

YAMHILL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL FORMAL SESSION

April 8, 2025

5:30 p.m.

McMinnville Civic Hall
200 NE 2nd St
McMinnville, OR 97128

Yamhill County: Commissioners Kit Johnston, Mary Starrett, and David "Bubba" King.

Yamhill County Staff: Ken Huffer; County Administrator, Christian Boenisch; County Council.

McMinnville City Council: McMinnville City Council - Mayor Kim Morris, Council President Sal Peralta, Councilor Zack Geary, Councilor Chris Chenoweth, Councilor Jessica Payne, Councilor Dan Tucholsky, Councilor Scott Cunningham.

City of McMinnville Staff: City Manager Jeff Towery, City Recorder Claudia Cisneros, City Attorney David Ligtenberg, Finance Director Katie Henry, Community Development Director Heather Richards, Police Chief Cord Wood, Library Director Jenny Berg, Public Works Director Geoff Hunsaker, Parks & Rec Director Susan Muir, IT Director Scott Burke, City Engineer James Lofton, Communications and Engagement Manager Noelle Amaya, and HR Director Vicki Hedges appeared via Zoom.

MURAC Members: Chair Peter Kircher, Vice Chair Mike Morris, Committee Member Dan Gibson, Committee Member Walt Gowell, Committee Member Dave Rucklos, Committee Member John Dietz, Committee Member Timothy Wade, Committee Member Diana Riggs, Committee Member Lisa Pool, and Committee Member Abigail Neilan appeared via Zoom.

Media: McMinnville Community Media Phil Guzzo. Scott Unger, News Register appeared via Zoom.

Welcome! Thank you for attending today's meeting. Public participation is encouraged. If you wish to address the Commissioners on any item not on the agenda, you may do so as part of the public comment period at the beginning of the meeting. If you desire to speak on any item, please raise your hand to be recognized after the Chair announces the agenda item. Please fill out a public comment card to indicate your intent to speak. NEW – Public participation also includes the ability to attend Formal Session via Zoom. For attendees that are attending the meeting via Zoom, the Chair will ask if any Zoom attendees wish to provide public comment in same manner as provided above. At that time, attendees will be asked to use the "raise hand" function in Zoom and staff will unmute the participant. Meetings will also continue to be available for view via a live stream on the Commissioners' You Tube channel. Written public comments may be submitted via email at bocinfo@yamhillcounty.gov by 5:00p.m. Wednesday.

Mayor Kim Morris called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

AGENDA:

1. Joint Work Session of City Council, MURAC & Yamhill County Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Community Development Director, Heather Richards, provided information regarding McMinnville's Urban Renewal Agency. There will be an update to the Downtown Improvement Plan (Downtown 2045),

starting in Q2 of this year. Both the City of McMinnville and Yamhill County own many properties in the downtown area, that are included in the downtown historic district inventory. Both need to evaluate their downtown property holdings for efficiencies and program delivery. Each agency is at different phases of evaluation of their property and there might be an opportunity for coordination and strategic next steps. MURAC Chair, Peter Kircher added that they want everyone, the city and county, to assess and identify currently owned properties to understand if there isn't a more dynamic use for these locations.

County Administrator, Ken Huffer, expressed how Yamhill began addressing initial planning & assessments 5 years ago. There are 600 + employees that take up the buildings, which are at max capacity. Numerous properties and county departments are facing challenges regarding maintenance and employee' limitations. Over the next year, the county is making a deliberate move to the new OMI location by vacating 8 properties in stages to avoid putting them up for sale at the same time. Overall, this is the first time in 20 years, consolidating numerous county services under one roof.

Mayor Kim Morris asked both parties what their current and future needs were relative to their property downtown. Commissioner Mary Starrett stated the county has taken on a huge debt and responsibility with the purchase OMI. All current county property sales will be used to pay down the debt incurred by purchasing the OMI buildings.

City Counselor, Scott Cunningham, inquired about adding another court room in the future and what the courthouse and jail are looking at needs wise. Ken Huffer explained the county is obligated to provide a courthouse for the courts and Sheriff's Office. There have been numerous inquiries about an additional courtroom due to its limitations on space. There are currently 4 courtrooms. 3 of those courtrooms are able to participate in jury trials and 1 cannot be, due to limited space. The Sheriff's Office has the potential to move into the old building at OMI to facilitate and improve the overall function and business. A longer project that the county is actively working on with the courts and state, is to get funding to offset costs for those needs. City Counselor, Scott Cunningham, confirmed the short- and long-term goals for the courts and jail system will be based around the current building and not the purchase of any new buildings, to which, Ken Huffer confirmed.

City Counselor, Jessica Payne brought up that parking garage is used more for judicial uses and the city is not getting use out of it. When the County is fully moved to the OMI building, she asked members of the County if that parking garage is still something they need, to which Ken Huffer confirmed it would still be used. He continued that by consolidating the Clerk's Office and the BOC Office, parking around buildings will still be utilized by numerous departments such as the Juvenile Department, the District Attorney's Office, Family and Youth, and Behavioral Health, and any business involving the courthouse.

City Counselor, Chris Chenoweth expressed the cities' overall experience with out-of-control dogs and the need for a building to help support this. He asked if any of the county buildings being put up for sale, could house a dog control facility. Ken Huffer stated that dog control is not something included in the overall plan, citing challenges such as kennel zoning. Commissioner Starrett confirmed that the county at one time did have dog control by the fairgrounds. The county doesn't have the money for a dog control officer or facility but added that the Newberg Animal Shelter went into a contract that will save the county around \$23,000 a year. Mayor Kim Morris also mentioned that Homeward Bound is building a new facility which may have room for cities/counties to contract space.

Commissioner Kit Johnston brought up the Detox Center that may be housed at the Annex Center behind the community center due to convenience. He added that this was not confirmed but would like to utilize the properties the county already owns before selling to the city.

Counselor Zack Geary recognized how the Detox Center would be a valuable asset to the county but raised concerns for McMinnville's citizens. Currently, the Community Center he stated, is the heart and soul of city due to its dynamic space and children's programming. He requested that the county keep staff, patrons, and kids in mind when considering the possible location of a Detox Center. Commissioner Mary Starrett's impression was that active users that would be frequenting the facility, but those individuals would be committed to getting clean and sticking to their sobriety and recovery rather than those choosing to not get clean and continue to use drugs.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned with no decisions made at 6:46 p.m.

Jessica Andre
Secretary

YAMHILL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Chair

KIT JOHNSTON



Commissioner

MARY STARRETT

Not Available for Signature

Commissioner

DAVID "BUBBA" KING

Approved by the Yamhill County Board of
Commissioners on 06/12/2025
via Board Order 25-153