



Vol. I (26), May 15, 2026

“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

April 28, 2026 [[meeting agenda and materials](#); [webcast](#)]

Two of the four individuals providing **Public Comments** in person represented Lane County Behavioral Health. They were essentially asking for continued funding from the Board. Their clients are largely the unhoused population – many of whom are dealing with mental illness, poverty, and joblessness – and need stabilization in their lives.

Lane County staff updated Commissioners on the **Indoor Multi-Sport Facility**, a partnership combining public funding and private capital. A decision-grade feasibility study will be provided to Commissioners, hopefully in time to make a decision to move forward by July 14, 2026. Travel Lane County would then provide the Commissioners updates every 90 days.

A question by Commissioner Buch clarified that private funds would come from private developers, capital campaign donations, philanthropy, investments, users, and other means. Commissioner Trieger noted that the Transient Lodging Tax would be the user capital, and that prepaid rent from users would also be a form of private funding. Commissioner Loveall expressed enthusiasm for the public/private partnership and said the Board needs to have a 30-year outlook when deciding on the site of this facility.

In the **monthly report by the Public Safety Funding Workgroup**, staff cited major factors contributing to the lack of Public Safety Funding as the following :

- loss of federal timber revenue and 90% reduction in secure rural schools funding
- a comparatively low permanent property tax rate

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

- the cost to provide services is growing faster than revenues

In a presentation to the Commission on June 24, 2025, following a year of detailed research and discussion, the Public Safety Funding Task Force recommended that the County Administrator further explore four primary opportunities for long-term stable funding: (1) efficiency, prioritization, and trust; (2) multi-layered solution; (3) a payroll tax; and (4) special district formation.

Outside vendor, **Lexicon & Line**, will help organize and facilitate listening sessions and stakeholder interviews. Listening sessions were to begin the week of April 20th with stakeholder interviews to begin shortly thereafter. The Board will hear a summary of those findings from Lexicon & Line on June 3. Monthly Board updates will continue until they are no longer needed.

In an **Elections Update**, Lane County Clerk Tommy Gong announced that April 28 was the last day for individuals to register to vote in the May election. The County will be sending out about **281,000 ballots** to Lane County residents in Oregon and about 2,000 to residents who are overseas. Gong emphasized that voters who mail their ballots by USPS need to do this at least one week prior to Election Day because of the change in the postmark process. Safer methods are to bring completed ballots to County drop boxes or to hand deliver them to the Election office.

In the Announcements period of the meeting, County Administrator Steve Mokrohisky reported that **Sanipac continues to drop solid waste in its privately owned landfill site near Medford**, instead of at the Short Mountain Landfill. The County is losing money because of Sanipac's practice. (A recent Lookout Eugene-Springfield article stated that Lane County's solid waste disposal fund lost \$5.2 million in fee revenue in the last fiscal year). After a March meeting with Sanipac, Lane County offered a five-year deal to Sanipac to lower the tipping fee at Short Mountain, but Mr. Mokrohisky said they have had no response from Sanipac. Sanipac, a regional hauler, is owned by Texas-based Waste Connections.

May 5, 2026 [[meeting agenda and materials](#); [morning webcast recording](#)]

Eve Gray, Director Health & Human Services, presented the latest **Lane Stabilization Center Quarterly Progress Report** to the Board of Commissioners. The Stabilization Center project is on-track to be completed at the end of 2027. Near-term project milestones include a property annexation hearing by the City of Springfield on May 18, 2026; schematic designs by TVA Architects, including initial value engineering; pursuit of licensure for 23-hour observation services; and collaboration with Connections Health Solutions to develop a sustainable billing model. When complete, the approximately 40,000 sq. ft. Stabilization Center will offer 24/7 behavioral health services to youth and adults, on a voluntary and involuntary basis, as an alternative to incarceration and hospital emergency rooms.

Shawn Hubbell, Lane County Procurement Manager, presented an order authorizing hiring a Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) to oversee the design phase of the Lane Stabilization Center. The CM/GC method is an integrated project delivery approach that can help identify cost savings in the design phase and prevent technical errors and potential site issues that could result in costly change orders. Also, it has the potential to provide accurate, real-time final cost estimates. Commissioners voiced support for the GM/GC method during their discussion due to the complexity of the Stabilization Center project and subsequently approved the order unanimously.

The Board adjourned for an Executive Session to “consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.”

In the afternoon [[webcast recording](#)], the Board met to review a prior Official Decision regarding the division of a property. Senior Planner Kevin Gilbride from the Lane County Land Management Division made a short presentation to the Board in which he recounted the history of the case, listed three proposed legal options, and recommended that the Board “ratify and affirm the Lane County Hearings Official Decision as the County’s final decision” (Option #1). *(Note: The documented history of this case can be found attached to item #9a of the Full meeting agenda, refer to the meeting materials link above.)* However, after questions from the Commissioners and further statements and recommendations by the attorneys involved on both sides, Commissioner Loveall made a motion in favor of Option #3, reversing the Official Decision, and conditionally approving the application with findings of fact that include the Board’s interpretation of Lane Code Chapter 13 and associated case law. Commissioner Farr seconded the motion and the Board voted 4-1 to overturn the Official Decision (Farr, Loveall, Buch, and Ceniga in favor; Trieger opposed). Staff will return on June 9, 2026, to present the revised Order to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

[May 12, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials; webcast\]](#)

The Board recognized the **Public Health Reserve Corps (a group of former Lane County Public Health employees) and St. Vincent de Paul**. The Corps is a group of trained volunteers and professionals who respond to natural disasters, public health emergencies, or mass casualty events. The corps was formed after COVID as part of a state registry medical volunteer group and funded for two years with grant money. The intent was to continue funding the program with EPA dollars, but the funding was stopped by the current administration. St. Vincent de Paul stepped up to transition Corps employees to their organization and subsequently received funding to ensure that the Corps important work continued to be done.

Lane County was ranked the state’s top healthiest employer, public or private, for the fifth year in a row. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the program set up to incentivize employees to work to become healthier, and in doing so, save money for both the County and employee through lower health care costs.

The final presentation concerned the **upcoming wild fire season**. The drought seen in much of Lane County is also apparent throughout the western half of the US. While data was presented to show that drought is only one factor in a busy fire season, the breadth of the drought in the western US also creates a resource challenge. That is, when a large area of the country is dry, the likelihood that there will be more fires means that fire fighting equipment may not be always available for all fires. To prepare for the fire season, work has been done on determining evacuation routes, testing of emergency alert systems, and strengthening good relations between fire districts on the county, state, and federal levels. There is a statewide plan for strategic resources such as large helicopters to handle fire retardant as well as a state partnership with Colorado to use smoke detection cameras right after a storm to identify fires from lightning strikes. A relatively new approach is the use of drones with thermal imaging capabilities in rural areas.

Legislation passed in the current session regarding land that is not covered by fire protection districts or the Oregon Department of Forestry. Local examples of these lands could include parks and recreational lands, such as those adjacent to Buford Recreation Area. The legislation also includes guidance for how rural areas that are not within a fire district are covered.

 Reported by: Judy Leahy, Tom Rigell, and Nancy Mills

Lane Community College Board of Education

May 6, 2026 [[webcast recording](#)]

Back-to-back meetings of the LCC Budget Committee and LCC Board of Education took place on May 6. The LCC Budget Committee received the first “reveal” of the FY2027 budget proposal. The Committee will meet at least three more times before the proposal is sent to the Board for their approval in June. Key takeaways of the proposed budget:

- The total proposed FY2027 budget is \$281.4 million.
- The proposed general fund budget is \$113.1 million. This reflects a 1.6% increase in monies allotted to the daily operations of the College, including full-time faculty pay (\$1.8 million) and part-time faculty pay (\$1 million).
- \$4.2 million in cuts are included as part of the Board-approved, three-year mitigation plan to restore the College’s ending fund balance, achieved by **eliminating two academic degree programs**, Health Information Management (HIM) and Criminal Justice (CJ), **and 23 FTE positions** (mostly from classified staff). [Note: FTE refers to Full-Time Equivalent, a measure used to represent the workload of employees based on the number of hours worked or classes taught.]

In a special meeting previously held on April 22 to hear public comment and vote on the proposed closure of the HIM and CJ programs, the Board had voted 4-3 in favor of closing the programs (with Trustees Fohnagy, Rust, and Mulholland voting against).

An update on **expenses for the current fiscal year** showed a **growing budget deficit** from \$804,000 to \$977,000. The Board approved a plan to close that gap by using \$400,000 from its already low reserve fund and another \$400,000 in unspecified spending cuts. Staff indicated the larger projected deficit was due to (a) lower revenue estimates from tuition and property taxes, and (b) overestimation of budgeted savings from vacant positions. The administration has imposed a general fund spending freeze to try to minimize the cost overruns. The Board will revisit the issue as 4th quarter estimates are updated.

The Board reviewed recommendations put forth by their ad hoc subcommittee tasked with **establishing policies for public comment** at meetings. After much discussion about the committee's recommendation to limit the overall time for public comment (similar to the Eugene City Council), the Board did not adopt the recommendations, but agreed to send their individual comments to the committee for additional consideration.

The Board voted to appoint James Arnold to fill a vacancy on the Budget Committee. He brings considerable experience in higher education in California and Oregon, including various appointments at LCC.

The Board approved President Bulger's proposed framework to bring together three distinct but interconnected governance processes: the close of the Strategic Plan 2022-2027, the development and approval of the President's FY2027 goals, and the Board's annual governance self-assessment. These processes will now be understood and scheduled as a coordinated whole. The practical impact is a shift in schedule of the annual Board retreat from July to September after the August recess.

In order to meet new State standards, the Board approved **new associate transfer degree programs in communication and psychology**. This action will facilitate the transfer of degree credits for students deciding to seek the same degree at any 4-year institution in Oregon, essentially streamlining the transfer process, saving time and money for students.

 Reported by: Anne Delaney

Eugene City Council

April 27, 2026 [[meeting agenda and webcast](#)]

At the Work Session, Councilors **reviewed the parks and recreation improvements funded since 2018 through both a levy and a bond measure**. At the end of fiscal year 2025, \$34 million of the \$39 million the bond raised has been spent. Another \$60 million from system development charges, urban renewal funds, and other sources, as well as \$8 million in state and federal grant funds are also covering costs. The operating levy contributed \$4.8 million in general park maintenance, public safety and recreation programming.

Park work paid for by bonds over the last three years includes expanding the park system by 639 acres, 12.5 miles of new trails, 6 playgrounds, 4 shelters, and 4 new and 2 renovated sports courts.

Levy impacts included removal of 799 instances of graffiti and removal of 330 dump-truck loads of garbage.

From 2022 to 2025 the number of public requests for service has decreased in several categories: Park safety requests dropped by 29.6 percent. Complaints about camping dropped by 42.7 percent. Problems with park structures dropped by 23.1 percent.

April 27, 2026 [\[meeting agenda and webcast\]](#)

Councilors **unanimously approved \$2.1 million in community development block grant funds** (federal money from Housing and Urban Development) for a variety of affordable housing, human services, and economic development grants. The federal money has declined to nearly half the amount received 20 years ago. The Council also unanimously approved **a fee increase to businesses using hazardous substances**. The new fee is \$75.22 per full-time employee, capped at \$2,000 per facility.

The **Public Comment** period drew 14 speakers, mostly upset with the City for failing to do more about ICE agents and allowing a fence to be built around the federal building.

May 11, 2026 [\[meeting agenda and webcast\]](#)

At the Work Session, Councilors **continued a long-term discussion on improving the budget, more efficiently controlling costs, and developing smart strategies to increase revenue over the coming decade**. The persistence of budget cuts over the last six years and expected cost increases in the future have driven this deep dive, with assistance from a team of community business leaders. The current 2025-2027 budget cycle saw \$11.5 million in cuts. The forecast for the 2027-2029 budget cycle anticipates a gap between revenue and expense in the realm of \$2.2 million per year. Among the expected cost increases, public employee pension costs continue to increase. Councilors asked for better modeling on how increasing new-home construction in coming years can help improve the City's revenue. A rule of thumb: every \$150 million in new assessed value generates \$1 million in general fund revenue to the City.

May 11, 2026 [\[meeting agenda and webcast\]](#)

Outrage over the recent online posting of a racist and misogynistic conversation recorded via body cam between police officers, one of them employed by EPD, took over this meeting. The recording prompted a statement by Mayor Kaarin Knudson, city police auditor Craig Renetzky, and several councilors, all expressing outrage over the recording and noting that the Eugene officer who participated immediately resigned when the

recording became public. More than 40 community members spoke in response to the recording, several of them calling for the immediate firing of Eugene Police Chief Chris Skinner. Everyone at this meeting was unsettled, the anger palpable. The video is easily available online through most news websites.

An example of the remarks included officers discussing a colleague who said he hit his daughter, quoting the absent officer as saying: “That bitch. She’s my daughter. I’ve chucked her up against the wall. I’ve slapped her face.” To be clear, the officers were talking about an officer not employed in Eugene. But the shock – for many listeners – came from the lack of surprise or outrage on the part of the police recalling what they’d heard. One speaker, Madeline Woodward, who said she was a domestic abuse survivor, raised this question: “How are we supposed to trust EPD to protect and serve the community when they won’t even protect and serve the women in their own lives that they know are being abused?”

On a separate matter, the Council voted 5-3 to amend City code and zoning regulations to permit the University of Oregon to construct student housing in the Fairmont neighborhood that allows for seven-story buildings and has been deeply unpopular with many residents.

 Reported by: Susan Palmer

Springfield Public Schools Board of Education

May 11, 2026 [\[webcast recording\]](#)

Approval of Agenda

Community members and observers were reminded of the continuing discord among members of the Board, as Directors Langworthy and De Graff disagreed about adding an item to the agenda. Superintendent O’Mara suggested that the Springfield Education Association (SEA) regularly have an agenda spot at the end of the public comment period. The motion to add a short discussion about adding a time slot for SEA to future agendas was approved, with only De Graff voting no. Director De Graff charged two unnamed Board members with shaping the agenda using serial communications prior to this meeting, against public meetings laws.

K5 Presentation

Elementary school Principals Knight and Price who presented their two schools’ approaches to the allocation of subject matter teaching time for grades Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. Director Light conveyed concerns that he’s heard from the public that reading and math take up most instructional time to the exclusion of other subjects. Elementary Director Joyce Johnson pushed back, saying all teachers in the district teach all subjects.

[Observer Note: The screen was blue during much of this discussion, requiring viewers to rely on voice recognition. The powerpoint was not made available publicly on the Board's website. The presentation about teaching time allocation, a topic of intense interest for two years, was made with about one month remaining in the school year.]

Public Comments

Former Board member and chair Heather Quaas-Annsa stated her reason for resigning was because the Board environment was becoming unhealthy and unsafe for her family and her. She stated that Chair Light bullies and patronizes other Board members and the public and that he lacks professionalism. She said there were six formal complaints filed against Light in the last three years, in addition to three recently filed with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

Former Board members Lisa Barriger and Zach Besset spoke regarding Chair Light, official Board-Staff communication policies, and the toxic environment that led to two high level administrators being forced to resign midyear.

James Stagal, parent, said the Board should revisit their methods of communicating with the public and avoid using Facebook, Instagram, and other social media platforms.

Ryan Herlands, incoming Springfield Education Association president and science teacher at Thurston High School, thanked the Board for creating time for SEA. He described the **low morale of the teachers after the mid-year cuts**. He encouraged the Board to be vigilant about budget cuts. Brandon Ferguson, a social science teacher who was transferred in February because of the mid-year cuts, also urged the Board to carefully consider budget cuts.

Finally, Sheila Garrelts, teacher at Walterville Elementary (the last rural school in the district), made the case for reinstating their principal from half to full-time status.

Action Items

Director Kohl requested a capital improvements comprehensive plan instead of the present piecemeal process. This was in response to being asked to, without preliminary knowledge or discussion, approve a school security system resolution. The resolution passed in order to move the purchasing along but the request for a comprehensive plan is still expected.

The Board approved a reduction in force of 33.7 full time equivalent positions. The vote was 4-0, with Director Kohl declaring a conflict of interest (as his wife might be one of the teachers on the reduction in force list).

A resolution was presented to approve the adoption of elementary science and secondary social science curricula. Director Kohl asked the cost of these adoptions and was told it would be under the \$800,000 budgeted. Further discussion took place. The resolution

was passed to move the process forward, but with the understanding that final cost numbers will be presented to the Board.

The Springfield Board of Education must seat a Board member on the Lane Education Service District Budget Committee. Director Langworthy volunteered to serve. Her participation was approved 4-1, with Director De Graff opposed.

Discussion

Interim Superintendent Jodi O'Mara began work on March 2, 2026. She asked the Board for a higher salary because she is doing the job of both the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. In contract negotiations it was verbalized, but not formalized, that she and the Board would revisit this request for greater compensation once the work got underway and was better defined. The Board did not address this request.

Director De Graff repeated her attempt to revise the policy covering matters related to the removal of a Board member from Board leadership ([see the 5-1-26 Sunshine Report](#)), but the remaining four Board members opposed it. De Graff muttered, "So, no accountability." Director Kohl took issue with this comment.

Reports and Information

In reference to Board policy, Director Brew explained to the audience that Board members wish to simplify the request and schedule process of school visitations by scheduling visits with the building principal with a courtesy notification to the superintendent. Director De Graff, took issue with Director Langworthy for saying that she (Langworthy) has not been able to get into schools; de Graff has repeatedly stated it has been easy to visit schools.

Superintendent O'Mara explained that Superintendent Hamilton had "postponed" school visitations in November because bargaining negotiations were underway with certified staff. Following the conclusion of bargaining and ensuing mid-year staff cuts it was felt schools needed time to adjust to the changes before resuming Board member school visits. Once Superintendent O'Mara began her short-term job on March 2, her visitations took priority to get her up and running as quickly as possible.

During the SEA discussion, Director De Graff repeated her opposition to having SEA talk to the Board about what has been going on in the lives of teachers. She said there would be no end to groups wanting Board time if SEA were allowed.

Director Brew put forward three requests:

- Have the district's attorney present at every public Board meeting.
- Have a parent exit survey to better understand why the district has lost 2300 students.
- Have a presentation about implementation and effectiveness of the Board's anti-bullying and harassment policy in the schools.

☀️ Reported by: Patty Sandoz and Kim Weston

Eugene 4J School Board

April 8, 2026 [[meeting agenda and materials](#); [webcast recording](#)]

The Budget Committee focused primarily on a review of an additional \$14.1 million shortfall over the originally projected \$30 million shortfall for Fiscal Year 2026/2027 (FY26/27). The additional shortfall was initially identified and announced before spring break, but this was the first opportunity to discuss it with the Budget Committee or Board.

Because it is too late in the process to find and implement an additional \$16.4 million in recurring general fund reductions, the District is using one-time sources to cover the shortfall as follows:

- Proceeds from sale of Wells Fargo Building (\$2.9 million)
- Transfer from the Facilities Maintenance Fund (\$10 million)
- Use of beginning fund balance, reducing reserves to 5% (\$3.5 million)

The district will need to implement additional cuts in the FY27/28 fiscal year to generate recurring savings on top of the \$8 million additional cuts they had already anticipated having to make in that year.

The Finance staff reported that the following errors contributed to the difference between the projected and actual numbers:

- Labor costs were projected using averages, rather than at the individual employee level. This resulted in overestimating the savings from staff reductions.
- Projections were based on the FY25/26 budget and did not reflect the impact of new union contracts. This resulted in a beginning General Fund balance for FY26/27 lower than projected and labor costs for FY 26/27 higher than projected.
- Based on recent years experience, a labor savings rate of 2.5% was assumed; however, this assumption did not take into account the impact of discontinued COVID dollars.
- New unemployment compensation laws went into effect in Oregon that increased the projected unemployment costs of workforce reductions.
- In January, finance staff learned that 4J is one of several school districts in Oregon that will deplete their PERS side account early. As a result, for a couple of months in FY26/27, 4J will be paying the full PERS rate plus an amount to cover two of the final debt service payments.

A lively discussion with lots of questions followed from Budget Committee members and the public alike. Notably, Eugene Education Association president Jamie Myers asked, given that \$16M suddenly became available to cover the shortfall, how can they trust there isn't more hidden money available to avoid cuts. Dr. Mickelson and Budget Committee members expressed concern about the ability to maintain trust and have confidence in the process because of the errors.

[April 15, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials; webcast recording\]](#)

Discussion and feedback on the budget errors and additional budget cuts dominated the meeting.

Student board representatives from EOA and the International School expressed concerns about the impact of budget-driven cuts in staffing on students and class sizes.

Lisa Jenkins-Easton, Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) Zone IV Director, asked that the District recognize the impact of reductions to classified staff: 104 fully-displaced staff and 15 staff whose hours are being reduced. OSEA calculates that there have been 23.5 FTE classified cuts from student-facing positions. It was originally presented that there would be 15 student-facing FTE eliminated. This does not include nutrition staff who OSEA contends are also student facing; 25 nutrition staff will lose their health insurance with the changes. [Note: FTE refers to Full-Time Equivalent, a measure used to represent the workload of employees based on the number of hours worked or classes taught.]

Jaime Myers, Eugene Education Association president, said teachers are angry, fearful, and confused about cuts to staff. She said they are angry that, while they are facing reductions, those responsible for a \$16 million miscalculation of public funds are facing no consequences.

Dr. Mickelson announced that the **sale of the Wells Fargo Building** was complete and that it generated \$2.95 million that will be applied toward the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 shortfall.

The Board heard a presentation on a process to **consider renaming Cesar Chavez Elementary** in response to recent allegations of Chavez' abuse. The Board determined that the feedback received to date was not adequate to support a change and directed the District to seek additional feedback from the Cesar Chavez community. The Board also recommended clarifying and updating 4J policy and criteria for name changes.

[April 22, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials; webcast recording\]](#)

Most of the meeting was spent responding to questions raised at the 4/8/26 Budget Committee meeting. Jenny Jonak had asked for a detailed breakdown of the \$16.4 million negative budget variance identified in March:

- \$4.5M error in projected cost savings from staff cuts (minus \$2.2M in savings from reducing more FTE than expected). \$2.30M
- Discrepant information between the Finance Department and HR. \$3.22M
- PERS and unemployment costs. \$2.85M
- Underestimate of the staffing adjustment costs (allocated to cover the gap between projected and actual enrollment by class). \$1.50M
- Finalized costs of contracted programs and specialized services that supplement District programs. \$3.50M
- Higher costs of risk insurance and liabilities due to unanticipated new mandated coverage. \$2.50M

- Miscellaneous variances, mostly the cost of contracts that did not allow early cancellation. \$0.53M

The Board approved reductions of up to 269 total FTE for non-executive positions. The current plan is to reduce 265.26 positions, resulting in a 13% cut in Licensed staff, 8.7% cut in classified staff, and 18.2% cut in non-bargaining staff. A 50% reduction (3 FTE) in executive staff was made in addition to Board-approved cuts.

The Nutrition Services budget was also reduced. Currently, Nutrition Services serves locally-sourced food, cooked from-scratch, and gives all children free meals and as much as they want to eat. The District has been paying 32% of the Nutrition Services budget out of the General Fund at a cost of \$3.9 million to make this possible. 4J will reduce costs to be in line with most other districts, which support 0-5% of nutrition services costs. This means only students in need will receive a free breakfast and lunch and there will be no second helpings. The meal size is the same regardless of whether the student is six or sixteen. 4J hopes to establish a scholarship fund supporting second servings for children in need.

[April 29, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials; webcast recording\]](#)

The District made an initial presentation on **Governor Kotek's Executive Order 26-06 regarding Instructional Time**. The definition of instructional time has changed. The old one, Hours of Instructional Time (HIT) included only hours Oregon students spent in planned learning activities or assessments under the supervision of a licensed or registered teacher or supervised educational assistant. The new measure, Student Instructional Time (SIT) includes the total hours students are at school, bell to bell, including recess, lunch, passing time, and hours of instructional time.

Under the new rule SIT will be calculated based on the 2024-2025 school year. As of the 2027-2028 school year, SIT hours can never fall below the 2024-2025 SIT hours. 4J is in compliance with the new rules as understood at this time. Administrative rules are still being developed and the Oregon Department of Education is waiting for clarification on many of the detailed questions this order raises .

Under items for action at a future meeting, Jenny Jonack recommended the Board **schedule a discussion in June to reflect on how the Board's meeting practices** are going and whether they can be improved. Judy Newman agreed that it would be good to do before the retreat and before they start to plan for next school year. A list of things to discuss was created. Among them, **Rick Hamilton suggested that the Board reconsider dialogue with the audience**. He pointed out that right now they can't even correct misunderstandings and said that the audience might appreciate getting a chance to "understand how we think".

[May 6, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials; webcast recording\]](#)

The final Budget Committee meeting began with **audience and employee group comments** again expressing anger and frustration that music, PE, and art positions are

being reduced; and that some teachers will be split between multiple schools, moved to other schools, or let go altogether. Lisa Jenkins-Easton, the Oregon School Employees Association Zone IV Director, asked that the District have a forensic audit performed due to the errors in projections that came to light in March.

The District responded to open questions from the previous budget meeting, sharing data on **the history of 4J's declining enrollment:**

- Since 2019, 4J enrollment has been dropping.
- Breaking down enrollment by grade for each school year shows a notable decline of entering Kindergarten students in each of the last three years.
- Since 2019, 4J's enrollment has dropped by 9.6% compared to a 7.4% decline in total Oregon public school enrollment.
- State funding is based on District enrollment relative to all districts in the state. Because 4J's enrollment has declined more than the state average, its share of state funds has declined.

In response to community complaints about how unclear the reduction-in-force process has been, **the district outlined the process of working through position elimination and the separate process of reassigning staff to remaining positions** in order to comply with state law, union agreements (seniority, bumping rights, previously held classifications, etc.), and the District's goal to keep staff full-time by combining part-time positions between schools, if needed. The District had to work through the changes in a stepwise process, carefully evaluating all the factors for each person individually, and in some cases, before considering the next position, they had to determine whether the individual would choose to accept reassignment or leave.

The Budget Committee unanimously approved the **tax rates and debt service levy** as requested by the District.

Before the vote on the Budget, Morgan Munro commented, "This budget perfectly demonstrates the paltry and shameful state of school funding in the state of Oregon. When voters, decades ago, chose to significantly limit state revenues, particularly property tax revenues, and then over the intervening years have continued to demand that the State offer more and greater services and programs from a smaller pool of money, this is what we are faced with..... And so I'm going to be voting yes for this budget because we can't spend money we don't have".

The Budget Committee unanimously approved the budget. The next step is for the Board to adopt the budget.

 Reported by: Lenice Shaw

Oakridge City Council

May 7, 2026 [[meeting agenda and materials](#); [webcast recording](#)]

Council President Tarman presided in place of Mayor Cutchen. Bridge Lane will host a job fair at Oakridge High School on June 3 from 12 to 3 p.m. Businesses that are hiring are encouraged to reserve a table. Social service contacts will also be available.

Eagle Scout Brecken Smith received approval from the City Council for installation of a birdwatching blind and benches in John Milandin Oakridge Industrial Park.

City Administrator James Cleavenger said **Lane Transit District (LTD) cannot provide the previously approved 24-hour free bus service for the 2026 Bus Fair in Greenwaters Park** because of federal regulatory changes. He asked the City Council to approve an additional \$2,400 to cover the loss of one day of LTD service. Councilor Spencer asked Brock Butterfield, founder of the Bus Fair, about average shuttle use in recent years. Brock said more than 300 people typically use the bus on a Saturday. Because the Oregon State Police had previously raised safety concerns about people crossing Highway 58 to reach Greenwaters Park, the shuttle picks people up at the Industrial Park and takes them across Highway 58 to the park. Councilor Carter said he might support the additional funding from a safety standpoint and would bring the issue back to the Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) Committee. Councilor Brewer asked whether a decision needed to be made at this meeting and reminded the Council that the RTMP Committee has emphasized following clear rules and guidelines. She also noted that the Bus Fair has received more than \$52,000 in tourism funding over the past six or seven years. A motion was approved to table the decision, so the RTMP Committee may be included in the discussion on May 18.

Councilor Scott said the Safety Committee did not have a quorum, but the City Administrator brought up projects regarding flammable vegetation, defensible space, and the issue of the unhoused feeling they were not being served.

 **Reported by: Leslie Heaton**

Eugene Water and Electric Board of Commissioners

April 7, 2026

In Public Comments, four individuals voiced opposition to the University of Oregon Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Pilot Study and one person voiced support for Ballot Measure 20-373, watershed protection.

Public opposition to the **UO Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Pilot Study** has created concern among some Commissioners. The purpose of the study is to evaluate whether UO's on-site combined heat and power generator could be a reliable option for EWEB to use in peak periods when electricity demand is high and renewable generation is limited. Commissioner Morris expressed concern that EWEB participation in this project may legitimize boiler room-generated power that accounts for 72% of greenhouse gases. President Brown agreed with Morris that further Board discussion should occur.

Commissioner Barofsky brought up the issue of rolling blackouts and outgoing Manager Lawson stated he supports the project.

Water Resources and Water Operations managers presented the **annual watershed report of the results of water quality monitoring and restoration activities**. They reported that water quality was similar to other years except for a rain on snow event in December that released very high sediment loads (highest in past 20 years) in the Holiday Farm Fire and McKenzie River area. They highlighted Restoration Projects with pure Water Partners (native tree and shrub planting and private landowner stewardship agreements) and McKenzie River Trust/McKenzie Watershed Council/US Forest Service instream restoration projects (\$1.8M spent in 2025).

The City will issue bonds in the amount of \$192M for electricity and \$82M for water to upgrade existing facilities and pay down debt.

John Hairston will take over as EWEB General Manager on May 11, 2026.

[May 5, 2026 \[meeting agenda and materials\]](#)

In **Public Comments**, eight of the nine individuals who testified spoke in **opposition to having to pay to opt out of using smart meters**. Many speakers stated that this would have an unfair impact on low income residents, claimed that the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) discharged by the meters cause health problems, and felt that charging to opt out is “coercive” and “punitive.” One speaker said that he had been paying his bill since 1999 and has never been required to pay a meter reader before. One speaker broke from the general theme of the evening and praised EWEB for grants that supported her science job at 4J. She noted that many of her colleagues had received pink slips in the past week and said that EWEB grants are keeping science in some classrooms.

Commissioner Sonja Carlson provided a **comprehensive response to attendees regarding smart meters**. First, she noted that initial fees will only be assessed to clients who have not already opted out. She stressed that the \$11 month fee is not a retribution; it is the actual cost to cover the meter readers and their equipment. She pointed out that for meters that opt in, data is transmitted every 15 minutes, not continuously. The number of EMFs is equivalent to 6 cell phones, noting that there were many more cell phones in the Board meeting at the moment. Commissioner Morris also mentioned the Customer Cares Program for assisting low income individuals with bill payment.

The Board will vote on the following **updated prices for Smart Meter Opt Out** at their June Board meeting:

- Manual meter enrollment fee: \$175.00
- Monthly reading fee: \$11.25
- Connect/disconnect fee for non-payment during business hours: \$87.50
- Connect/disconnect fee for non-payment during non-business hours: \$360.00

Many members of the public have requested to opt out of smart meter installation due to concerns over health effects resulting from meters. EWEB has proposed costs for opting in to using old meters and meter readers with the proviso that as the number of manual meter users decreases, costs could increase.

Despite public comments about smart meter fees, no Commissioner discussed the updated fee schedule. They spent the most time discussing a fee for stealing fire hydrant water.

EWEB has released a new guide, [2026 Climate Guidebook](#), that outlines its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It states that EWEB's power supply emissions goal is well on its way to becoming 95% carbon free by 2030. It discusses grants to encourage customer decarbonization, internal operations, and how EWEB is working with the City of Eugene to cap carbon in the community.

 Reported by: Jenny Lippert

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, Springfield City Council, Eugene 4J School District, Springfield School District, Eugene Water and Electricity Board, and Lane Transit District. To keep you informed, we will distribute their reports by email twice 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, President (president@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.