



**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING #5 AGENDA  
FISCAL YEAR 2026/2027**

**May 21, 2026 at 3:00 pm**

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA
- III. PUBLIC COMMENT (Public comment allotted 3 minutes each)
- IV. APPROVE 5.7.2026 MINUTES
- V. BUDGET & FINANCE DIRECTOR REVIEWS PACKET MATERIALS
- VI. Approve Proposed/Amended FY26/27 Budgets
  - a Hood River County Budget Fiscal Year 26/27
  - b 911 Communications Budget Fiscal Year 26/27
  - c Windmaster Sewer District Budget Fiscal Year 26/27
  - d Windmaster Urban Renewal Budget Fiscal Year 26/27
- VII. ADJOURN



**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING #3 MINUTES  
FISCAL YEAR 2026/2027**

**May 7, 2026 at 3:00 pm**

Committee members present: Kristen Dillon, Matt Fullteron, Matt Althoff, Joe Betzing, Chris Robuck, Leticia Moretti (Commissioner), Arthur Babitz (Commissioner), Chad Muenzer (Commissioner), Jennifer Euwer (BOC Chair)

Staff Present: Administrator Williams, County Administrator, Sheri Patterson, B&F Director and Clayton Goode, Finance Accountant

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Dillon called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

**II. CONFLICTS OR POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA**

There were none.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT (Public comment allotted 3 minutes each)**

There was none

**V. APPROVE 4.23.2026 MEETING MINUTES**

Matt A made a motion to accept the minutes as presented.

Jennifer seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

**VI. BAKER TILLY PRESENTATION**

Tammy Lohr-Schweitzer and Andy Belknap with Baker Tilly (BT), who are conducting the county's Organizational Assessment and Fiscal Analysis, presented an update on the project. See the full packet for details.

There was discussion about the tax and levy recommendations provided by BT and the costs associated with administering them.

Chris asked about the Transient Lodging Tax.

Allison said that the county is currently grandfathered in at a 90/10 split, but staff identified that the rate can be increased. Additionally, some counties are layering their TLT over their city's TLT, allowing for an increased rate option.

Matt F asked about user fees.

Tammy replied that most Community Development Departments have 90-100% cost recovery from their user fees, and that the county is 10%.

Community Development (CD) Director, Eric Walker, replied that building fee services are covered so there is no impact to the General Fund (GF). He estimated that with the inclusion of the National Scenic Area grant, Planning has 15-20% cost recovery through fees. He explained that fees have remained low, so people apply, and that further increases become a policy discussion. The county could raise costs, which could lead to fewer applicants and an impact on development.

Trish replied that in January, Environmental Health increased their fees by 18%, and they haven't yet realized the full impact. She expressed concern about impacting licensed operators by continuing to raise fees at an exponential rate.

Arthur asked if political realities were considered in the BT study and mentioned the previously failed Food & Beverage (F&B) Tax.

Allison replied that having a strategic approach and polling the community will help be more successful.

## **BIG PICTURE**

Arthur explained his handout on the county's GF ending balance history, see full packet. He expressed concern about an unsustainable budget balanced by open positions and retirements.

Staff explained that the county budgets annually and has state partners who budget biannually, resulting in carryover funds. They also explained grant revenues, contingencies, and the GF.

Chris replied that it is essential to have a financial forecast and is concerned about making long-term decisions without one. She proposed focusing on revenue generation and not cutting full-time employees (FTEs).

Allison added that there is also a retirement wave that needs succession planning which takes resources – people and budget.

Matt A asked about what cutting services would look like.

Allison replied that a reduction in services should be done thoughtfully. The presented budget maintains current employees and services. When staff receive BT's final report in June, they can strategically plan the next steps.

There was discussion regarding preparation for a potential F&B Tax; they considered the opportunity of polling visitors to gauge support and help refine a potential tax proposal.

Allison replied that cutting non-mandated services, such as transitioning the Health Department back to the State, relinquishing the HRC Museum operations and facility, and certain Public Safety positions, requires analysis. She expressed concern about proceeding without understanding the implications.

Chris made a motion to adopt the proposed budget and directed staff to develop a plan in the next 4 months with recommendations on service delivery partnerships and revenue enhancements. The motion was discussed and did not receive a second and was not brought to a vote.

Jennifer added that implementing surface solutions without understanding the implications could cause more problems.

Arthur asked what management controls are in place while the BT plan is being developed.

Jennifer replied that this is a policy vs management topic, and that the Board of Commissioners (BOC) doesn't administer management controls.

Matt F made a motion directing staff to provide a 1-year plan at the May 17 Budget Committee meeting to increase user fee revenues in line with recommendations from BT. Leti seconded.

Allison advised that fees should be carried out using an official fee study to gather comparator data.

Sheri said that CD and the Health Department did a review of their fees. She said that the GF impact by CD is low, around \$1,000 so doubling that number is not significant.

The motion was retracted and did not proceed to a vote.

The committee discussed

The committee discussed the need for staff to develop a long-term projection with an implementation plan to restore a sustainable budget and define the spend down in reserves. There was also discussion about the contracted services spreadsheet, see full packet.

Clayton pointed to the language in Resolution 2223, which is where policy changes regarding financial sustainability could happen.

#### Deliverables

- Fee schedule
- Income data for the current appraiser position to see if it would pay for itself
- Request for staff to find \$1 million worth of revenue and expenditure reductions from proposed budget

VII. BUDGET & FINANCE DIRECTOR REVIEWS ATTACHMENTS AND REQUESTED DELIVERABLES FROM THE 4.23.2026 and 4.30.2026 MEETING

a Department budget presentation video recordings

The recordings are available on the county's website.

b Contract Services Spreadsheet

This attachment was provided in the meeting packet.

XI. RECESS UNTIL THE NEXT BUDGET MEETING

Matt F recessed the meeting was recessed at p.m. until May 14, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

Proposed cuts for Budget Committee						
						Amount
Add property tax optimization revenue increase (Split \$100k between the main tax collection and the Levy accts)						100,000
Tax Deferral disqualification email 5.15.26 - additional \$10,750.01 > 16% applicable to HRC						1,720
User Fees						
1	Com Dev \$50k permits					50,000
2	Forestry Rec Trails Indirect xfer (events + parking fees increase)					40,000
	Increases Forestry Timber Deposit to GF Forestry					50,000
3	Increase Environmental Health Permit Revenue					10,000
Health Rural Health Formula Funds						
	Indirect to GF of \$12.8k, plus reductions to GF personnel, as hours will transfer to this program					137,855
Juvenile Grant						
						40,000
Eliminate DUII Grant GF contribution (Grant will only execute through Q1)						78,585
Absorb Vets Contract Work utilizing existing Health Dept Staff						44,093
Open position vacancy savings						323,749
	These position savings discussed and reviewed 5.20.26, detailed on additional handout					
					Original Schedule	<b>876,003</b>
Remove the Timber Deposit Interest fund xfer to GF						(475,000)
<b>Net Impact to GF UEFB</b>						<b>401,003</b>
5.14.26 Meeting, this will impact GF via adding an indirect of \$40k, and increasing Timber Dep. to GF Forestry xfer						

Proposed cuts for Budget Committee						Initial Schedule	Updated
Add property tax optimization revenue increase (Split \$100k between the main tax collection and the Levy accoutns)						100,000	100,000
Tax Deferral disqualification email 5.15.26 - additonal \$10,750.01							
Total Amt		10,750.00					
16% applicable to HRC						-	1,720
User Fees							
1 Com Dev \$50k permits						50,000	50,000
2 Forestry Rec Trails Indirect xfer (\$10k events + \$75k parking increase)						10,000	40,000
Increases Forestry Timber Deposit to GF Forestry						75,000	50,000
3 Increase Environmental Health Permit Revenue						10,000	10,000
Health Rural Health Formula Funds							
Indirect to GF of \$12.8k, plus reductions to GF personnel, as hours will transfer to this program						200,000	137,855
Juvenile Grant							
Add \$40,000 intergov grant to Juvenile						40,000	40,000
Eliminate DUUI Grant GF contribution (Grant will only execute through Q1)						126,000	78,585
Absorb Vets Contract Work utilizing existing Health Dept Staff						50,000	44,093
Open position vacancy savings							
These position savings discussed and reviewed 5.20.26, detailed on tab "holding open vacant positions"							

						316,000	323,749	
Implement retirement incentives.								
This won't really be shown until it's more is known, though, something we're hoping to do								
						50,000		
					Original Schedule	<b>1,027,000</b>	<b>876,003</b>	85%
Remove the Timber Deposit Interest fund xfer to GF								
							(475,000)	
							<b>401,003</b>	39%
5.14.26 Meeting, this will impact GF via adding an indirect of \$40k, and increasing Timber Dep. to GF Forestry xfer								

ALL		Emp. Mo	Open			
Jobs Open or Soon to Open	Qty.	Total Comp	Positions Total Comp	Time to Fill	Total	
911 Dispatcher	6	\$7,948	\$47,687	6	\$286,122	
Patrol Deputy	4	\$9,521	\$38,084	3	\$91,000	
Legal Secretary	1	\$7,317	\$7,317	1.5	\$8,692	
Seas'l Trail Crew	1	\$5,619	\$5,619	0.5	\$2,601	
Seas'l Road Tech	1	\$5,619	\$5,619	1	\$5,203	
Seas'l P&B Laborer	1	\$5,619	\$5,619	0.5	\$2,601	
Case Manager, IMPACTS	1	\$10,012	\$10,012	3	\$21,046	
Wildfire Mitigation	1	\$11,915	\$11,915	1.5	\$17,873	
ARE Technician	1	\$7,997	\$7,997	2	\$11,590	
Engineering Technician	1	\$10,427	\$10,427	0.5	\$4,441	
Engineering Manager	1	\$13,150	\$13,150	3	\$36,604	
Forestry Technician	1	\$10,435	\$10,435	2	\$15,817	
Public Health Nurse	1	\$10,587	\$10,587	2	\$15,686	
County Surveyor	1	\$14,809	\$14,809	2	\$24,403	
PIO	1	\$11,261	\$11,261	0.5	\$4,810	
					<b>\$548,489</b>	



GENERAL FUND - 12-Months Open Jobs Open or Soon to Open	Qty.	Emp. Mo Total Comp	Open Positions Total Comp	Time to Fill	Total
Patrol Deputy	3	\$9,521	\$28,563	12	\$342,751
Legal Secretary	1	\$7,317	\$7,317	12	\$87,804
Seas'l P&B Laborer	1	\$5,619	\$5,619	8	\$44,952
Public Health Nurse	1	\$10,587	\$10,587	12	\$127,044
					<b>\$602,551</b>