BENEWAH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 13, 2026

Be it remembered that at this time the Board of County Commissioners met in a special 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 8:02 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. Approve Monthly Claims (ACTION): A motion to approve the claims was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Discussion on the Danielson rock invoice on hold, questions on the Ziply phone costs and the difference in pricing for D2, D3, and Ambulance building in Fernwood. Motion carried.
3. Expenditure Requests:
    a) IACRC Annual Conference – Janeen LeWan, Clerk (ACTION): Commissioner Reynolds noted he would like to get to a point where the county is covering the full cost of training. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
    b) Extension Office Copier Lease Agreement – Rhonda Amy, Office Manager (ACTION): Rhonda Amy with extension discussed the lease with the Commissioners, a motion to move forward providing everything meets legal review was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried
    c) Building Department Copier Lease Agreement – Tina Thomson, Building Inspector (ACTION): Jim discussed the lease and the printer need with the Commissioners. Commissioner Reynolds mad a motion that after everything is said and done we approve the continuation of the lease, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
    d) Email Conversion Licensing Cost Estimate – Janeen LeWan, Clerk (ACTION): Clerk LeWan discussed the estimate, noting it will come down in cost as the number of email addresses has been reduced. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
4. Proposal for Emergency Medical Dispatch Program Implementation – Anthony Eells, Sheriff (ACTION): Sheriff Eells explained the program to the Commissioners, the importance, and the price reduction from the previous system which was non-functional. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
5. St. Maries Fire Protection District Letter re: Fire Protection & Detection – Review: Sheriff Eells explained that a sprinkler system is needed for the jail. He is working on obtaining a quote for the system. The fire alarm system in the courthouse also needs repairs, and working

on an estimate. Currently jail deputies are completing Firewatch after hours, no OT or extra cost for the watch.

6. Discussion on Extending No Wake Zone on 1st Street – Waterways Committee: Sheriff Eells mentioned JJ Michaels was approached by the owners of the RV park on 1st street requesting the no wake zone be extended. Discussion continued on the areas where there is a no wake zone, process for changing, & laws on the river. Commissioner requested clarification on how to institute some rules on the waterways. Attorney Dunham will look into state code, Sheriff Eells discussed the 100' rule and width of the rivers. Commissioners noted the need to follow state law.
7. Lease Agreement Golf Cart Storage Space (ACTION): Attorney Dunham, not ready for action yet. There are new golf cart sheds, and there may be some adjustments to the agreement coming. A motion to table pending further adjustments was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
8. Lolo Creek Rural Subdivision Preliminary Plat Application – (ACTION): Attorney Dunham reviewed the public hearing at the last meeting, discussed the options the commissioners had for approval, and next steps for each option. Commissioners discussed some of the public concerns and how some of them will be addressed prior to final plat based on requirement needed to complete the subdivision. Discussion continued into planning & zoning, and subdivisions and the compromise it plays vs having zoning. A motion to approve the preliminary plat was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
9. PILT Program Memo Review from Secretary of the Interior – Review: Clerk LeWan reviewed the funds received, recommended placing in general reserve to utilize at the end of the year to even out funds. Remainder if any can be saved for future projects. Commissioners noted the need to use for negative funds.
10. SPD Lease Renewal for FY2027 (ACTION): Commissioners discussed the lease, pricing, and competitiveness right now. Motion to move forward with the lease was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
11. SOI Dept of Parks & Recreation – Clarkia Grooming Shed Grant Application – Review: Clerk LeWan discussed the denial, has notified the Snow Riders Club, and they are working on a decision of their next steps.
12. Compensation Practices for Elected County Officials – Resolution 2026-17 (ACTION): Attorney Dunham discussed her review of compensation policies, some revisions in the personnel policy do not apply to elected officials. Their salaries need to be set with no changes throughout the year, unless there are changes in the duties of the office. A motion to approve Resolution 2026-17 was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds.
    Roll call vote: Manes – aye, Reynolds – aye, Short – aye. Motion carried unanimously.
13. Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Development Resolution 2026-18 (ACTION): Attorney Dunham discussed her legal memorandum with Commissioners, as well ah her analysis. Recommendation is to put a temporary moratorium, task P&Z to move forward with any changes needed. Discussion of the timeline for the moratorium. A motion to approve Temporary Moratorium on Data Center Development Resolution 2026-18 was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
    Roll call vote: Manes – aye, Reynolds – aye, Short – aye. Motion carried unanimously.
14. Establish a Monthly Timecard Submission Deadline for Hourly Employees Resolution 2026-19 (ACTION): Attorney Dunham noted this was reviewed with Clerk LeWan, discussed the process, need, and notification timeline with Commissioners. A motion to approve agenda

item number 2026-19 was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
Roll call vote: Manes – aye, Reynolds – aye, Short – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

15. Establishing Requirements for Road Approach Permits & Access to County Roads Ordinance 2026-167 (ACTION): Attorney Dunham noted they have a process in place that applies, however is not addressed in the ordinance. This is to memorialize the practice and requirements of the county. A motion to add Ordinance 2026-167 establish requirement for road approach was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
    Roll call vote: Manes – aye, Reynolds – aye, Short – aye. Motion carried unanimously.
16. CAT Equipment Financing Options (ACTION): Commissioner Reynolds discussed the financing options. Recommendation was the purchase option of a new machine with warranty and to relinquish the current machine. A motion to purchase a new machine and give back our current leased machine that is a $180,0000 value was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
17. Benewah County Library Parking Lot Request (ACTION): A motion to approve the request was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
18. Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections Passthrough Funds Recipient Agreement (ACTION): Discussion on this being an annual funding agreement with the state, Commissioner Manes moved that we approve that, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
19. Anderson Height Lots to Ross Brothers Investments Deed (ACTION): Discussed these were the lots that previously the county attempted to sell. Offer was made at the last meeting and the Commissioners approved the sale. A motion that they accept the action according to the agenda was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
20. IT Professional Services Agreement FY2026 & 2027 (ACTION): Clerk Discussed the need for the IT services, current billing and documentation of time, and the addition of EMS. A motion to approve the agreement with IT Professional Services was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
21. IOEM PW00043 Benewah County Reimbursement & Project Completion & Certification Report (ACTION): Jim noted these are from an event in 2016 and are the last two. Updated on current requests and noted the delay in payment should not follow suit. A motion to approve agenda item 21 was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
22. IOEM PW00053 Benewah County Reimbursement & Project Completion & Certification Report (ACTION): A motion to approve action item 22 on the agenda was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
23. Misdemeanor/Juvenile Probation Office Supervision Department – (ACTION): Attorney Dunham noted the supervision of this department falls under the commissioners unless directed to be supervised by another office. Discussion on how probation has been functioning, and recommendation to have it be supervised by the Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Eells noted hs has agreed to take on probation services. A motion to approve Resolution number 2026-20 was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Manes. Motion carried.
    Roll call vote: Manes – aye, Reynolds – aye, Short – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

<u>9:00 A.M.</u> <u>BCH Hospital Update:</u>
Lori Minier and Burt Keltner provided an overview of the proposed 2027 budget, highlighting assumptions including a standard 6% cost increase, anticipated growth in service utilization, and expansion of programs such as diabetic care, infusion therapy, physical and occupational therapy, laboratory services, and Quick Care. Leadership discussed workforce challenges, including RN recruitment, with expectations that improved staffing will reduce overtime and traveler costs. Employee benefit expenses are projected to decrease based on updated historical trends. Financial discussions acknowledged the hospital's debt obligations, current cash flow constraints, and the inability to make bond payments without jeopardizing payroll. Commissioners reviewed new and existing service lines, quarterly financial reviews, cost-saving efforts, and auditing practices. They also outlined growth opportunities, including expansion of pharmacy compounding services and a proposed cardiac program expected to generate future revenue. Hospital leadership also addressed public perception, financial performance trends, and requested county support where infrastructure or other assistance may be available to help strengthen the hospital's long-term financial stability.

<u>9:15 A.M Public Comment:</u>
Wayne Glassman: Spoke about the water adjudication with the tribe. Attorney Dunham noted there is a lot of information available to the public. Mr. Glassman noted some of the parties who have signed the agreement. Read off some items from the agreement he has concern with. Discussed interactions he had about having a license while at Heyburn State Park, and being under the tribe's jurisdiction. Noted that his son cannot use property around his home as it has been purchased by the tribe from Stimson.
Robin Stebbins: Commented on the land use plan; contradicts the statement that Benewah County does not want zoning. He would encourage the commissioners to review this plan, and would like to encourage reviewing and redoing the plan as it may be time. Comprehensive land use plan talks of zoning. Comes across a directional goal of the county however what he heard today it contradicts that. Important to get clarity on the regulation and work that needs to be done for final plat.
Jennifer Izzareli: Questioned that Medicare/Medicaid both reimbursement rate pay significantly less than the cost hospital. Recommended to separate Medicare and Medicaid. Medicare is by law to pay 101% allowable. Not understanding why our management of the hospital states that they get reimbursed so little for Medicare. Recommends looking into and asking for more information. Commented on bond levy triggers to the hospital.
Maureen Hodgson: Commented the bond that paid for the construction of the hospital that it was historically low for the percentage. Has that ever changed?

<u>**9:30 A.M Noxious Weeds Discussion –** *Chase Youngdahl, Noxious Weeds Director, Bonner County; Secretary * Region 1 Representative for IANWCS*</u>
The Board received an introductory overview of the County's noxious weed program and the responsibilities of the Noxious Weed Superintendent, including serving as a regional ambassador, identifying noxious weeds, and developing management programs as required by Idaho Code. Discussion covered landowner responsibilities, coordination with state and local agencies, available resources for weed management, and opportunities for future collaboration and education. Particular concern was expressed regarding the spread of Bohemian knotweed along the St. Joe River, and the Board discussed the superintendent role, community outreach, and partnerships to improve inventory, education, and control efforts.

<u>**10:00 A.M. Cleaning Ditches to Prevent Black Ice –** *Mary Burton –*</u>
Mary Burton discussed her concerns of the Benewah Road connecting to Hwy 5. She noted residents have assisted in cleaning ditches in this area. Requested help from the road crews in cleaning out the ditches.

Mary also noted that residents have continued to help clean the area around the dumpsters on the Benewah.

Chairman Short recessed the Business Meeting to enter into the Board of Equalization Hearing at 11:08 a.m.

Chairman Short called the Business Meeting back to order at 12:57 p.m.

10:15 A.M. Benewah County Treasurer

- **Possible Tax Cancellation/Hardship Request(s) (ACTION)** The Board approved a tax cancellation for Annie and William Frederick in the amount of $20.30 due to a casualty loss. The Board also discussed a second cancellation request based on the taxpayer's hospitalization when payment was due; however, the Treasurer did not recommend approval and will send a letter outlining the Idaho Code requirements for timely tax payments. A motion to approve the cancellations was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.
- **Financial Review/Cash Balance Review –** The Board discussed the hospital's unpaid levy payments, including the August 2027 payment, and the need for a decision before this year's budget is finalized. A review of funding concerns and the hospital's payment history was discussed. It was noted that the hospital has not expressed when they would provide the necessary funds, and it was recommended the Board has weekly meetings with the hospital to review balances and payment status.
- **Request to Set Date to Sell Parcel w/ Title Report (ACTION)** The Board reviewed the title report for the property. Attorney Dunham recommended reviewing the existing lease before proceeding with any sale to determine which property is included in the lease. No action was taken.
- **Approval of Two Land Sale Parcels, & Request Deeds to be Completed by Prosecutor's Office (ACTION)** The Board approved the sale of tax deed properties, including the Chicago Insurance property in the St. Joe City area for $20,100 and 131 W. Ridge Drive in the Benewah Alder Creek area for $60,100. The purchasers will pay all delinquent taxes, and any remaining proceeds will be remitted to the State as unclaimed funds. The Board also authorized the Prosecuting Attorney to complete the deeds for the sales. Motion carried. A motion for the approval of the land sales and approval for the prosecuting attorney to complete the deeds for the sale was made by Commissioner Manes, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. Motion carried.

10:30 a.m. Jim Roletto, Benewah County Public Works Director

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

- **Washtucna Landfill**

Jim Roletto was not able to present on this day.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: A motion was made by Commissioner Manes to enter executive session @ 1:25 pm 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.
Exited executive session 2:22 pm

Minutes read and approved this 27th day of July, 2026.

By the Board of Benewah County Commissioners:

_/s/_____________________	_____/s/_________________	_____/s/________________
Robert Short, Commissioner	Mark Reynolds, Commissioner	Scott Manes, Commissioner

Attest:

_/s/_____________________________
Janeen LeWan, Clerk