat Easements:

Mr. Smith presented information regarding a subdivision platted in the 1980s and expressed concerns about encroachments along the subdivision road that have developed over time. He requested the County's assistance in reestablishing the road easements to allow for road improvements and submitted supporting documentation, including correspondence with the Fire District, Sheriff's Office, and Planning and Zoning.

Attorney Dunham explained that the road has historically been represented as a private road and discussed the challenges the County faces in enforcing encroachments on private roads. She advised that if the property owner believes the road is public, a road validation process may be available to determine its legal status.

The property owner questioned why the County performs some maintenance on the road and asked what options were available. Public Works Director Roletto noted that, based on his review, the road is not maintained or operated by the County. He also discussed the ongoing countywide road study and stated he could communicate with the Fire District regarding roadway conditions as they relate to fire code.

Attorney Dunham requested additional time to review the information presented and advised that the property owner would be contacted through the Clerk's Office with recommended next steps.

10:00 A.M. Juvenile Probation for Emily Gleason and JD Storm – Updates:

This item was rescheduled due to an unexpected absence. Will be on a future meeting agenda.

10:15 A.M. Jim Roletto, Benewah County Public Works Director: (spoke at 8:36 am)

Emergency Management	Road Projects	Public Works	Solid Waste
	Sewer System	Airport	Planning & Zoning

- ITD Final Settlement of Local Agreement – Slaughter House Bridge – Review: Updated the project finishing and the funds would roll to the next project.
- SM Airport - IDL Land Use Agreement 2026 – (ACTION): Mr. Roletto explained they have an agreement out at the airport for fire use with IDL. This agreement outlines how we work in conjunction with them. Motion to approve the agreement with IDL was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
- Garden Tracts Road – Controlled Access (ACTION): There was a question on ownership for part of the road. The County maintains up to a point on the road. A request came from a homeowner to post some signage so traffic is directed for local traffic only no trucks or no weights over a certain amount. Mr. Roletto noted he did not have enough information today to present an action. Motion to table upon further review was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- S72 Taxi lane Phase III - Airport Grant Application AIP NPE (ACTION) – There is a fee for the county. It is a 2.5%, estimated at \$10,000 cost. A motion to approve the taxi lane phase III was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- S72 Taxi lane Phase III - Airport Grant Application AIG IJA (ACTION) A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- Change speed limit on Benewah Creek Road (ACTION) – The speed limit is 35 currently and to change it a speed study needs to be completed and Mr. Roletto offered to complete this study. Mr. Roletto was directed by the commissioners to complete the speed study. A motion to table the item pending more information from Mr. Roletto was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.

Emergency Management: Mr. Roletto has entered the data into the FEMA system for the windstorm in December. The application is complete and they are waiting for results.

Planning & Zoning: City of St. Maries Area of Impact was presented to the board. Seems to hit the correct points and with what was presented on the map. P&Z has no issues with the map as it is. Will be an upcoming discussion in the future. P&Z meeting this week for a preliminary plat for the board. Code changes are pending.

Airport: Fly-in breakfast will be July 18th.

Solid Waste: Mr. Roletto is working with Southlake Services and developing a new system. Approval for Washtucna has been received and next steps are looking into pricing. More information will be presented at the next meeting. Question on if test loads would be an option came up, he will look into it.

10:30 A.M. Benewah County Treasurer:

- Possible Tax Cancellation/Hardship Request(s) – (ACTION): No cancellations requested.
- Financial Review/Cash Balance Review – Treasurer Sexton provided an update the hospital on the absence of payments from the hospital for the months of April, May or June. Discussed the bank balances and changes in funds available.
- Staffing: (ACTION): Requested that her previous request for a full time employee be reconsidered to a part time position at this time for FY2026. A motion to accept the request was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- Benewah County Tax Deed Parcels (ACTION): Treasurer Sexton discussed the properties scheduled for the upcoming tax deed auction, as well as nine additional parcels that have never been offered at public auction. Options discussed included offering the parcels for sale through the County auction process or requesting that the Assessor remove the assessed value if the properties are being retained for County use. It was noted that several of the parcels have been County-owned since the 1930s through the 1980s. Attorney Dunham explained that this is the final phase of a project that has been underway for approximately 10 years to research County-owned properties and determine any necessary action. She recommended reviewing each of the remaining nine parcels individually to determine whether they should be retained for County use or sold. If retained, the County would need to complete the quiet title process; if sold, the properties' market value and any back taxes would need to be determined.
 - RP45N04W264300 – A motion to remove the valuation on parcel 12610 Benewah Creek Road and request the quiet title was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried. Treasurer Sexton asked for this to be reviewed by the Prosecutor and request this is deeded over to the county.
 - RP004100400010 – A motion that the valuation is removed on RP004100400010 was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried. Treasurer Sexton asked for this to be reviewed by the Prosecutor and request this is deeded over to the county.
 - RPB00100280010 – A motion for RPB00100280010 Plummer dumpster site valuation is removed from the county rolls was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried. Treasurer Sexton asked for this to be reviewed by the Prosecutor and request this is deeded over to the county.
 - RPA0120070001A – A motion that RPA0120070001A is put up for sell was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried. Treasurer Sexton made a request to order a title report prior to the sale. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
 - RPA01200600020 – Treasurer Sexton recommended to place a hold on this property until the lease is up. Taxes are being calculated each year. Will collect back taxes at that time and split with the taxing districts.
 - RPA01300100050 – Treasurer Sexton noted there may be some past sewer use on this parcel. She recommends that this property stay for county use. A motion to remove market value for RPA01300100050 was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.

- RPA04000230360 – Treasurer Sexton discussed the current use of the property. Reviewed if the property could be sold as surplus in the future. Motion to remove the taxes on RPA04000230360 was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried. Clerk LeWan noted the motion was to remove taxes only and asked for clarification on if the intention was to remove the valuation. A motion to also remove the valuation on RPA04000230360 was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
- RPA02001000050 – Treasurer Sexton discussed the road running through the property. Noted they did an odd lot letter in the past and no adjacent owner responded. A motion to remove the market value on RPA02001000050 was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- RP002300100031 – A motion to remove the market value on RP002300100031 was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- Treasurer Sexton requested a motion to remove the taxes to be cancelled on all properties that the market value will be removed. Commissioner Manes made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- Land Sale Offer (ACTION): Treasurer Sexton discussed an offer received for the Andersen Heights parcels, noting that the properties had previously been offered at public auction multiple times without being sold. A motion to accept the offer was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Commissioner Manes to enter executive session @ 11:40 am per the agenda: pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(d); to consider items exempt from disclosure; Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(a)(b); personnel; & Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(f); possible litigation; Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(c) Real Property, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds.

Roll call vote: Manes – aye, Reynolds – aye, Short – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Present: Commissioner Reynolds, Commissioner Short, Commissioner Manes, Clerk Janeen LeWan, Attorney Mariah Dunham, & Public Works Director Jim Roletto.

Exited executive session 12:30 pm

Minutes read and approved this 13th day of July, 2026.

By the Board of Benewah County Commissioners:

_____/s/_____
Robert Short, Commissioner

_____/s/_____
Mark Reynolds, Commissioner

_____/s/_____
Scott Manes, Commissioner

Attest:

_____/s/_____
Janeen LeWan, Clerk