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“Sunshine” or openness in government refers to access to public records and meetings. Regardless of what label an access law is given — “sunshine,” freedom of information, or transparency — the premise is that everyday people have the right to know what actions their government is taking.¹

The ☀️ Sunshine Report from the LWVLC Observer Corps:

Lane County Board of Commissioners

September 9, 2025: No members of the public signed up to speak at this meeting. However, Commissioner Pat Farr took the time to urge Board members to work together to enforce a policy that individual Commissioners may not be singled out in public comments.

Commissioner Heather Buch read a prepared statement related to **Chairman David Loveall’s behavior** over the last two years in response to the County Administrator’s email outlining his concerns about those behaviors. “Notably, **the reported negative impacts of his behavior seem to fall on women in the County workplace and partnering agencies.**” Buch implored the Board to take actions that “make clear to the public that this behavior will not be tolerated at the County.” Her statement can be viewed from 1:29:20 to 1:33:08 on the [recording of the meeting](#).

Finally, the Board was informed that the county department that jails and rehabilitates felons faces up to an \$8.1 million shortfall, which will force reductions across the system, “significantly damaging the public safety ecosystem.” The shortfall is from decreased state funding levels, specifically Grant-in-Aid. Addressing it will require further cuts in personnel, resulting in fewer Lane County felons being served by the Community Justice and Rehabilitation Services Department as they serve their sentences and are released into parole or probation as mandated by the State of Oregon. The Board of Commissioners directed the County Administrator to develop a supplemental funding strategy as quickly as possible.

¹ [LWV Observing Your Government in Action](#)

 Reported by: Thomas Rigell

Lane Community College Board of Education

September 17, 2025: Compared to its meeting earlier this month, the LCC Board work session was sparsely attended by the public. **LCC President Stephanie Bulger** gave a presentation of her goals and evaluation framework and **asked for Board support** when they come up for approval on September 30. It was clear that the controversial decision to pause the LPN program was still a point of contention.

President Bulger presented three examples of how the determinations to add, pause, or terminate programs are made with a clear path of both sequence and responsibility by each group consulted: faculty, administration, and board, with final approval by Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) and the U.S. Department of Education.

The meeting began well with members bringing support and concerns with honest and calm communication, but it became tense and less civil as questions were raised of authority and responsibility between the Board and the college President. An effort to change the wording in Board Policy (BP) 4350, in particular, sparked conflict. The policy requires Board approval of “major substantive changes” to programs. Bulger argued that pausing the LPN program did not rise to that definition but her explanation was met with clear hostility by Trustee Zach Mulholland, while other members attempted to de-escalate the rising emotionally-charged atmosphere. As with all schools in Oregon, the authority to govern Lane Community College is vested in the Board of Education. The Board, in turn, delegates authority for the general supervision and control of the college to the college President. The President, to achieve college ends, delegates authority to college administration and the college governance system, while retaining final authority over both. This is clearly stated in both BP 2200, cited by Trustee Steve Mital, and BP 3240. The interpretation was at the heart of the contention in the second half of the meeting, which extended nearly an hour past its original end time. It is abundantly clear that more work on collegiality is needed.

Closing remarks included a request by Trustee Jesse Maldonado to retain a parliamentarian in the future. In response, President Bulger said she had already begun to look into that. Trustee Julie Weismann reiterated a request for a new public Board apology to be written collaboratively and a request for Trustee Mulholland to resign.

The [full investigative report](#) with appropriate redactions, written by Rebekah R. Jacobson of the Salem law firm Garrett Hemann Robertson, and a detailed account of the controversy is available in an [August 13th article](#) published in Lookout Eugene-Springfield.

 Reported by: Morgan Vierheller

Eugene City Council

September 8, 2025: In a Work Session, the Council discussed the process of selecting a new city manager with the recruitment firm Bob Murray & Associates with a timeline resulting in a hire at the end of January 2026. The Council voted unanimously to hold a public session, yet to be scheduled, to gather community input.

Public comments took up the bulk of this session. Almost 70 community members **raised objections to the police department's addition of video cameras** that capture license plates at intersections. Palantir, the company contracted to provide the Flock Safety cameras and record the data, has been critiqued across the country for providing information to the federal government in addition to the cities with which they have contracts. One speaker, Natalie Renshaw, said, "Your voters have shared that they feel unsafe with the amount of data stored and shared by a private company...Flock Safety Cameras, utilizing image recognition and machine learning that can be shared with police departments and can be integrated into predictive policing platforms like Palantir, a data mining company." For further information, see story on NBC News website [here](#).

September 10, 2025: In a Work Session, preliminary data from the 2025 community survey, completed by 1419 community members, showed nearly 60% have grave concerns about homelessness and public safety. By contrast, nearly 70% said their neighborhood is a place they feel they belong.

September 15, 2025: Councillors discussed an ordinance to turn over a portion of the **Leo Harris Parkway** to the University of Oregon. The road skirts the edge of the University's football complex of buildings. Action on this ordinance is scheduled for 9/22.

September 17, 2025: In a Work Session, Councillors discussed an overview of wildfire efforts, an anti-panhandling ordinance, and a reduction in metal theft. Most notably, the city has increased its training of firefighters across a range of kinds of fires given the increase in wildfires in Lane adjacent counties. The state provided "conflagration funding" that allows cities to quickly respond to nearby fires that are technically outside their jurisdiction but threaten to spread. Eugene-Springfield firefighters have been deployed to 5 fires with 19 members for 51 days (including the fire that threatened Sisters this year). All told, 78 employees are trained for this duty. Statewide in 2024 there were 16 fires designated as conflagrations with 1.3 million acres burned. In 2025, so far, there have been 7 conflagrations with 128,000 acres burned. The city is also changing its evacuation maps, creating smaller zones to evacuate to keep streets from getting too crowded. The **South Hills neighborhood groups** are particularly interested in this effort.

 **Reported by: Susan Palmer**

Springfield City Council

September 9, 2025: In a Town Hall with about 130 people in attendance, Springfield Mayor Sean VanGordon answered public questions and took comments about the findings

of the Fiscal Stability Task Force he had gathered to respond to the financial shortfall of about \$4.5 million. The task force had suggested:

- Adjust Public Safety levies to reflect full-service costs (\$1.3 million).
- Implement a shared payroll tax (\$2.3 million).
- Review city-owned property for sale or development.
- Reduce the Springfield Library budget (\$500,000).
- Install traffic cameras to enhance public safety.
- Boost local business growth through retention and expansion strategies.

Most questions and comments related to **cuts to the library budget** because those are the most pressing. Comments will be taken back to the City Council before any action is taken.

September 15, 2025: Councillors heard a motion to sell 8 acres of land on Linda Lane in South Springfield valued at \$830,000. Objections were raised in the Public Comments period about traffic and about the 11.5 acre active wetlands right next to the city property, but the Council voted unanimously to sell the property. A second motion allowed the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Obie Companies, Inc., to develop city property on Main Street.

 **Reported by: Jen Allison-Keim**

Eugene School District 4J Board of Education

September 17, 2025: The monthly finance report restated the urgency of addressing the district's General Fund **deficit spending**, reminding the Board that last fiscal year the district's Reserve Fund decreased from \$75 to \$40 million. It is projected to decrease again to less than \$20 million this year. Ninety percent of the district's costs are personnel. Difficult decisions will have to be made.

In the **Comments by Employee Groups** part of the meeting, PR manager for MAPS (Managers, Administrators, Professionals & Supervisors), Joel Lavin, said that the budget outlook is sobering. He urged the Board to select people for the Budget Committee who are data driven with an equity focus.

The finance report noted a significant decrease in State Integrated Guidance money due to a decrease in 4J's ADM (Average Daily Membership) score between March and September 2025. ADMw is a weighted average rating of the district's total number of students taking into account child poverty, teen pregnancy, foster care, IEPs, and other elements. State funding for Integrated Guidance is distributed relative to ADMw ratings and the number of students in each school district. Even though the money per student increased, there was a net reduction of \$1.5 million to 4J. To help offset this shortfall, the State is issuing \$1.2 million from timber revenue as a one-time benefit.

The Board reviewed the district's Integrated Guidance Programs and connected 2024-25 grant spending totaling \$15.5 million with three areas of focus:

- Elementary attendance is improving. Challenges remain in Middle and High School attendance.
- 3rd grade reading achievement improved. A challenge to even greater progress is lack of time for teachers' professional development in reading given competing needs for training in other new curricula. The costs of training and paying for substitute teachers also affect progress.
- The number of students eligible to graduate at the end of their junior year is surprisingly high. The district is developing career pathway programs to encourage seniors to stay enrolled for their final year of high school. These courses, which will need to be developed, could help students save on college costs by giving them up to a year of college credits.

 **Reported by: Lenice Shaw**

Springfield Public Schools (SPS) Board of Education

September 8, 2025: In its Executive Session, the Board conducted **labor negotiations**. Springfield Public Schools and the Springfield Education Association have been **unable to come to agreement** on all of the bargainable issues for a new contract. SPS has, as a result, requested mediation to resolve the remaining issues.

The Board meeting was uneventful compared to recent SPS Board meetings. Community members continued to support the issues central to the August 25 Board meeting. **Public comments** included a request for a rich curriculum beyond math and reading for all students; a request for greater teacher autonomy and flexibility; a request that Board members respond to community comments; and a request that SPS use curriculum approved by the Oregon Department of Education.

 **Reported by: Patty Sandoz**

Oakridge City Council

September 4, 2025: The City was prepared to change the name of a street from Oakridge Industrial Parkway to the John Milandin Parkway. After a business owner complained about the costs to businesses of changing their addresses, the city is writing a resolution to name the Industrial Park for Mr. Milandin.

 **Reported by: Leslie Heaton**

Lane County Transit (LTD) District Board

September 10, 2025: Metrics have changed for LTD ridership. There is **more bus service** but lower ridership, possibly because of the construction of additional housing near UO so that fewer UO students use LTD. On-demand service requests are going up, however.

Accidents are down, especially because the new drivers hired in 2024 have more experience.

Assaults are up, in part because the definition of assault is broader than last year. It now includes cussing and throwing water. There are more security personnel on buses.

A new Operations Command Center will be dedicated to LTD's first female General Manager (1974-2000), Phyllis Loobey, who died in 2019.

☀️ Reported by: Alice Davenport

The Observer Corps is a group of LWVLC members who pledge to regularly attend government meetings and report back to the Lane County League. We have Observers at the County Commissioners meetings, Eugene City Council, Eugene 4J School District, Springfield School District, and Lane Transit District. To keep you informed, we will distribute their reports by email once a month. When topics arise that require action or attendance by a larger number of us, LWVLC will send out an email "Call for Action".

If you are interested in joining the Observer Corps, please contact Terry Parker, Advocacy Chair (action@lwvlc.com) or Beatrice McKenzie (beatricem@lwvlc.org). We hope to recruit one or two members for each government group. You can attend a meeting first before you pledge to go regularly.