

MISSOULA COUNTY OPEN LANDS CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 9, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Via Computer or Microsoft Teams App

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 217 703 726 117 7

Passcode: q7ub7So6



Parks, Trails & Open Lands

Via Phone: 406-272-4824; Conference ID: 972 825 18#

MISSOULA COUNTY

This will be a hybrid meeting, held in-person in the Lands and Communities conference room (127 E. Main, 2nd floor), and via Microsoft Teams

- Call to Order and Roll Call
- Land Acknowledgement

Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people.
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 2026
- Public Comment and Announcements on items not on the agenda
- New Business (6:05pm: 20min)
 - 1. 2026 Land Stewardship Award Timeline & Materials Review
- Subcommittee Reports/Communications/Questions
 - 1. Staff Communications (6:25pm: 15min)
 - i. OLC Web Page & Resource Folder Update
 - ii. 20th Anniversary Open Space Bond Planning Update
 - 2. Subcommittee Communications (6:40pm: 25min)
 - i. Communications
 - Good Neighbor Handbook Updates
 - ii. Board Chair/Vice-Chair Communications
 - OLC Subcommittee Descriptions & Sign-ups
 - Chair/Vice Chair Elections
 - 3. General Communications and Questions (7:05pm: 20 min)
 - i. Round Robin updates
- Future Agenda items (7:25pm: 5 min)
- Adjourn

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If anyone attending this meeting needs special assistance, please provide advance notice by calling Missoula County Lands and Communities at (406) 258-4651. Missoula County will provide auxiliary aids and services.

**Interested in OLC? Head to [this website](#) to find out more.
Est. 2006**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Missoula County Open Lands Citizens Advisory Committee is to advise the Board of County Commissioners and represent the citizens of Missoula County in the protection and preservation of open space and rural lifestyles for present and future generations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Establish policy and adopt rules for its operations consistent with any and all plans and policies adopted by Missoula County and approved by the Commissioners.
2. Keep records and have responsibility for the custody of all records and documents of the OLC.
3. Advise and assist the Commissioners in:
 - Review and implementation of plans, policies, programs, and regulatory and non-regulatory tools that support or impact open space and rural lifestyles;
 - Implementation of the Open Space Bond Program by reviewing applications and recommending funding to conserve open space in accordance with the Program's Interlocal Agreement;
 - Outreach and two-way communication with rural communities relative to open space and rural lifestyles.
4. Collaborate with Lands, Culture and Recreation staff and other city and county advisory committees.

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OLC Administrative Subcommittee Agenda

Date: March 18, 2026 10a via Microsoft TEAMS

Attendees: Sharon Sweeney, Bonnie Buckingham, Jenny Zaso

A. Land Acknowledgment

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B. Follow-up from March OLC meeting

- New OLC Members Next Steps
 - Jenny is working on orienting new members; 2 out of 3 new members have met with her for orientation and it is going great.
 - Subcommittee signups – descriptions of subcommittees will be available for all members at April meeting and a request for all OLC members to commit/recommit to a committee will be made.
 - New member spotlights? Admin Committee decided this would be a good idea if the new members were up for participating.
 - Admin committee discussed the pros and cons of listing the vacancies for the two still open alternate OLC members positions now or with the one voting member vacancy during the normal recruitment time in Nov – Dec. It seemed beneficial to wait until Nov to post and focus on getting current new members up to speed and settled in!
- Paraic Neibergs & Kyle Barber speaker debrief – conservation easement appraisals and valuation. Admin committee discussed the success of the speaker presentation – they were a bit concerned about the denseness of the information, hoping no one felt overwhelmed, but also noted there were so many great questions from both long-time and new OLC members, so the topic seemed relevant and engaging. Committee decided it was a good time to take a break for guest speakers for next meeting, since there was a lot of OLC housekeeping and new information about upcoming 2026 items to cover in April.
- Good Neighbor Handbook Update – Jenny to discuss FWP interest in funding and retaining use of graphics with full OLC Board in April. Admin Committee thought this was reasonable to share Handbook assets with FWP if funding was available. This also helps with a larger cross-agency goal of streamlining land/water stewardship best practices messaging across the state.

C. Upcoming Agenda Items for April

- Chair and Vice Chair Elections
- 20th Anniversary Planning Update – Jenny notified the committee that recent discussions with Five Valleys Land Trust & the City were starting to question whether or not to celebrate a larger 50 year milestone of successive bonds vs. 20 years since the 2006 bond only. This discussion will be brought to OLC in April.
- Land Stewardship Award Prep – Jenny will include the nomination application materials for OLC member review in April's Board packet. Jenny will ask for OLC input and edits to the timeline and materials at the meeting as well.
- OLC Web page updated and updated OLC Member resources available – Jenny will share the link in the April agenda meeting to the updated OLC Board web page. There is a whole new folder available on the site of OLC Member Resources and these will be reviewed with everyone at the April meeting.

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- Guest Speaker/Small Ag Program Update? Bonnie and Jenny agreed based on where the small ag land conservation program is right now, that the May meeting would be better timing for an update, so will push this topic until then.

D. Other Future Agenda Items

- Ranching/conservation producer speaker: Food Policy Advisory Board would also be invited to listen to this speaker. (TBD timing) – will still work toward having a speaker that fits this description in Spring/Summer.

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Missoula County

Land Stewardship Award Program

2026 Program Timeline

Ask for nominations, sent out to media and community sources	Mid-May	Request to OLC and land trusts/partners to submit nominations to staff. Outreach through LCR partner contact list, website, e-newsletter, OLC community contacts, partner groups member email list, Facebook pages, press release to various newspapers, ETC!
Nominations due	June 11th	All nominations must be submitted by June 9th
PTOL emails packets of nominations to committee members	Week of June 11th	Stewardship Award Selection Committee members review nominations and make initial notes on strengths and questions/concerns for each nomination.
Stewardship Selection Committee meeting/s	Late June/early July	Selection Committee meets to discuss nominations. Committee lists strengths, concerns, additional information needs. Committee votes on recommendation.
OLC briefing and recommendation	July 9th	Selection Committee presents recommended award recipient to OLC and gets OLC's recommendation.
BCC briefing and vote	Mid-Late July	Selection Committee representative presents recommendation(s) to BCC. BCC votes for final award recipient.
Stewardship Award press trip, field trip, award presentation	July/Aug	LCR staff coordinates with Selection Committee members, BCC, and award recipients to arrange details. BCC presents plaque.
Additional recognition	July/Aug/Sep	Award recipients and stewardship practices recognized on website and newsletter, public plaque, press release, other outlets.

Stewardship Award Selection Committee:

- OLC members (Communications Subcommittee)
 - Helene Michael
 - Sarah Holden
- Partner members
 - Steffany Rogge (Department of Ecology)
 - Travis Greenwalt (Conservation District board)

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