CLACKAMAS COUNTY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Cindy Becker, County Administration Project Coordinator
RE: Independent Review: Sheriff's Resignation and Appointment
DATE: November 10, 2026

REQUEST: Staff are seeking direction from the Board regarding the scope of work for an independent review of Sheriff Brandenburg's resignation and the process of appointing an interim Sheriff.

BACKGROUND:
Former Sheriff Brandenburg announced her resignation to the Board of County Commissioners and County Administrator in an email and accompanying letter on July 22, 2026, effective July 27, 2026.

The resignation was discussed by the Board at their July 28, 2026, Issues session. During this session, the Board also appointed James Rhodes as the Sheriff.

Subsequently, the Board discussed the resignation and appointment again at their October 13, 2026, Issues session. The Board directed staff to seek an independent review of the Sheriff's resignation.

SCOPE OF WORK

Conduct an independent review of the following:

- The facts surrounding Brandenburg's resignation related to the timing and notification of staff, Board members and others.
  - What information was shared?
  - Who was it shared with?
  - When was it shared?
  - Why was the Board only notified three days before implementation?
  - Did any candidates for Sheriff know of the decision before July 22?
  - Were any Sheriff campaign political action committees formed prior to July 22?
  - Did any candidates for Sheriff raise funds or create materials (website) before July 22?
  - Who advised the Sheriff, County Elections Clerk, and Board of the election process and timelines to elect a Sheriff during a mid-term resignation?
- Review of the process to appoint Sheriff Rhodes on July 28th
  - Was the appointment process compliant with election laws?
  - Was the appointment process properly noticed by public meeting laws?
  - Why was the matter under Issues and not a policy session?
  - What was the urgency of appointing a Sheriff on July 28?
  - When did Rhodes' DPSST certification expire?

OPTIONS:

1. Direct staff to use the above scope of work in a contract with an independent reviewer
2. Direct staff to edit the above scope of work in a contract with an independent reviewer
3. Do not move forward with an independent reviewer.

RECOMMENDATION: None