



ONEIDA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Bill Lewis, Chairman – Ken Eliason – Brian Jeppsen

Meeting Location: Event Center, 459 South Main St., Malad City, Idaho 83252

MINUTES – Commissioners Meeting - 22 December 2025 - 9:00AM

* RECORDING# 251222-0175 *

IN ATTENDANCE: Commissioner Chairman Bill Lewis, Commissioner Brian Jeppsen, and Commissioner Ken Eliason.

Commissioner Lewis opened the meeting and led all in the pledge and a prayer.

Approve Agenda

Commissioner Eliason requested to add the "2026 Commissioner Assignments and Chairman Designation" agenda item to today's agenda as he will not be here at the next meeting.

Commissioner Eliason motioned to add "2026 Commissioner Assignments and Chairman Designation" to the agenda and to accept the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda, Payment of Claims, and Approval of Meeting Minutes

The board reviewed the payment of claims, agenda, and meeting minutes.

Commissioner Jeppsen motioned to accept the consent agenda, which includes the payment of claims and approval of meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Total # of Payments	Fund Description	Amount Paid
65	GENERAL FUND/CURRENT EXPENSE	\$ 29,355.44
37	ROAD AND BRIDGE	\$ 19,456.04
5	AIRPORT	\$ 3,194.51
21	AMBULANCE	\$ 11,628.38
4	DISTRICT COURT	\$ 699.14
2	FAIR, COUNTY	\$ 1,665.00
37	JUSTICE FUND	\$ 9,342.87
1	PARKS & RECREATION	\$ 11.98
3	REVALUATION	\$ 2,330.00
1	TORT	\$ 2,735.70
2	WEEDS	\$ 128.73
5	CONSOLIDATED ELECTIONS	\$ 1,400.00
4	E-911	\$ 14,847.19
2	DRUG COURT/SPC. CT. CORRINATOR	\$ 124.15
TOTAL:		\$ 96,919.13

Oneida County Vessel Fund Report (timestamp: 00:05:47)

The statute governing Vessel Funds allows expenditures that support public boating access, safety, and facilities. Approved expenditures may include training personnel, providing public boating safety education, constructing or repairing boating access sites, and conducting boating inspections. Sheriff Doug Williams suggested the county use the available Vessel Funds to purchase a search and rescue drone, noting how useful such equipment would have been in 2024 when a vehicle entered the Weston Reservoir and needed to be located.

Sheriff Williams stated that he priced a drone and estimated that the combined cost of registration, operator training, and miscellaneous expenses would be close to the \$26,291 in Vessel Funds currently available.

Commissioner Jeppsen motioned to submit the County Vessel Fund Report in the amount of \$26,291.60, the cost to purchase a search and rescue drone that would include training, licensing, and anything else necessary to get the drone operational. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Probation Policy Suggested Updates (timestamp: 00:21:12)

County Probation Officer Gabe Jimenez brought suggested updates to the Probation Policy before the Board of Commissioners, stating that the largest changes would be under the "use of force" section. The proposed updates would specifically add the use of OC spray (similar to pepper spray) and include training on its use for de-escalation of force.

Prior to proposing the changes, Mr. Jimenez stated that the current policy was reviewed by several law enforcement peers from various locations throughout Idaho. Following this review, Mr. Jimenez contacted ICRMP, which provided sample policies from three Idaho organizations. If the Board approves the proposed changes, the document will be submitted to ICRMP for review before returning to the Board of Commissioners for final approval. Mr. Jimenez stated he foresees the document being reviewed with the commissioners on an annual basis.

Commissioner Eliason motioned to authorize Oneida County Probation Officer Gabe Jimenez to move forward with the updated Oneida County Probation Policy by sending it to ICRMP for review. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

Proposed Commissioner Meeting Schedule - 2026 (timestamp: 00:39:56)

An error was identified on the December 2026 meeting schedule, which listed the first meeting on the first Monday of the month rather than the second Monday, as required by Idaho Code. To remain compliant, the commissioners changed the meeting date to December 14.

Commissioner Jeppsen motioned to move the currently scheduled commissioner meeting date from December 7 to December 14 and to keep the December 21st date. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

129K Overweight Vehicle Permits - Hess Pumice (timestamp: 00:41:30)

Six 129,000-pound overweight vehicle permits for 2026 were submitted by Hess Pumice for commissioner approval, listing them as permit numbers 1 thru 6.

Commissioner Jeppsen motioned to approve issuance of six (6) 129,000-pound overweight vehicle permits (permit numbers 1 thru 6) to Hess Pumice Products, 100 Hess Drive, Malad City Idaho for the 2026 calendar year. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Rocky Mountain Power - Substation Update - 10:00am (timestamp: 00:48:10)

Steve Leichty with Rocky Mountain Power and Oneida County Emergency Services Manager Dan Williams reported on the recent failure of the substation in Malad. The protective devices intended to safeguard the transformer did not operate as expected. The transformer must be replaced, and all three breakers, along with the bus work, were damaged. The upstream device protecting the transformer was also damaged. Testing and review of the protective devices will be conducted to determine why they did not perform as designed.

Currently, only one of the three breakers is feeding the entire area, which could make power restoration more challenging if another event occurs downstream. There is concern regarding the ground grid, which consists of ground rods spaced every 6–8 feet. The three distribution breakers will need to be replaced and rebuilt. The estimated repair timeline is six months, although this may change once the ground grid assessment is complete. The plan is to rebuild while the substation remains in operation.

Mr. Leichty noted that events such as this reveal system weaknesses and opportunities for improvement. Rocky Mountain Power appreciates the support of the community. No decisions were made.

Engage Wellness Update (timestamp: 01:17:55)

County Clerk Lon Colton reported on discussions with Engage Wellness and Computer Arts regarding incorporation of the program. Computer Arts will set up a beta test. The program is not expected to affect the budget, though a few budget lines will need to be added to allow for proper tracking. Estimated implementation is in January.

The agreement sent by Engage Wellness has been reviewed by legal counsel. Attorney Lyle Fuller requested that Engage Wellness provide a representation or warranty ensuring compliance with all tax laws. He also noted that some indemnifications could be removed and that paragraph 6 on page 4 lists the wrong location. Attorney Fuller requested a redline version for review before a final copy is presented for commissioner approval. No decisions were made.

Ballot Security Measures Compliant with Idaho Code 34-901 (timestamp: 01:23:59)

County Clerk Lon Colton explained updates to ballot security measures being implemented to enhance election integrity. Several audit measures are in place to detect any fraudulent attempts, including an audit at the state level through the Secretary of State's office.

The County will be moving to a ballot-on-demand system rather than using pre-printed ballots. During the voting process, voters provide identification, are checked in, and the

issuing clerk tears off the ballot and stamps it with an official stamp. With the ballot-on-demand system, the ballot is printed and stamped during the check-in process. The Idaho Statewide Voter Registration System (ISVRS) tracks all activity and provides immediate updates when voters are checked into the system. No decisions were made.

Department Update & Highlights 11:00am

Emergency Services *(timestamp: 01:35:50)*

The remaining funds from the 2023 SHSP Grant are \$1,176.50 and must be used by February 28, 2026. The funds are designated for "county resiliency," so expenditures related to county emergency needs would likely be approved.

The 2024 SHSP Grant must be used by February 28, 2027. The total award of \$14,454.45 will be split between the county and the Sheriff's Department, with \$11,454.45 allocated to the county and \$3,000 to the Sheriff's Department.

The 2025 SHSP Grant has not yet been awarded.

Previously discussed uses of the funds include purchasing a second LifeStraw water filtration system (previously approved), long-term food storage, cots, and a generator for the Holbrook Fire Station or school.

On Tuesday, December 30, 2025, between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m., the school will test the generator to ensure it is operational in the event of another emergency. The generator would then be housed at the school.

Road & Bridge *(timestamp: 01:54:15)*

Due to warm weather and lack of snow, the Road Department has not been actively plowing but has continued work on other projects. The salt shed is full, and all plows and sanders have been serviced and are ready for snowy conditions. Gravel has been hauled, and roads have been patched in several lower-traffic areas.

The safety grant project is progressing. Rumble strips and centerline painting are expected to occur this summer from Snowville through Roy and along all of Old Highway 191.

There is concern regarding the road near Devils Creek, which is sinking. The state installed drains several years ago, but the area has continued to settle and the dirt has shifted. The plan is to dig out that side of the road and install additional drains before the rumble strip project next year.

Dates for chip sealing have been set for next year, along with a preliminary estimate of the roads to be completed.

The department is working on installing a fence around the Juniper Pit and plans to apply for a grant to place a crusher there due to the current condition of the road.

The new road widener has been used for asphalt and gravel work in Arbon and the Narrows. The equipment is performing well, and material has been compacted as

much as possible; however, some road edges are too steep for the roller to safely reach.

Building Inspector & Maintenance *(timestamp: 02:17:44)*

Building Inspector and Maintenance Manager Tory Richardson provided a report on city and county building permit activity for the period of October through December 2025. During this period, seventeen (17) building permits were issued in Oneida County. The permits issued included four (4) commercial buildings, five (5) outbuildings, five (5) single-family dwellings, one (1) multi-residential building, and two (2) miscellaneous permits.

An annual comparison of total permits issued shows a decline over time. In 2021, a total of 124 permits were issued; by 2025, with only a few days remaining in the year, the total stands at ninety (90).

The courtroom remodel project is nearing completion. The carpet installation is complete, and the new doors for the courtroom offices are scheduled to be painted the day after Christmas. Blinds for the Treasurer's Office still need to be completed. The downstairs bathrooms were not included in the original courthouse remodel project, but require updates and, if possible, ADA compliance.

The projector from the old elementary school has been installed at the Event Center and, aside from a few remaining issues, is close to being operational. Event Center rain gutter exits need to be extended into the ground with rock bed drains installed below the frost level. In previous years, standing water has been an issue at the fairgrounds, and this improvement is expected to help mitigate that problem.

Mr. Richardson reported that during the recent county-wide power outage, the county generators functioned as intended, although the courthouse generator required manual startup.

Weeds *(timestamp: 02:27:40)*

Weed Supervisor Cody Clyde stated there was not much to report as this is the slow season for the department. Some rush skeleton weed has been located along the I-15 freeway and frontage roads where the old highway used to be, including the Couches gravel pit. Mr. Clyde met with the Noxious Weed Association in Preston a few weeks ago, where it was noted that rush skeleton weed is a widespread issue.

Mr. Clyde reported that the \$30,000 allocated for FY2025 was not released until the end of the fiscal year, allowing him to spend only approximately \$8,000. He recently submitted a \$30,000 request for the cost-share program, along with an additional \$8,000 request for Milestone chemical to treat Mediterranean sage discovered on Samaria Mountain. Last season, the chemical High Noon was used unsuccessfully to control the weed. Upon returning to the site, Mr. Clyde observed Mediterranean sage rosettes throughout the area and is hopeful the new chemical will be more effective.

Next year, the Oneida County Weed Department will be able to subcontract some spraying, including work for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and helicopter spraying.

Mr. Clyde stated he will be recertifying this year for weed-free hay and forage. There are a few farms in Oneida County, and he also assists Bannock County, which does not currently have a certified inspector.

The weed spraying drone was damaged earlier this year. Hyllo has acknowledged receipt of the drone and will have one of their contractors complete the repairs. An estimate is needed for the ICRMP claim, and Mr. Clyde will follow up with Hyllo to obtain the estimate.

Adoption of Impact Area Ordinance No. 2025-12-01 and Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (timestamp: 02:02:52)

A public hearing was held on December 2, 2025, with discussion occurring during the meeting that followed the hearing. The Ordinance and Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law (FFCL) were prepared by Attorney Lyle Fuller. Following the hearing, Exhibit A, including the legal description and map, was updated by Deputy Assessor Jaime Olsen using information provided during the hearing and meeting. The new impact area shrinks what was previously in place.

Commissioner Eliason motioned to accept Area of Impact Ordinance 2025-12-01 and the Area of Impact Factual Findings dated December 22, 2025. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

Credit Card Use (timestamp: 02:40:55)

Discussion was held regarding the Credit Card Policy, specifically the prohibition on tips. Clarification was requested concerning holiday meals and the allowance of a \$100 tip. It was noted that the Fairboard appears to maintain separate bank accounts and credit cards outside of the county, while expenditures associated with the county require commissioner authorization.

It was further noted that the policy should address tipping related to authorized group activities, such as annual dinners or events involving volunteer service (including the Fairboard, Planning and Zoning, and IAC meetings), and clearly distinguish those situations from employee per diem expenses. The need to specify "group activities authorized by the county" within the policy was identified.

Commissioner Lewis motioned to accept the tip that was paid on the Fairboard annual dinner held on November 8, 2025. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Non-Medical Indigent (timestamp: 02:57:40)

County Clerk Lon Colton provided examples of non-medical indigent policies from other counties. Currently, Oneida County donates \$500 annually to the Interfaith Council. The Board discussed the option of drafting an official resolution to address non-medical expenses, but it was also noted that the county could continue with the annual donation,

accompanied by a statement specifying what the county will and will not cover, which could be posted on the county website.

Commissioner Jeppsen motioned to accept, in principle, an adaptation of the Cassia County Indigent Assistance statement that could be posted on the Oneida County website once modified. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

P&Z Office Staffing (timestamp: 03:14:50)

During a budget meeting earlier this year, the Planning & Zoning Administrator Rhonda Neal indicated she would retire in July 2026 and recently stated she plans to honor that commitment unless the county finds a replacement before that time. The board agreed that all of the facets related to that role need to be identified after the first of the year. No decisions were made.

Mutual Aid Agreement With Other Counties (timestamp: 03:16:45)

At the last 4-county commissioner meeting, it was suggested that the county's mutual aid policy be updated. County Clerk Lon Colton located two previous versions, updated in 2019 and 2021. The versions were very similar, with the main difference appearing on page 2 of the most recent version. No decisions were made.

Proposed Commissioner Assignments and Chairman for 2026 (timestamp: 03:25:51)

Chairman responsibilities and assignments for 2026 were discussed. It was unanimously decided to keep the chairman designation and commissioner assignments unchanged in 2026.

Commissioner Eliason motioned to nominate Commissioner Lewis as the Chairman of the board for the 2026 year. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jeppsen motioned to maintain the assignments the commissioners have had thus far. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

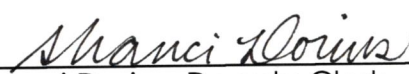
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 1:00pm (timestamp: 03:28:41)

Commissioner Jeppsen motioned to move into (2) two Executive Sessions per Idaho Code 74-206 (1)(b) To consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or public school student and (1) one Executive Session per Idaho Code 74-206 (1)(f) To communicate with legal counsel for the public agency to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation, or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated. The mere presence of legal counsel at an executive session does not satisfy this requirement. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. Roll call vote: Ayes from Commissioners Lewis, Eliason, and Jeppsen. Motion carried.

***** Meeting adjourned by 1:50 pm*****



Bill Lewis, Chairman



Shanci Dorius, Deputy Clerk