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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

June 23, 2026 [[meeting agenda](#); [webcast recording](#)]

The Board adopted the FY2026-27 Lane County Budget after revising the allocation of funding for the Sheriff’s Rural Patrol and new courthouse complex to draw from County reserve funds instead of from proceeds from the County Transient Lodging Tax (TLT).

As initially presented to the Board, the budget would have allocated half of projected TLT proceeds to fund the Rural Patrol for two years (for a total \$4.8 million) and for the courthouse project (\$1.7 million). The other half of the funding would be dedicated to bridge stabilization, the feasibility study for a multi-use facility, and tourism-related reserves. On an ongoing basis, TLT revenue would be split between funding the courthouse and tourism-related expenses.

Commissioners were divided about whether to use TLT proceeds or tap into reserves to cover the Rural Patrol and courthouse fund. They ultimately voted 4-1, with Commissioner Trieger dissenting, to use reserve funds for the Rural Patrol for one year at a cost of \$2 million and to set aside \$1.7 million for the courthouse complex. Noncommitted reserves will account for \$2.7 million of those funds, and the remaining \$1 million will come from the general reserve fund.

Lane County Administrator Steve Mokrohisky prefaced the budget presentation with an overview of how the County has built a 20 percent reserve in its General Fund and

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

maintained an AA Moody's bond rating, without raising property taxes, even as timber revenue and Secure Rural Schools payments declined.

During the Public Comment period, ten speakers urged the Board to dedicate TLT proceeds to support the County's travel and lodging industry, including planning for the proposed winter indoor facility. They stressed that Public Safety needs its own source of stable income.

Most of the remaining speakers during this period urged the County to take over and maintain local access roads in the River Road area. These roads are open to the public but are not owned or maintained by a city or county government. Instead, property owners along these roads are legally responsible for their own maintenance, repairs, and liability.

In other business, the Board voted to temporarily authorize Western Lane Fire and EMS Authority to provide ambulance services for Ambulance Service Area #2—North/West.

☀️ **Reported by: Judy Leahy**

Springfield City Council

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

Councilors unanimously **passed the \$155.78 million FY2026-27 Springfield City budget** without adjustments. Councilor Cuadros offered an acknowledgement of public response to the steep cuts (\$310,000) in the Springfield Library's budget and called for reviewing these reductions in the fall. Also approved were funding for the police digital forensics unit and intent to receive shared revenue funds from state gas, liquor, cigarette, and marijuana sales. No member of the public offered comments in the meeting.

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

The City Attorney spent much of the Council meeting reviewing legal aspects of the impending decision about the **annexation of the 18-acre property near the Gateway I-5 exchange**, where PeaceHealth and Lane County intend to build a crisis stabilization center and 96-bed behavioral health hospital for children and adults. The goal was to get appropriate information into the record, respond, and receive final input over the summer. In September the Council intends to make the final decision. Key issues are the provision of city services, especially use of roads with 90 degree angles by emergency vehicles, congestion in the left turn lane from the Beltline onto Gateway Street, and the use of "any law" (the State super-siting law that may compel Springfield to annex the property).

In a session devoted to **City Hall deferred maintenance**, Councilors rejected the process whereby staff had selected a national construction firm, Swinerton, to provide

preconstruction decisions and construction management for the project. It was clear that local construction firms and the Springfield Chamber of Commerce had weighed in with the Mayor and individual Councilors. The city used a Construction Manager/General Contractor method of selection rather than a standard bidding process, with the intent to get a plan and guaranteed maximum price in advance of starting the disruptive work at City Hall. Although Oregon law requires preference for local bidders, the question was "how local is local?" Ultimately Councilor Rodley moved to reject the recent selection, read through the recently received complaints, and reopen the process with an eye toward allowing more business for local companies using local products.

 Reported by: Beatrice McKenzie

Springfield School Board

June 22, 2026 [[webcast recording](#)]

The Board welcomed the District's Interim Superintendent, John "Shawn" Stover, and unanimously approved his contract. Stover, formerly superintendent of Rockingham County, N.C., schools, acknowledged the District has been working through difficult issues and said his focus will be on students in the coming year. The Board thanked Acting Superintendent Jodi O'Mara for stepping in following Todd Hamilton's resignation in February.

Dr. Brian Megert was appointed Assistant Superintendent in a 3-2 vote, with Directors Langworthy and Light dissenting over the costs of this administrative position when student programs were being cut. Other board members said Megert's 16 years of experience with the District would be helpful during this leadership transition, but the Board agreed to revisit the need for this position when a permanent superintendent is hired.

A survey of community and staff members on District priorities and desired qualifications for a new superintendent drew 580 responses. The survey results will be provided to the Board and then to the public.

Director Brew advocated for the District to conduct exit surveys of families leaving the District in light of Springfield's declining enrollment, which he noted is 15 percent higher than other districts. Brew also wants the Board to explore having an attorney present at all meetings and called for the District to develop an easy-to-understand, one-page document on anti-bullying policies and procedures to share with families.

The Board discussed the Oregon Department of Education findings about elementary curriculum issues. Because the District is taking corrective actions based on those findings, no further action will be taken by the State. Brew called for a press release explaining all the findings to the public. During the Public Comment period, one parent questioned how the District plans to bring its elementary science and social science

curriculum up to standards and how it will help students catch up in these areas before middle school.

The dominant theme during Public Comment was the controversial decision to cut the Dual Immersion Spanish/English program. Fourteen parents, existing and former teachers, former students, and community members asked the Board to find funds to maintain or expand the program.

The Board scheduled a tentative July 6 meeting to review and vote on financing to contract for the repair of engineered wood trusses at ten school buildings. Directors Kohl and Brew had questioned how the project would be paid for and whether a 30 percent contingency built into the contract was appropriate. Directors also plan to elect a chair and vice chair at that meeting.

 **Reported by: Kim Weston**

Oakridge City Council

June 18, 2026 [[meeting agenda](#); [webcast recording](#)]

The Council voted 5-2 to approve the second reading of Ordinance 954, **Ambulance Service Utility Fee for FY2026-27, which will add \$17 to residents' monthly water bill.** The ordinance includes a provision to discontinue the monthly fee if voters approve a five-year property tax levy to support EMS and ambulance service.

The City Administrator worked with the Lane County Assessor to develop a levy-rate range of \$1.63 to \$2.80 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Mayor Cutchen suggested the creation of a hardship credit for SSI-eligible residents. His research indicated that the credit could affect approximately 74 households. The program is not expected to significantly increase city staff workload because SSI eligibility is federally regulated and residents would only need to provide federal paperwork to qualify. He estimated the potential credit would require \$12,000-\$20,000 from the general fund. The Council agreed to a levy rate no lower than \$1.63 per \$1,000 of assessed property value.

The Council voted to seat Goat Crudup on the Parks Committee; approved a three-year collective bargaining agreement with the International Association of Fire Fighters; and approved a T-Mobile cell tower lease, in return for a \$30,000 annual payment to the City.

 **Reported by: Leslie Heaton**

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, Oakridge City Council, Lane Community College Board, Springfield School District, and Eugene Water and Electricity Board. 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.