



Contact: Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email: [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us)

## Commissioners support grant request for wildfire prevention project

ALBANY — Tuesday morning, Linn County Commissioners Roger Nyquist, Sherrie Sprenger and Will Tucker approved sending a letter of support to U.S. Forest Service officials for the Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group, a coalition of organizations whose goal is to take proactive measures to reduce wildfires.

The Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group is facing the possibility of losing federal funding.

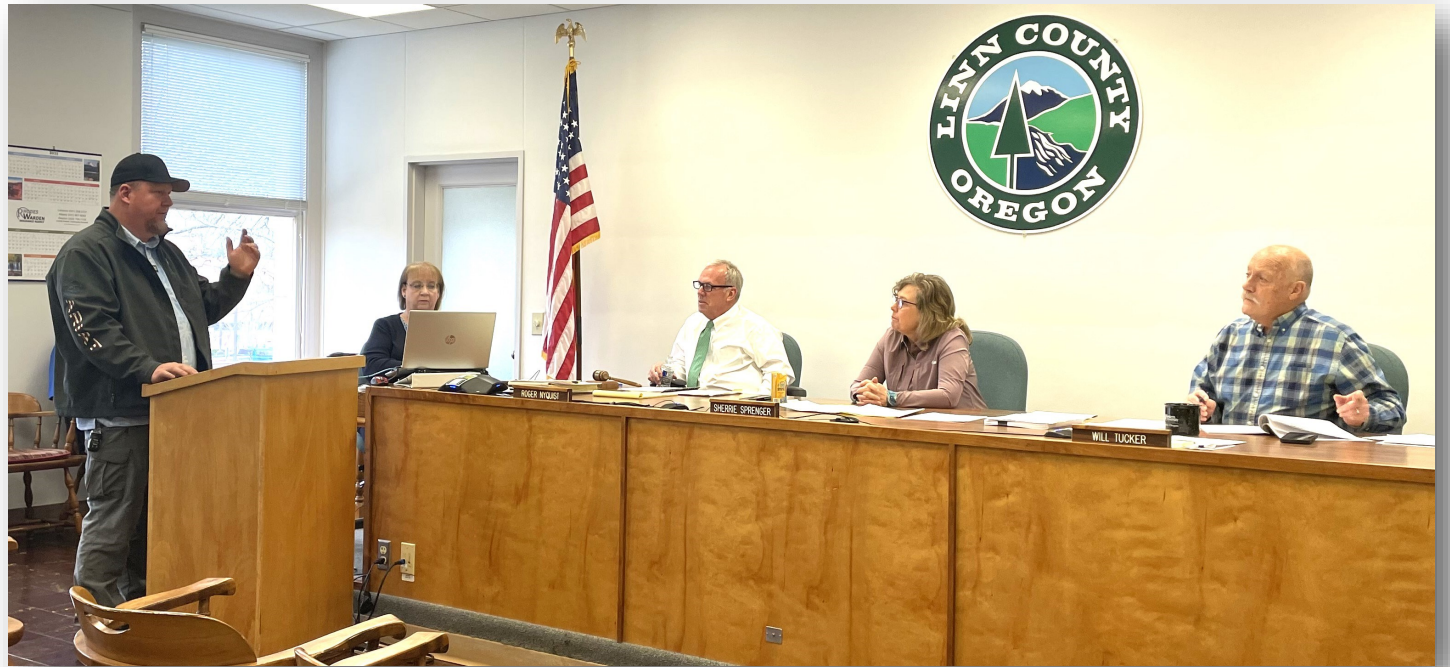
Partner members include the Linn County Juvenile Department, Sweet Home Fire District, Lebanon Fire District, South Santiam Watershed Council, Calapooia Watershed Council and Oregon Department of Forestry South Cascade District.

The Commissioners' letter notes:

- When we adopted the Linn County Community Wildfire Protection Plan update in 2024, we intended to highlight the need for effective, proactive wildfire prevention measures. The LWMG's project would serve as a critical tool in fulfilling that need and ensuring that residents in east Linn County are, not only more prepared, but also better equipped with the resources they need to make their homes and communities safe.
- We strongly believe that funding this grant would be a wise and effective investment in the safety, economy and future of Linn County."
- We strongly believe that funding this grant would be a wise and effective investment in the safety, economy and future of Linn County.

The Commissioners support the work of the Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group's goals:

- Developing a project pipeline that will sustain and centralize a



*Sweet Home City Councilman Josh Thorstad attended Tuesday's meeting of the Linn County Board of Commissioners and introduced himself.*

fuels reduction project database and property assessment system across jurisdictions and land ownerships.

- Greatly accelerate the pace of fuels reduction project work by funding professional fuels crews to complete treatments based on assessments in the project database, provide frequent chipper days at no cost to residents, and reduce financial barriers to completing defensible space work in and around at-risk communities.
- Directly engage with community members to educate and empower them with knowledge and resources about wildfire prevention and preparedness through community events, K-12 programs in school, vocational training to Linn County youth, and professional support for developing new Firewise USA communities in Linn County.

Other Linn County agencies, including the Sheriff's Office and

the Planning & Building Department also provide support for the Linn Wildfire Mitigation Group's efforts.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved a contract with Gerding Builders of Corvallis to be the general contractor for the Linn County Jail renovation project. Other Requests for Proposals were submitted by Kirby Nagelhout Construction and ATK Construction.
- Learned there were 45 land use permits and 234 total building permits issued in February. Of those, three were for single family dwellings, three for manufactured dwellings, 15 for additions/alterations and three for ancillary buildings. There were nine new code enforcement cases and 15 cases were closed.
- Approved a grant increase of \$27,000 within the Planning Department for the 2020 Wildfire Victims Grant from the

State of Oregon.

- Approved participating in the 2025-27 Community Dispute Resolution Program. Linn County provides office space as a grant match for the program.
- Reappointed Nancy Greenman and appointed new member Jesse Bowlin to the Community Services Consortium's — Community Action Advisory Council.
- Approved adjusting the Public Health Nurse/Health Services Nurse pay range from 18 to 20 and the Supervising Nurse pay range from 20 to 22.
- Approved a personal services contract with Michael Best Strategies, a lobbying firm based in Washington, D.C. to represent Linn County about federal timber management issues.

**Media contact:** Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email [apaul@co.linn.or.us](mailto:apaul@co.linn.or.us).