



**Virtual Commission Meeting
October 21, 2024**



Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission

Meeting Agenda

October 21, 2024

Business Meeting	October 21, 2024	10:45 am – 12:00 pm
------------------	------------------	---------------------

Virtual Meeting

The public is welcome to watch or listen to the meeting through the following methods:

- **YouTube Streaming/Recording:** www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa_OA. There may be a slight delay when streaming the meeting content.
- **Zoom:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83937353641>

Public comment

The OAHC welcomes written and verbal public comments on any agenda item. Written comments submitted by the deadline will be provided to the commission before the meeting.

Written comments and requests to make verbal comments should be submitted using the online [Public Comment Form](#).

The deadline for submitting written comments and requests to make verbal comments is **5:00 pm Thursday, October 17, 2024**.

Verbal comments:

- Limited to three minutes
- Will be heard in the public comment period

Provide the following information for virtual verbal comments:

- Your first and last name
- The topic of your comment
- The phone number you will use when calling the meeting.

If physical, auditory, language, or other accommodations are needed for this meeting, please contact [Nicole Bettinardi](#) as soon as possible, and at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Agenda

A. Welcome & Introductions (10:45 am)

B. Public Comment (10:50 m)

This time is reserved for the commission to hear general public comments and review the written public comments submitted before the meeting. *Information item.*

C. [Review and Approve Minutes \(11:05 am\)](#)

The Minutes from the September 11th, 2024, OAHC meeting will be presented for Commission approval. *Action Item*

D. [Preparation for November Meeting \(11:10 am\)](#)

Staff will review the role of the Commission in evaluating projects and making funding recommendations to the OWEB board ahead of the November 7, 2024 meeting at which the Commission will consider 10 conservation easement applications. *Information item.*

E. [Program Implementation Concerns and Opportunities for Refinement \(11:40 am\)](#)

Staff will highlight a handful of programmatic topics that have been raised in public comment, with a focus on requirements regarding management plans in OAHP funded conservation easements. The Commission will be asked to weigh in on this programmatic topic to inform program refinements. *Information item.*

F. Other Business (11:55 am)

This time is reserved for other business that may come up before the Commission. *Information item*

Contact Information

OAHP Program Coordinator – Taylor Larson

Taylor.Larson@OWEB.oregon.gov

OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist – Robin Meacher

Robin.M.Meacher@OWEB.oregon.gov

Agenda Item B

Public Comment

Commission Meeting October 21, 2024

Submitted written public comment will be published in a supplemental document after the committee meeting and posted on our website here:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/grants/oahp/Pages/OAHC/2024-Oct-OAHC.aspx>

Agenda Items C

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commission Meeting October 21, 2024



Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission

Meeting Minutes: September 11, 2024

MINUTES ARE NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMISSION

This meeting was held virtually.

Recording at: <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/grants/oahp/Pages/OAHC/2024-Sep-OAHC.aspx>

OAHC Members Present

Contreras, Ed
Duhnkrack, Nancy
Krahmer, Doug
Loop, Lois
Lowe, Amanda
Masterson, Laura

OWEB Staff Present

Davis, Renee
Ingamells, Ellen
Larson, Taylor
Meacher, Robin
Page, Stephanie

Others

Bellis, Natasha
McAdams, Nellie

The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm by co-chair Doug Krahmer.

A. Welcome and Introductions, and Commissioner Updates

Vice Chair Doug Krahmer welcomed the commission and public. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

B. Public Comment

This time was reserved for the commission to hear general public comments and review the written public comment submitted for the meeting. There were four written public comments submitted for this meeting. No guests present provided verbal comments. *Information item.*

C. Review and Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the August 7, 2024, meeting were presented for commission approval. *Action item.*

Amanda Lowe moved the commission approve the meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Nancy Duhnkrack. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Spending Plan Rebalance

Taylor Larson, OAHC Program Coordinator, updated the Commission on the funds available in the Agricultural Heritage Fund. *Action item.*

Nancy Duhnkrack moved the commission allocate funds from the Agricultural Heritage Fund to the Conservation Easement/Conservation Covenant spending plan line item, seconded by Lois Loop. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Economic Values to Support an OAHP Payment for Ecosystem Services Program

Staff presented a final draft of the "Economic Values to Support an OAHP Payment for Ecosystem Services Program" from Highland Economics and answered clarifying questions from the Commission. *Information item*

F. Other Business/Next Meeting

This time was reserved for other business that may come up before the Commission. *Information item*

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Agenda Item D

**Preparation for
November Meeting**

Commission Meeting October 21, 2024



STAFF REPORT

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

October 21, 2024 OAHP Commission Meeting



Tina Kotek, Governor

ITEM D – Preparation for the November Meeting

To: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission
From: Taylor Larson, *OAHP Program Coordinator*
Robin Meacher, *OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist*
Renee Davis, *Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager*

Introduction

This staff report provides an overview of the 2024 OAHP Conservation Covenant and Easement grant solicitation and outlines the commission's role in making funding recommendations at the November 7, 2024 meeting for consideration by the OWEB board at its January 2025 meeting.

OAHP Conservation Covenants and Easements – 2024 Solicitation Background

The 2024 legislative session resulted in a \$5.161 million general fund appropriation to the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Fund (\$4,541,680 for grants and \$619,320 for operations) through Senate Bill (SB) 5701. At the April 2024 OAHC meeting, the commission voted to allocate all funding from SB 5701 to the OAHP Conservation Covenant and Easement Program. Since that time, additional funds became available to the commission due to carry over from the previous biennium and a canceled grant agreement. At the September 2024 OAHC meeting, the commission voted to add these funds (\$261,580) to the OAHP Conservation Covenant and Easements Program, resulting in a total amount available of \$4,803,260.

The OAHP Conservation Covenant and Easement grant solicitation opened in May 2024 and closed on June 28th, 2024. Ten applications were received, requesting a total of \$8,878,709. All applications requested funds for the purchase of perpetual conservation easements; there were no applications for termed covenants. OWEB staff shared the grant applications with OAHC members via OWEB's online grant system.

Applications were made available to OWEB's due diligence contractors and to the technical reviewers (group of seven ranging from soils, rangeland, fish and wildlife, ag land use, and agronomy expertise). The due diligence contractors provided feedback in written form on the project elements related specifically to the transaction's soundness, as well as the applicant's capacity to purchase and steward the easement. This feedback was summarized and presented by OWEB staff during the technical review team meeting where technical reviewers discussed and ranked the 10 applications. Their discussion for each project will be summarized by staff and presented in the evaluations ahead of the November OAHC meeting.

At the November OAHC meeting, staff will facilitate a discussion of each project grounded in the technical review team ranking and evaluation based on the criteria established in rule, and then ask the commission to vote on a formal funding recommendation to the OWEB board.

Role of the Commission

Prior to the November OAHC meeting, evaluations for each proposed project will be published and provided to commissioners. The evaluations summarize input received during a technical review team (TRT) meeting and from OWEB's due-diligence contractors. The commission will also receive a project ranking from the TRT rooted in the extent to which each project application meets the established evaluation criteria. The commission will have a chance to ask clarifying questions from staff and discuss the merits of each project. The commission will then hear public comment prior to entering deliberations around a funding recommendation to the OWEB board. Commissioners are encouraged to come to the November OAHC meeting having read each application and accompanying evaluation in order to facilitate a robust discussion and informed funding recommendation.

At the October OAHC meeting, staff will briefly review the application process and role of the OAHC, along with describing several grant-making best practices applied more broadly across OWEB's granting programs.

Agenda Item E

Program Implementation Concerns and Opportunities for Refinement

Commission Meeting October 21, 2024



STAFF REPORT

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

October 21, 2024 OAHP Commission Meeting



Tina Kotek, Governor

ITEM E – Program Implementation Concerns and Opportunities for Refinement

To: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission
From: Taylor Larson, *OAHP Program Coordinator*
Robin Meacher, *OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist*
Renee Davis, *Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager*

Introduction

This staff report precedes a discussion at the October OAHC meeting regarding several topics raised by program partners over the previous year. This discussion may result in the commission recommending policy refinements at the meeting.

Program Implementation Topics

Over the previous year, the commission and staff have received feedback from program partners through various channels including public comment, one-on-one meetings, emails, and facilitated small group feedback sessions with staff. Following these discussions, staff adjusted the program's use of conservation easement template language, adjusting to providing an example document that includes required OWEB administrative language, rather than a template document. This adjustment also included clarification on the program's approach to water rights, clarifying that the program recognizes the variable approaches and needs to water rights for agricultural properties. Additionally, staff made changes to the application based off feedback from reviewers, the OAHC, and applicants. Staff continue to solicit feedback from program participants on the application format.

Another topic that has been raised is the requirement that all OAHP funded easement projects include an OWEB approved management plan that is referenced in the final conservation easement with language that includes an OWEB review requirement for plan updates or amendments.

In response to this feedback, staff previously modified the approval process for updates or amendments to management plans associated with OAHP funded easements to reduce potential for delay in implementation of management practices that may result from OWEB approval timelines. However, staff have continued to hear from some applicant/grantee organizations that the requirement that all OAHP funded easements include a management plan is reducing demand for the program and are unnecessary to meet the intent of the program (e.g., resulting in uncertainty for landowners about program expectations due to funder approvals).

Proposed Refinement to Program Implementation for Management Plans

Given the management plan topic described above and subsequent discussions among OWEB staff and local partners, staff will facilitate a discussion with the commission around the role of

management plans in OAHP funded conservation easements and seek their direction on potential process refinements. Prior to the October 21, 2024 OAHC meeting, an updated staff report will be provided that details potential changes to the process for requiring management plans (forthcoming Attachment A to this staff report). The proposed refinement will aim to strike a balance between streamlined program implementation and accountable grantmaking for this dual-benefit program.