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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

[January 6, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials\]](#)

Changing of the Guard. The Board unanimously elected Commissioners Ryan Ceniga and Heather Buch to positions of Chair and Vice Chair. Commissioners David Loveall and Ryan Ceniga had been Chair and Vice Chair in 2025.

The Board extended an agreement with Comcast to operate **the County's cable communications system** until June 30, 2027. Assistant County Counsel Marcus Vehar explained that the 1.5 year extension was necessary for the legal team to work out final details for the next contract with Comcast.

Commissioners shut down the action protesting the awarding of a contract for the **Armitage Dog Park Project** to RiverBend Construction brought by Classic Design & Construction LLC, a losing bidder on the project.

☀ Reported by: Tom Rigell

Lane Community College Board of Education

[December 17, 2025 \[meeting agenda and materials; recording\]](#)

The primary focus and reason for this **previously unscheduled work session** was to review the [General Fund Balance 3-Year Mitigation Plan](#) introduced in December. Its passage is necessary to guide course offerings, staffing, and maintenance.

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

Trustee Jesse Maldonado chaired the meeting, as Board Chair Austin Folnagy was absent and VP Jerry Rust was experiencing technical difficulties. College President Dr. Stephanie Bulger, VP of Finance and Operations Kara Flath, and Director of Budget, Grants, and Resource Planning Jonathan Campbell presented the plan. After a historical review of the budget of the past three years that focused on expense mitigation of an average of \$2.5 million each year, the plan recommends a mitigation of \$2.5-\$3 million per year for fiscal years 2026-2029. In summary, the plan includes attention to the following goals:

- Discontinue deficit spending
- Restore 10% ending fund balance by FY 2029
- Fund future strategic investments

Financial triggers requiring re-evaluation of mitigation targets include the following:

- Change in state funds of +/-3%
- Change in ending fund balance
- Enrollment change of +/-3%
- Staffing costs exceed budgeted levels
- Unexpected costs not funded
- Legislative or Board policy changes affecting budgets

Board Members expressed some frustration with approving this plan without knowing where cuts or future investments would be made. President Bulger also reminded the Board that forthcoming State cuts would create a cashflow problem.

The Administration named five programs running a \$700,000-\$800,000 deficit that would need either to continue being supported by the general fund or face cuts: Dental Restorative Clinic on Willamette, Student Health Clinic, Talent Grants, Aviation, and a Printing and Graphic area.

What ensued was essentially a conflict of views about college governance, that is, whether the President or the Board would preside over program and budgetary cuts.

- Trustee Mulholland suggested that this can become the Board's plan by having the Board Chair, Austin Fölnagy, create an ad hoc sub-committee to study the plan that has been presented and come up with a more complete, improved 3-year plan.
- Trustee Weismann stated that this would undermine the Budget Committee's work by leaving them out of the conversation when they are charged with the responsibility for budget development.
- Trustee Alltucker stated that the Board should delegate to those with educational expertise the decisions of where the cuts would occur.
- Vice-CFO Kara Flath stated that soliciting input from the educational community would be part of the process of determining where the cuts would be made and how big they would be.

- Trustee Maldonado felt that the process before them, in which the financial team and Budget Committee were allowed to proceed without additional help, was the best course of action.
- President Bulger worried that salaries were 85% of the general fund. She seemed willing to provide what she had been hearing regarding areas that might be cut.
- Kara Flath asked for trust that the numbers presented would address the deficit and that the budget would be brought back each year for review by the Board.

At the end of the meeting, Trustee Mulholland pushed forward his idea, supported by Trustees Maldonado and Mital. There was significant pushback from Trustee Weismann as a matter of record. Trustee Alltucker floated an idea inspired by the book "[The Great Upheaval: Higher Education's Past, Present, and Uncertain Future](#)," by Arthur Levine and Scott Van Pelt ,and suggested that the Board work with President Bulger and the College to 'future proof' LCC.

 **Reported by:** Morgan Vierheller

Eugene Water and Electric Board

[January 6, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials\]](#)

The Board unanimously elected John Brown President and Sonia Carlson Vice President for 2026.

Interviews will be conducted in January for the **new General Manager** and the decision/public vote will occur at the February Board meeting.

Leaburg Dam Decommissioning Plan Update. EWEB will work with an engineering company in 2026 on options to reduce peak flows at Johnson and Cogswell Creek which can cause overflow in the Leaburg Canal. The Board will make a decision whether or not to take out Walterville Canal in 2026. EWEB is working with ODOT and Lane County Commissioners, who will make the decision on options for a road over the dam in 2026.

Commissioner Barofsky proposed a resolution regarding the **Watershed Bill of Rights**, Lane County Measure 20-373, a local ballot measure meant to hold polluters accountable for water pollution. At the meeting, Barofsky said the ballot measure is so general that as written it could be used to hinder EWEB's watershed restoration work. He solicited comment from other Board Members on his proposed wording and will work with legal counsel to put it into a resolution to be voted on in February. Unfortunately, Barofsky's resolution was not provided to the public with this month's agenda.

 **Reported by:** Jenny Lippert

Lane County Transit Board

[Observer Comment: This report is based upon LTD minutes of the meeting. Apparently, the sound recording malfunctioned during the meeting, so the minutes were incomplete.]

Ridership declined 1.6% but revenue was up 5%, probably due to better fare collection. Reported assaults again increased, likely due to the revised definition of “assault”.

 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 (beaticem@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.