

April 15, 2015

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on April 15, 2015, in the Eureka Annex of the Lincoln County Courthouse. Present were Commissioner Mike Cole, Commissioner Greg Larson, Executive Assistant Bill Bischoff and Clerk and Recorder Robin Benson.

Commissioner Cole **opened the meeting** with the Pledge of Allegiance.

11:00 AM **JP Court Update:** Present were Krista Nemeroff and Judge Sheffield was present via Vision Net Judge Sheffield submitted a report to the Commission regarding the Eureka JP consolidation. **The update has been appended to today's minutes for public review.** Judge Sheffield was available via VisionNet to provide clarity and answer any questions the Commission may have.

11:30 AM **Tim Orthmeyer, Airport Projects:**

Tim provided a grant summary for a taxiway lighting project for the Libby Airport. Part of the project will be obstruction removal; clearing some of the trees on the approach, mostly along dense areas. The total cost of this project is \$401,000. FAA Share is \$360,900 (90%) and the local share is \$40,100 (10%).

**Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve authorization to move forward with the Taxiway Lighting Project for the Libby Airport, including obstruction removal. The motion allows Morrison-Maierle, Inc. to submit a grant application to the FAA on behalf of the county with approval of the engineering fees. Second by Commissioner Cole, so ordered upon consensus of the board.

Tim submitted a final draft of the Libby Airport Master Plan Study. **Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve the pay request submitted by Morrison-Maierle, Inc. in the amount of \$22,800 to pay for the cost of the Libby Airport Master Plan Study.

1:30 PM **Planning Department:** Present were Lisa Oedewaldt and Deb Blystone

**Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve the Beltram Family Transfer subject to planning staff recommendations. Second by Commissioner Cole, and so ordered upon consent of the Board.

**Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve final plat of Amended Plat Lot 4E Sorenson's Kokanee Terrace AKA Morgan Subdivision subject to planning staff recommendations. Second by Commissioner Cole, and so ordered upon consent of the Board. All conditions have been met.

2:00 PM **Administrative Issues:**

- **Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve the annual Noxious Weed Trust Fund Project Grant Agreement for Tansy Ragwort Management in Lincoln County. Second by Commissioner Cole, and so ordered upon consent of the Board.
- The Commission signed a Proclamation recognizing May 2015 as **Mental Health Month** in Lincoln County.
- The Commission read the minutes for April 8, 2015. **Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve April 8, 2015 regular commissioner meeting minutes with corrections. Second by Commissioner Cole, and so ordered upon consent of the Board.

3:30 PM The **meeting was adjourned.**

**LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Cole, Chairman

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Robin A. Benson, Clerk of the Board

**JUSTICE COURT**  
**Hon. Jay C. Sheffield**  
**Justice of the Peace**  
**Lincoln County, Montana**

**418 Mineral Avenue**  
**Libby, MT 59923**

**(406) 283-2411**  
**FAX NO. (406) 293-5948**

To: Lincoln County Commissioners  
From Judge Jay C. Sheffield  
Reference: Eureka Consolidation Update 04-15-15

The Justice Court consolidation has gone fairly smoothly. As you will recall from your tour of the Eureka court shortly after the closure, no effort had been made for the preparation or transfer of any archived documents. My staff and I made four trips to the annex to sort through the case files. It was very obvious that the old cases had not been purged in years and I had to hire a commercial shredding service to come and destroy them. We filled eleven commercial trash bins, with an estimated 2200 pounds of old case files at a cost of \$498.50. We organized and boxed the files that needed to be retained and transported them by van to the Libby office.

We have configured the courtroom so that it can be conveniently used by people wanting to make their appearances by video conference. All necessary paperwork is available in the courtroom and there is a fax machine that allows documents to be sent and received in real time while I am speaking with the person. All state owned equipment has been removed from the office.

Since 01-01-15 only five people have requested to be seen by video. Three were north Lincoln County residents and two were from Flathead County. There has only been one request for a protective order hearing to be held in Eureka. Both parties appeared with their lawyers and they worked out a settlement agreement minutes before the hearing was set to begin.

We started processing Eureka area civil cases on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2014 which was almost a month prior to the consolidation. In the nearly five months since, I have not conducted any hearings in Eureka for small claims, landlord tenant or other civil issues. When the time comes that I do need to hear a north county civil case, it will be in person at the annex.

Since January 1<sup>st</sup> all new civil and criminal cases/citations have been filed in the Libby court and entered into our data systems. There is no simple way for the computer to differentiate between north and south county filings. It will however provide statistics that document both our past and current total case load.

From 01-01-14 through 04-13-14 there were a total of 416 cases filed in Libby Justice Court. During that same period there were 168 cases filed in Eureka, for a combined total of 584. This year in the same time period, 636 cases have been filed in the Libby court, an overall increase of 8.9%.

My staff and I are able to manage the added workload. The main issue we are dealing with now is the number of hours my staff and I have to spend per day reviewing the Eureka cases. Reconciling the physical files (particularly civil cases) with the data entered in the state Full Court system is very time consuming and may take until the end of the year to complete.