



ONEIDA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Bill Lewis, Chairman – Ken Eliason – Brian Jeppsén

Regular Commissioners Meeting

27 April 2026 - 9:00AM

Meeting Location: Event Center

459 South Main Street, Malad City, Idaho 83252

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

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

Approve Agenda

Commissioner Eliason moved to accept the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsén. All ayes. Motion carried.

Per Diem Exception Request – Probation

A County Probation employee attended training where a meal was provided but reported it had been sitting out too long, was spoiled, and had made attendees sick the day prior. The employee chose to purchase lunch instead and requested an exception to allow per diem for that meal.

Commissioner Eliason moved to accept the request to allow a per-diem exception for a single meal (lunch) at the recent training attended by County Probation employee Kristi Christophersen. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsén. All ayes. Motion carried.

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

Commissioner Jeppsén moved to accept the consent agenda, to include the payment of claims and approval of meeting minutes for April 13 and April 15. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsén. All ayes. Motion carried.

Total # of Payments	Fund Description	Amount Paid
62	GENERAL FUND/CURRENT EXPENSE	\$ 45,405.04
23	ROAD AND BRIDGE	\$ 44,114.00
5	AIRPORT	\$ 5,575.77
14	AMBULANCE	\$ 3,426.63
2	DISTRICT COURT	\$ 632.83
6	FAIR, COUNTY	\$ 1,446.72
27	JUSTICE FUND	\$ 35,081.46
2	PARKS & RECREATION	\$ 38.32
1	REVALUATION	\$ 2,500.00
1	TORT	\$ 3,521.10
12	WEEDS	\$ 8,835.64
1	DRUG COURT/SPC.CT. COORDINATOR	\$ 151.48
1	LATCF FUNDING	\$ 2,759.87
	TOTAL:	\$ 153,488.86



Board of Equalization, if needed

No Board of Equalization was needed.

Discussion with District Judge Cody Brower

As the District Court Judge presiding over this area, District Judge Cody Brower is attempting to meet annually with commissioners in the district. Judge Brower has recently taken on a larger docket in Pocatello and presides in multiple counties, including Oneida County, and stated it is a privilege to serve as the District Court Judge. He referenced his prior service in Oneida County as County Attorney and noted that experience has been helpful in his position as district judge. Judge Brower answered questions from the Board regarding his role, and no decisions were made.

EDPRO Grant – Request for Oneida County to Serve as the Submitting Entity

In a letter addressed to the Oneida County Board of Commissioners, Molly Beseris with the Four County Alliance of Southeast Idaho (4CASI) formally requested that Oneida County continue to serve as the sponsoring entity for the Economic Development Professional (EDPRO) Grant for Fiscal Year 2027, acting as the financial managing county for the grant.

Her letter explained that the application process is managed through the Idaho Commerce portal, with a submission deadline at the end of May, and requested permission to write and submit the grant on behalf of the County. She noted that, should the grant be awarded, the final contract would be brought before the Board for review and signature. The letter concluded with 4CASI's appreciation for Oneida County's continued partnership and sponsorship of the grant over the past two decades.

Commissioner Jeppsen moved to continue serving as the sponsoring entity for the Economic Development Professional Grant for the 2027 fiscal year. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Request to Waive Event Center Fees for National Day of Prayer - Interfaith Council

The Oneida County Interfaith Council is sponsoring the County's participation in the National Day of Prayer at 6:00 p.m. on May 7, 2026. The Council has planned to use the Event Center as the gathering place that day and requested the rental fee be waived. They will ensure the building is left clean. The Board stipulated that a contract was required even though the rental fee was waived.

Commissioner Jeppsen moved to waive the Event Center rental fees for the Interfaith Council's sponsoring of the National Day of Prayer on May 7, 2026; a contract will still be required and the building left clean. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Hospital Board Member

Hospital Board Member Sharee Blaisdell has stepped down, and Jerry Thomas has agreed to serve in her place. The board signed a card of appreciation for Mrs. Blaisdell's service.

Commissioner Lewis moved to appoint Jerry Thomas as a hospital board member to fill the vacancy left by Sharee Blaisdell. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.



P&Z Administrator Position Hire

During a recent special meeting in executive session, with a quorum present, interviews for the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Administrator position were conducted. The Board also received and reviewed rankings from other members who participated in the interviews. Based on the interview process and rankings, Darla Tombaugh was selected for the position and will assume her new role on May 4, 2026 at \$19.50 per hour.

Commissioner Lewis moved to ratify the interview rankings and hiring recommendation, appointing Darla Tombaugh as the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Administrator effective May 4, 2026, with a starting wage of \$19.50 per hour. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

P&Z - Hadley Subdivision Plat for Board Signature

Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Administrator Rhonda Neal sent a letter of recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for approval of the Hadley Subdivision Plat. Planning and Zoning Assistant Darla Tombaugh presented the plat for Board signature.

Commissioner Eliason moved to approve the combined preliminary and final minor subdivision plat for the Hadley Subdivision. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

Planning Services Agreement – Strategic Communities Alliance

Rodney Birch with Strategic Communities Alliance (SCA), a nonprofit that assists small counties with planning services including land use review, zoning code analysis, development and zoning application processing, staff report summaries and recommendations, and staff training, submitted an agreement for the Board's review regarding planning and zoning (P&Z) support services.

The agreement is intended to provide support to the P&Z Administrator and Committee by assisting with application review to ensure forms and processes are consistent with applicable laws, policies, and professional standards prior to distribution.

The Board reviewed the agreement, supported its intent, and identified minor editorial amendments to be made prior to signing. The Board discussed the possibility of being able to utilize services immediately, with the agreement to be finalized and signed at a subsequent Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting following those revisions. Legal counsel was present and did not object.

Services from SCA will be billed on an hourly basis depending on the type of assistance, with rates ranging from \$55 to \$95 per hour.

Commissioner Jeppsen moved to approve the Planning Services Agreement between Oneida County and Strategic Communities Alliance (SCA) for services to be rendered to the Oneida County Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Administrator and Committee, with minor editorial amendments to be made prior to signing at the next Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting, and to allow services to be utilized immediately. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.



IDWR State Declaration of Drought Emergency – All Idaho Counties

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) issued an order, signed by the Director of IDWR and the Governor of Idaho, declaring a drought emergency in nearly all basins in Idaho, citing abnormally low snow water equivalent (SWE) levels during the second warmest snow accumulation season (October through March) recorded in Idaho since 1896, with only the winter of 1933–1934 being warmer.

The order further explained that extreme temperature conditions resulted in accelerated snowmelt, including at higher elevations where snow accumulation typically persists for at least an additional month. This resulted in record-low snowpack levels. Calculations obtained using the Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) indicate a high likelihood of irrigation shortages in many areas of the state.

With the declaration of the drought emergency, the order outlined several procedures and requirements that applied to the filing, processing, and approval of any application for a temporary change to an existing water right during the pendency of the declared drought emergency.

A declaration from Oneida County was discussed and will be considered at a future meeting after additional information is gathered. No decision was made.

Law Clerk Expenses for District Judges

Law Clerk expenses for district judges were discussed. Historically, smaller counties, including Oneida and Power Counties, have not contributed to these costs, which have been covered by surrounding counties. Discussion included smaller counties participating more equally in these costs in the future; however, specific cost allocations and participation details have not yet been determined.

A request will be included in the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY2027) budget for an estimated \$25,000 for law clerk expenses. For the current fiscal year, Franklin County agreed to split the cost with Oneida County, with Oneida County contributing \$15,000 from contingency funds to assist with Law Clerk expenses for Judge Brower.

Commissioner Jeppsen moved to approve covering Oneida County's portion of Law Clerk expenses for the district judge in the amount of \$15,000 from contingency funds. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Assessor - MLS Licensing Agreement

This topic was moved to the May 11, 2026 meeting and was not discussed.

R&B - Changes to the Roadway Development Procedures for Oneida County Road & Bridge

Road & Bridge Department Supervisor Dianna Dredge approached the Board to discuss issues with the current county road standards that may need to be updated or amended for clarification and enforceability. The Board determined a broader discussion with Planning & Zoning, Road & Bridge, the County Inspector, and relevant parties would be appropriate before any changes are made. No action was taken.



Stone Generator Update

County Inspector and Building Maintenance Manager Tory Richardson reported on the Stone Generator Project. The electrical estimate from Preston Electric was received and is more expensive than the work completed for the Event Center generator. The Stone Generator project differs in scope and will require a manual transfer switch and approximately 100 feet of additional wire. Generator fuel lines will also be installed, and the generator will be brought online.

Mr. Richardson is coordinating bids for electrical work, fencing, concrete, and the generator structure. The Board plans to use State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) funds once released, as federal funding is delayed due to the federal government shutdown. These funds would cover the electrical portion but not the structure. No decisions were made pending additional information.

Event Center Rental Fee Waiver Request - Library Read-a-Thon

The library is hosting a read-a-thon and requested that the rental fee for the Event Center be waived. The Board agreed to waive the fee, with the stipulations that the refundable deposit must still be paid and the building must be left in clean and acceptable condition following use.

Commissioner Eliason moved to waive the Event Center rental fee for the Library Read-a-Thon. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

Method of Fairboard Operation

The Fair Board's current operating structure was discussed regarding whether it is operating as an autonomous board aside from a commissioner-approved budget or under the purview of the Board of County Commissioners. The Board will gather additional information on how other county fair boards operate, and the discussion will continue at a future meeting. No action was taken.

Southeastern Idaho Public Health (SIPH) - FY27 Public Health Budget

Southeastern Idaho Public Health (SIPH) Director Maggie Mann attended with Spring Cobabe with the Malad Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program and SIPH Board of Health member Bob Christophersen. Director Mann presented the Fiscal Year 2027 Public Health budget request and county contribution calculations based on adjusted current-year and proposed budget figures. The SIPH fiscal year begins July 1, 2026, and Oneida County's annual contribution will be \$64,402.

Commissioner Chairman Bill Lewis, or a designated proxy with a signed authorization form, will attend the budget hearing as part of the Board of Health meeting in Pocatello on Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

Commissioner Jeppsen moved to support the Southeastern Idaho Public Health (SIPH) fiscal year 2027 budget request of \$64,402. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.



Comp Time / Overtime Pay

In recent discussions regarding Oneida County's Compensatory and Overtime Pay policy, Sharon Jutila with SMJ Consulting was tasked with developing an election form for county employees. The form allows employees to elect (choose) between accruing compensatory (comp) time with payout if department limits are exceeded, or receiving payout for comp time as it is earned. Quarterly elections must be made prior to the upcoming quarter if any changes are desired by the employee.

Commissioner Jepps moved that, regarding compensatory (comp) time, all currently accrued comp time be frozen and must be used as comp time; that a finalized Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Compensatory Time and Overtime Pay Policy be implemented, allowing employees to elect either comp time or overtime through a quarterly election process, effective immediately; and that any paid out time that results in a budget overage may be adjusted at year-end. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Budget Meeting Questions

Sheriff Doug Williams was attending training and unable to attend the recent department head budget meeting. He requested a discussion with the Board and County Clerk to clarify questions from that meeting and review department budget reports. No decisions were made.

Budget Questions

Sheriff Doug Williams spoke with the Board of Commissioners and the County Clerk to clarify budget questions in preparation for Fiscal Year 2027 (FY2027) budget requests. No decisions were made.

Compliance Letter Review

This topic was not addressed by the requestor. No action was taken.

Vehicle Use Policy

This vehicle use policy topic will be moved to a future meeting to allow Justin Nyquist with Idaho Counties Risk Management Program (ICRMP) to participate in the discussion.

Department Updates & Highlights

Building Inspector/Maintenance

Building Inspector and Maintenance Manager Tory Richardson reported that building permit activity has increased compared to the previous quarter and provided updates on courthouse improvement projects, including a basement bathroom remodel and front walkway and stair improvements. The chairs in the Event Center conference room will be cleaned.

Bids are still being sought for the courthouse basement bathroom project, which will include widening the doorway and other minor modifications to improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility; however, the restroom is approximately two inches too narrow for full compliance. Mr. Richardson noted that a fully ADA-compliant restroom is available elsewhere in the building.



The front walkway and steps were identified as a tripping hazard. A bid was received to repair or replace the affected areas of the walkway and stairs in front of the courthouse; handrails are not included in the bid, but the existing handrails could be repainted. Mr. Richardson reported he confirmed via a phone call that the bid will include fixing the pillars and the flagpole will remain in place, although these were not listed on the bid.

Commissioner Eliason moved to accept the concrete bid from Blake Love Construction in the amount of \$21,750 with funds from the capital expenditure budget to be used for the courthouse concrete project to remove and replace the bottom landing leading to the front doors, remove and replace the steps at the bottom of the first landing, remove and replace the sidewalk and flatwork around the flagpole and towards the parking lot, remove and replace three sets of steps heading west down the hill along with up to 20-feet of sidewalk between sets of steps headed west down the hill. Seconded by Commissioner Jeppsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

The courthouse parking lot will have parking lines repainted this spring. Mr. Richardson will also assist with projects related to the seasonal opening of the Le Grande Aqua Plunge swimming pool.

The Event Center has numerous keys in circulation, and the current key holders are not fully accounted for; there have also been instances of doors being left unlocked or open as well as windows being left open. Mr. Richardson recommended re-keying the building and maintaining a log of key holders to improve accountability and building security.

Commissioner Jeppsen moved to rekey the locks at the Event Center. Seconded by Commissioner Eliason. All ayes. Motion carried.

Treasurer

County Treasurer Leigh Love reported the County's investments are performing well, with bonds and certificates of deposit (CDs) secured at favorable rates. Total interest earnings were reported at \$154,919.88 as of March 31, 2026.

Total collections for the second quarter of 2026 were \$683,692.49. Delinquent taxes have decreased compared to the prior year, with tax year 2023 delinquency reduced to \$28,292.35. Total delinquencies from 2023 through the unpaid second half of 2025 were reported at \$1,856,601.16.

There were no tax deeds this year, as all qualifying properties were paid in a timely manner.

Ambulance

Oneida County Ambulance Treasurer Shane Howard is expecting the new ambulance, which has been paid in full, to be delivered soon following an approximately two-year build period. The rescue truck may be remounted pending award of a recently applied-for grant in the amount of \$115,000.



A new class of emergency medical technicians (EMTs) has completed training. Of the seven attendees, three have passed the EMT examination, one did not pass and plans to retest, and the remaining three plan to test in the near future.

Call volume has remained relatively steady, with a slight decrease reported at this time. The new billing company, Gold Cross Ambulance, has improved billing operations, including a patient portal for online account access and payment, as well as expanded reporting and invoice access.

Airport

Airport Board Secretary Kathy Ray shared updates regarding the airport. J-U-B Engineers Inc has been contracted to complete the airport lighting project, including design, bid solicitation, and administration of the bidding process. The design and bidding phases are expected to be completed later this summer or early fall, after which the project timeline for construction will be determined. The airport is currently under a Notice to Air Missions (NOTAM) due to deficiencies in the existing lighting system, as there is no lighting available for night landings; completion of this project is expected to address those deficiencies.

A new airport surveillance system has been installed, providing coverage of the airport grounds and the pilot's lounge, to address issues with unauthorized activity around aircraft, tiedowns, and minor theft within the lounge.

An additional grant opportunity is available and may be pursued for fencing and site improvements related to future hangar expansion.

Clerk

County Clerk/Auditor Lon Colton provided updates on departments under his oversight:

Elections - There are two contested races for the upcoming primary election on May 19, 2026: Commissioner District 1 and Commissioner District 2. All other county races are uncontested. The local candidates are: Bill Drury, Bob Crowther, Drew Pettis, and Mike Asay (Commissioner District 1, four-year term); Randy Willie and Kirk Nielsen (Commissioner District 2, two-year term); Lon Colton, Clerk of the District Court; Leigh Love, Treasurer; Kathleen Atkinson, Assessor; and Brad Horsley, Coroner.

Oneida County will be using ballot-on-demand beginning with the May Primary Election. This system allows ballots to be printed at the polling location rather than using pre-printed ballots that may go unused. The Elections Department will also be using newer ballot scanner/tabulator machines to tally ballots, supported by two Help America Vote Act (HAVA) grants received through the Secretary of State's Office. In preparation for the election, programming has been completed and ballot printers and related hardware are being tested. Public Logic and Accuracy (L&A) testing will be held May 4, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Events Center.



Clerk/Auditor - Budget worksheets have been distributed and are due May 18, 2026. This year's budgeting process will differ from prior years due to state projections of potential revenue declines. The State has also indicated a reduction in funding allocated for Road and Bridge, which may impact future roadwork capacity. The County will monitor state projections throughout the summer prior to adoption of the final budget this fall.

Courts (submitted by Chief Deputy Clerk Diane Skidmore)- Court staff continue to utilize the completed courtroom remodel, with minor remaining punch-list items in the conference room and jury room.

The Idaho Supreme Court will launch a new public-facing website on April 27, 2026, to improve access to court information and services.

The Idaho Supreme Court will be in Oneida County May 5–7, 2026, to complete a network migration, transitioning the local courts onto the state court network. Court clerks have completed online training related to the transition.

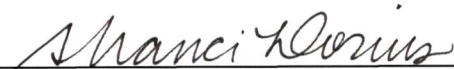
Court staff also received training on new security protocols implementing Duo Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), an essential safeguard for protecting systems and data. In the near future, the courts will transition to the For the Record (FTR) Desktop Application for recording court proceedings, with additional training to follow on system integration.

On May 7, 2026, third-grade students will tour the courthouse, with each office preparing informational handouts or displays.

***** Meeting adjourned by 1:35 pm*****



Bill Lewis, Chairman



Shanci Dorius, Deputy Clerk

