

MEETING MINUTES FOR: IAC District 1

January 16th, 2026 : 10:00 a.m.

Kootenai County Administrative Building : 1st Floor / Meeting Rooms 1A & 1B : 451 N. Government Way, Coeur d'Alene

A. Call to Order: Chairman Benjamin Allen called the meeting to order at 10:00 am with a reminder of the sign-in sheet and name tags.

County	Members Present
Benewah	Treasurer Sara Sexton
Bonner	Chief Deputy Assessor Cory Gabel; Clerk Michael Rosedale; Commissioner Asia Williams; Commissioner Ron Korn
Boundary	Assessor Olivia Drake; Clerk Glenda Poston; Prosecutor Andrakay Pluid; Treasurer Jennifer Economou Clerk Jennifer Locke; Chief Deputy Clerk Grace Blomgren; Commissioner Marc Eberlein (to 11 am);
Kootenai	Commissioner Bruce Mattare; Commissioner Leslie Duncan; Prosecutor Stanley Mortensen (10:30am); Chief Deputy Treasurer Jill Smith
Shoshone	Prosecutor Benjamin Allen
IAC	Director of Government Affairs Sara Westbrook
Guests	GMarc Kilmer, Caleb Davis, Mark Rhodes

B. Introductions: No new guests besides Mark Rhodes who will receive a more formal introduction before his presentation.

C. Changes to the Agenda: none presented.

D. Officer & Sub-Committee Reports

D-1. Secretary Report – Assessor Drake noted the COI curriculum summary attached to the agendas, and explained corrections to the November minutes. MOTION to approve the 11/21/25 minutes by Treasurer Sexton and seconded by Commissioner Duncan, motion carried.

D-2. Treasurer Report – Treasurer Sexton had previously submitted the financials (attached to the agenda). Checks for legislative meeting travel have already been approved and the item needing approved today is \$49.21 for meeting snacks to Sara Masters. MOTION to approve payment of bills made by Clerk Poston and seconded by Commissioner Mattare, motion carried.

D-3. Legislative Committee Report – Tabled to business items (section F)

D-4. Budget Committee Report – Treasurer Sexton opened the floor for questions regarding the budget and financials which were emailed out. No questions.

D-5. IAC Board Representative Report – Clerk Poston noted returning to the even-year schedule [for IAC representatives]. Commissioner Duncan attended the meeting in January and the Board approved the updated policies & procedures handbook. The strategic plan was discussed and committees are in full swing. Commissioner Duncan was elected chair of the education committee and will discuss the COI curriculum later in the agenda. Chairman Allen asked to clarify what the education committee will be working on, and Commissioner Duncan responded that they will be reviewing existing classes to make sure they are still helpful, and consider adding or removing classes. Please contact her with your thoughts regarding the curriculum.

D-6. GEM Plan Update – Clerk Poston plans to attend the GEM Plan meeting at Midwinter. There are 27 counties on the plan. A yearly audit is being prepared. One of the big concerns is staying on top of

prescription rebates as some costs are astronomical. The annual rate planning meeting will be in April, and hopefully rate increases can again be held to 4%. Clerk Poston was reelected as Vice-Chair of the GEM Plan Board. Chairman Allen appreciates members from our district stepping up into these roles as it gives a strong voice for our constituents.

E. Elected Office Reports

E-1. Assessors: - Assessor Drake stated that Assessors had their Fall meeting in December. They are continuing to work with the Treasurers and State Tax Commission on finding solutions for their aging software issues. State Tech support teams are facing budget cutbacks so counties may need to pay some or all of the costs. DMV administrative fee counts are down due to ITD's online renewal program now filling up to 60% of renewal transactions. It sounds like there will be an effort to repeal the proration of homeowner's exemptions this session, after it passed last year. Some support has been gathered through the CFTM for the requirement of timber management plans for timber 'exemptions'.

E-2. Clerks: - Clerk Rosedale reported meeting in Boise for the elections conference. There could be another executive order from President Trump which would put more requirements on elections. The current orders are reasonable and manageable but they are apprehensive and waiting to hear more about additional requirements. Clerk Locke added that State Legislative Committees are getting shuffled up a bit, including changes on State Affairs which could effect Clerks and elections. The Clerks group is working with the Secretary of State to be able to add constitutional questions onto the same ballot page as candidates. They are also looking at requiring schools to be closed for November and May elections so they don't have to make that day up. Clerk Rosedale added that some churches may be requesting that their buildings not be used for elections activity, which would mean many counties would be looking for new elections facilities.

E-3. Coroners: - Treasurer Sexton reported for Coroner Nordin, stating that offices have been very busy this year and are working within tight budgets. Commissioner Mattare explained that the Spokane County Coroner has decided to not renew their contract with Kootenai County. With 15 days notice, Kootenai is scrambling to get a medical examiners lab set up. As they have been working towards getting an office set up to handle their own autopsies already, would other counties consider sending their autopsies to Kootenai instead of Spokane once their offices are up and running? Chairman Allen added that besides autopsies, this may help to alleviate the issue of availability for expert testimony. There is a shortage of medical examiners with salary & overhead of up to \$500k / year, which would require 160 autopsies to cover hiring or contracting full time. Prosecutor Pluid added that they are also suffering with scheduling issues and Prosecutor Mortensen noted that there could be a savings with a salaried employee if testimony is needed. Commissioner Williams discussed this with Coroner Beers and they didn't think Bonner County would be making a shift at this time. Treasurer Sexton didn't think they were having any issues with Spokane but would consider changes in the long term.

E-4. Prosecutors: - Prosecutor Mortensen mentioned that their office is still understaffed, and they are also involved with the medical examiner shortage. Staffing seems to have improved in Bonner & Benewah. There will be five District 1 Judges retiring by the end of the year, which could be good for prosecutors looking to fill those positions, but may be hard on counties. Contested elections would be forced in May. Legislative incentives such as early retirement bonuses and years of service buy-backs were discussed. Prosecutors Allen

and Pluid are planning to apply/run for openings in their respective counties and are gearing up to continue to serve in a new capacity.

E-5. Sheriffs: - None in attendance and we will need to brainstorm in order to receive representative input.

E-6. Treasurers: - Treasurer Sexton sent an email out regarding USPS delays causing conflicting postmarks with legislative deadlines. This may need to be addressed legislatively by changing language from postmark date to in-office date. Pennies are being phased out and some counties are already having troubles getting them. It's unclear whether the State Tax Commission could run program changes to adjust for rounding, or if changes would need to be done legislatively. This will be discussed at the Treasurer meeting at Midwinter. They will also be discussing raising the homeowners exemption, which needs to increase if HTR credits are being phased out.

F. Business:

F-1. Feedback re: County Officials Institute Curriculum – Commissioner Duncan summarized the training curriculum and will take recommendations, including by email, up until January 26th when their next meeting will be held. Chairman Allen supported the presentations which had been created in order to get newly elected officials quickly up to speed on rules and regulations and thought that it could be expanded. Commissioner Duncan would like to review said presentations for consideration. Commissioner Williams spoke to the importance of budget education and the inclusion of basic references from “what is a county budget” to more information on how to create the budgets and tools on capital planning.

F-2. Feedback re: Lunch with Legislators – Commissioner Williams was asked if Panhandle Regional Behavioral Health Board could be invited. That board (and Veteran’s Assistance) still need more representation from a couple of counties. Approximately half of our legislators attended the Lunch with Legislators, and those that did were actively involved in discussion.

F-3. Update re: Sharing County Professional Services – Commissioner Duncan reminded the group to look out for a survey coming from IAC. If any county reaches out to Commissioner Duncan, she will pass along the interest. Sara Westbrook spoke about hearing a need from rural counties for regionalized or contract services such as HR.

F-4. 2026 Legislative Priorities – Commissioner Mattare attended their first legislative meeting this past Wednesday. Topics included the Governor’s State of the State address and cuts to highway district funding. Changes in House leadership including the JFAC cochair, House agriculture, education, and business were noted. IAC legislative priorities were discussed, including an increase in daily fees for holding state inmates in county jails. E911 fees & public health district food inspection fees haven’t gained traction, while recording fees will be taken up by Clerks lobby. There was discussion of having a statewide, standardized tax software. Unfunded state mandates are an issue for counties, along with and diversifying county revenues with a local option tax. Other priorities included garnering County input in federal land use decisions, and enhancing public transparency with public notices being published online instead of a paper of record. Any changes to the public notice process should continue to ensure public access. Additional discussion included ensuring local input on the placement of communication towers, public health district governance funding, and streamlining local transparency reporting requirements. Sara Westbrook explained the tax commission reporting mixup regarding taxing district compliances, which raises concerns with tracking and oversight. A

group will meet at midwinter to address the challenges with compliance reporting. A 60-page draft of solid waste legislation is being developed to clarify jurisdiction over waste compliance between counties, health districts and DEQ. Commissioner Mattare noted possible progress with Representative Alfieri towards legislation for impact fee collection on behalf of counties for jails and courthouses. Other notables included removing vehicle registration stickers, repealing property tax proration for homeowners exemptions, and increasing the timeline for lease purchases. There may also be changes considered to the competitive bond process, and confidentiality for photos of human remains.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback to Commissioner Mattare and the committee on legislative priorities for effective representation. Commissioner Mattare was commended for his efforts.

F-5. IAC Weekly Legislative Zoom Meetings – Chairman Allen reminded those interested to register for the weekly zoom updates. They will be also be open for staff to listen in this year.

G. Presentation: Mark Rhodes with Idaho Fish & Game (IDFG) presented “Open Fields – Balancing Property Rights with The Public Trust Doctrine”. IDFG emphasizes the critical balance between private property rights and public resource management, underscoring the importance of the open fields doctrine for effective natural resource enforcement. Mark Rhodes highlighted that while a non-enforcement agency, Idaho’s natural resource officers are POST certified and conduct thousands of voluntary compliance checks annually on private land, which is vital for wildlife management and license enforcement. The open fields doctrine allows warrantless searches on non-residential private land, essential for timely enforcement of hunting and fishing regulations. Policies were updated in 2024 regarding entry to private lands for guidance and being sensitive to landowner rights. The department is navigating the best way to remain sensitive to private property rights while balancing management of the public trust. Mark can be contacted at Mark.rhodes@idfg.idaho.gov

H. State Updates:

H-1. IAC: - Sara Westbrook reminded the group of Friday Legislative Live starting today and every Friday through the session. Watch inboxes for legislative alerts, typically specific to the offices effected and urgent since there isn’t a lot of lead time. Meet with your legislators when in Boise. Send her a text. IAC is actively pursuing lodging tax opportunities. Treasurer Sexton suggested moving our January meetings to Thursday to avoid conflicting with the legislative live. Commissioner Duncan offered that we could start at regular time and attend the zoom at the meeting. Commissioner Mattare noted that legislation may still be picked up regarding requirements for Cities to collect impact fees.

H-2. Sen. Crapo's Office: - not in attendance

H-3. Sen. Risch's Office: - Regional Director Marc Kilmer remarked on the passage of Secure Rural Schools with the funding being retroactive. It will need to be reauthorized next year so advocacy is still needed.

H-4. Rep. Fulcher's Office: - Regional Director Caleb Davis agreed that future SRS funding is still questionable though they are glad it passed for this year. PILT funding passed the Senate and should be signed by the President if not held up by government shutdowns. Delegation members are pressuring the Army Corps to address infrastructure issues through their appropriations.

H-5. Gov. Little's Office: - not in attendance.

I. County Reports:

Benewah – Treasurer Sexton noted that 79 parcels were conveyed from Stimson to the Tribe, and they are looking at \$20,000 loss in property tax which will require budget adjustments. Monthly meetings are being implemented to enable elected officials to work closely together on communication and coordination.

Bonner – Commissioner Williams reminded that Panhandle behavioral health still has money for mental health grants. Commissioner Korn commented regarding the Fairgrounds and Fair Board issues, and taking a deeper dive into Title 22 to clarify county responsibilities. Please reach out if you have more info.

Boundary – Clerk Poston mentioned that the county is reviewing opioid funds, with allocations for a drug dog and partial funding for a school resource officer. Boundary is progressing on a new justice center and looking to finish around the end of September. The community mourns the loss of their Weed Superintendent who was also President of the Weed Association.

Kootenai – Chief Deputy Treasurer Smith noted that 40 of their parcels were also conveyed from Stimson to the Tribe. Commissioner Duncan added that Spokane County has allowed a 30-day extension, enabling Kootenai to get their autopsy center up and running.

Shoshone – Chairman Allen mentioned the current newspaper articles and announced the next meeting scheduled for April 10th.

J. Public Comment – Sara Westbrook reminded that America 250 grants are open through end of month.

K. Upcoming Meetings: Regular Meetings 2026: April 10th, July 10th, November 6th

Fall Legislative Luncheon: November 6th, 2026

L. Adjourn: Chairman Allen ordered the meeting adjourned at 11:57 p.m. Next meeting April 10th.

Attachments: Financials, COI Curriculum

IAC DISTRICT 1 - 2026 OFFICERS

Chair – Benjamin Allen Shoshone County Prosecutor	Secretary – Olivia Drake Boundary County Assessor
Vice-Chair – Bruce Mattare Kootenai County Commissioner	Treasurer – Sara Sexton Benewah County Treasurer
Legislative Representative – Bruce Mattare Kootenai County Commissioner	IAC Representative – Leslie Duncan Kootenai County Commissioner
1st Alt. Legislative Representative – Brian Domke Bonner County Commissioner	Alternate IAC Representative – Asia Williams Bonner County Commissioner
2nd Alt. Legislative Representative – Jennifer Locke Kootenai County Clerk	Gem Plan Representative - Glenda Poston Boundary County Clerk

Budget Committee: Treasurer Sara Sexton, Assessor Olivia Drake, Assessor Dennis Engelhardt

Elected Office Chairs

Assessor: Jerry White	Prosecutor: Stanley Mortensen
Clerk: Mike Rosedale	Sheriff: pending
Coroner: Carrie Nordin	Treasurer: Sara Sexton