



BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting

Work Session

Thursday, December 11, 2025, at 3:00 pm

BOCC Conference Room, Room 232, 128 N 2nd Street, Yakima, WA 98901 or Zoom

12/11/2025 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order at 3:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Kyle Curtis, Commissioner LaDon Linde, Commissioner Amanda McKinney, Legal Counsel Stefanie Weigand, Clerk of the Board Julie Lawrence, Deputy Clerk of the Board Erin Franklin, Interim Facilities Director Blake Erickson, Human Resources Director Judy Kendall, Financial Services Director Brian Carlson, and guests.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment Received.

3. DISCUSSION ON FACILITIES DEPARTMENT - CHECK IN AND DIRECTOR POSITION (15 Minutes) - Commissioner Curtis And Blake Erickson

Commissioner Curtis explained that the Board needs to work toward a decision on what to do about the vacant Facilities Director position. Blake Erickson has been paid out-of-class while he has been serving as Interim Facilities Director. Commissioners Curtis and Linde took turns asking Blake questions about how things have been going in his interim role and whether he would like to continue long-term. Blake spoke about his team's helpfulness, high-level operation, and great morale. He stated that, if the Board intends to fill the director role, it would also be beneficial to fill the project manager role. Adding another office specialist would also help with dispatching calls to staff and managing paperwork for contracts and BOCC agendas. He noted further that as Facilities' presence grows at the landfill and County Roads shop, it will become more necessary to have an employee out there full-time. Blake stated that he and his team are willing to be flexible with whatever decision the Board makes about the department's future. Commissioner Curtis noted that current budget challenges might result in a change in service expectations for Facilities, and adding extra positions may not be feasible in the near future.

In order to allow additional time to consider the position and a potential reorganization, the Commissioners agreed to an extension of out-of-class pay for Blake through the end of March 2026, at which time they will make a decision about how to proceed. Judy Kendall noted that no resolution is needed for this extension; however, she will bring an out-of-class extension form to a future work session for the Board's approval.

4. AGENDA ITEM REVIEW (10 Minutes)

Julie Lawrence reviewed for the Board all Agenda items submitted for Tuesday's Regular Agenda Meeting.

Commissioner Linde asked Julie to move County Roads' Agreement 364-2025 to Regular Agenda for County Engineer Matt Pietrusiewicz to highlight.

At this time, Commissioner McKinney joined the meeting and confirmed that she had no changes to request.

5. REVIEW APPLICANTS FOR THE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION (15 Minutes)

Julie Lawrence listed the three applicants for two open positions on the Board of Equalization: Steven Gustafson, Marilyn Poukkula, and Kristi Wilbert. She explained that current member Arvel Hale's term expires December 31st, and Kristi Wilbert is seeking reappointment after December 31st.

Commissioner Linde MOTION: To Appoint Steven Gustafson to the Board of Equalization

Commissioner McKinney SECOND

Motion Passes Unanimously.

Commissioner Curtis stated that he believes Steven will do a great job with the large number of property tax appeals this year.

Commissioner Linde MOTION: To Appoint Marilyn Poukkula to the Board of Equalization

Commissioner McKinney SECOND

Motion Passes Unanimously.

Julie will prepare a resolution reflecting the new appointments. The Commissioners highlighted and thanked Kristi Wilbert for her service but acknowledged that having fresh eyes can also be beneficial. The Commissioners also asked Julie about recognizing Arvel Hale at a future agenda in light of his "retirement" after decades of service.

6. BOARD OF HEALTH CANDIDATE DISCUSSION (10 Minutes)

The Commissioners discussed the Board of Health's recommendation to appoint Dr. Jennifer Maxwell to the vacant board position. Commissioner McKinney highlighted strong community and BOH support for this candidate. Commissioner Linde noted that Analilia Núñez was another strong candidate who would represent the regulated community with her experience as a legal vendor, stating his view that the BOH should be recommending two candidates to the BOCC when possible. Commissioner McKinney disagreed with this interpretation of the RCW and noted that Dr. Maxwell was the only candidate to make it all the way through the process with a majority vote. Commissioner Curtis stated that he will stick with the process and recommendation from the BOH. He noted that Ms. Núñez will have another opportunity to apply next year, and strongly encouraged her to do so.

Commissioner McKinney MOTION: To Appoint Dr. Jennifer Maxwell to the Board of Health

Commissioner Curtis SECOND

Motion Passes: 2 in Favor (Commissioner Curtis and Commissioner McKinney); 1 Abstained (Commissioner Linde). Julie Lawrence will prepare a resolution reflecting the new appointment.

7. DISCUSSION: SELECTING A BOARD CHAIR (10 Minutes)

Commissioner McKinney noted that Commissioner Linde is next in line for Chair of the Board, according to the Board's practice of rotation. She congratulated current Commissioner Curtis on his great work as Chair this year and expressed her gratitude that all the Commissioners assist each other.

Commissioner McKinney MOTION: To Nominate Commissioner Linde as Chair of the Board of Yakima County Commissioners for 2026

Commissioner Curtis SECOND

Motion Passes Unanimously.

Commissioner Linde accepted the nomination and also congratulated Commissioner Curtis on a job well done. Commissioner Curtis expressed his gratitude for getting to work alongside the other two Commissioners, noting that while the Commissioners don't always agree, they work toward consensus and are always willing to help each other.

Commissioner Linde MOTION: TO Nominate Commissioner McKinney as Vice Chair of the Board of Yakima County Commissioners

Commissioner Curtis SECOND

Motion Passes Unanimously. Commissioner McKinney accepted the nomination.

Julie Lawrence will prepare a resolution reflecting these new appointments.

8. DISCUSSION: 2026 BOCC COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS (10 Minutes)

The Commissioners agreed that they are happy to continue their current committee assignments without major changes. However, Commissioner Linde agreed to take on the Canvassing Board since he will be BOCC Chair in 2026 and Commissioner McKinney will be up for election. Commissioner Curtis offered to take the Behavioral Health Substance Use Disorder Coalition meetings off of Commissioner Linde's plate due to a scheduling conflict and Commissioner Curtis' similar work on other committees. Finally, Commissioner Curtis asked Julie Lawrence to begin listing the Treasurer's Finance Meeting as public so that the Commissioners can attend simultaneously. Julie confirmed that she will prepare a resolution reflecting the Board's changes for the 2026 BOCC committee assignments as discussed. Commissioner Curtis also noted that Commissioner Linde will be the Office of Emergency Management's primary contact for emergencies since he will be BOCC Board Chair in 2026.

9. COMMISSIONER UPDATES/ GENERAL DISCUSSION

The Commissioners did not discuss any updates.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Curtis asked Julie Lawrence to send an email asking all County directors to schedule their annual check-ins with the Board to occur by the end of February.

Commissioner McKinney noted that after a recent meeting some concerns from MultiCare, she connected their government affairs liaison with County Prosecutor Joe Brusic, Briahna Murray (Gordon Thomas Honeywell), and the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) to potentially advocate for or against legislation during the next legislative session. Commissioner Curtis also suggested the Board seek out data on how many Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA) patients are currently from outside Yakima County, and why Yakima County is being used for ITA's.

Commissioner McKinney highlighted that Saving Rural Schools (SRS) passed the House of Representatives, which is part of the reason for her fly-ins to Washington D.C. with the National Association of Counties (NaCO) for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and SRS. PILT funding is vital to Yakima County's bottom line because of its public lands. She expressed thanks to Congressmen Newhouse and Baumgartner and all the other congressional representatives involved. There will be additional information available about 45 days after SRS is signed by the president that will help guide advocacy efforts in the future.

Commissioner Curtis highlighted how well Yakima County departments, the Yakama Nation, and community partners have worked together during the current flood emergency, and stated that the public should be proud. Commissioner Linde concurred. Commissioner McKinney added that the County's congressional delegation has been keeping in touch, as well.

Commissioner McKinney shared that the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency (YRCAA) just passed its fee schedule for next year.

11. ADJOURN

Commissioner Linde MOTION: To Adjourn

Commissioner McKinney SECOND

Motion Passes to Adjourn. Meeting Adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

All work sessions are recorded and will be available to view on the BOCC website at <https://www.yakimacounty.us/AgendaCenter/Board-of-Commissioners-2>.

APPROVED DATE

DATE/Minutes

JAN 13 2026

BOARD OF YAKIMA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

LaDon Linde, Chair

Amanda McKinney, Commissioner

Kyle Curtis, Commissioner
*Constituting the Board of County Commissioners
for Yakima County, Washington*

Attest:

Julie Lawrence, Clerk of the Board *or*
Erin Franklin, Deputy Clerk of the Board