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Press Release

Date: May 20, 2026
Subject: ***Wasco County Commissioner Election and Vacancy Process (Language Clarification)***

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Wasco County Receives Secretary of State Interpretation of Law

Commissioner Election and Vacancy Process

Following the passing of County Commissioner Phil Brady on Election Day, Wasco County has conferred with the Oregon Secretary of State's Office regarding the path forward for both the November General Election and the current vacancy on the Board of Commissioners.

November General Election Ballot

In the primary election, no candidate for the nonpartisan Commissioner position received a majority of the vote. Under ORS 249.088, this outcome would ordinarily require a runoff between the top two vote-getters in the November General Election. However, following Commissioner Brady's passing, the Wasco County Clerk has determined, based on the interpretation of law from the Secretary of State, that ORS 254.135(1)(c) applies. Under this provision, when one nominated candidate dies before the general election, only the remaining nominated candidate will appear on the November ballot.

Filling the Current Vacancy

Separately, a vacancy now exists in Commissioner Brady's current unexpired term. Pursuant to ORS 236.210(2), the remaining members of the Wasco County Board of Commissioners are responsible for appointing a qualified individual to serve the remainder of the term. The Board will announce the timeline and appointment procedures in the coming weeks.

Next Steps and Certification

The Wasco County Clerk's Office will proceed with the standard timeline to certify the primary election results in the coming weeks. "We appreciate the prompt interpretation from the Secretary of State's Office," said Chrissy Zaugg, Wasco County Clerk. "This clarity allows the County to move forward with confidence in the integrity of the election process while we continue to mourn the loss of Commissioner Brady."