

October 11, 2016

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a special session on October 11, 2016, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Cole, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Peck, Clerk and Recorder Robin Benson, Dallas Wamsley, Matt Pickett and Gary Neff.

9:00 AM Matt Pickett/Briefing and Recommendations:

Matt submitted an operational assessment and operational recommendations to the commission for review. The assessment describes nine recommendations under financial operations. Matt said he is aware that people and employees are asking what he is doing and what changes are going to be made. Matt said there are some who want to know what will change so they can attack it. Commissioner Peck commented that is normal. Matt shared that although he is impressed with county employees and department heads, there are people who are not adequately trained and end up in positions that they may not have the skills to function efficiently. Matt said that during his analysis he determined there are very little resources and training available to employees. Commissioner Larson commented that in his position there is a large amount of diversity of knowledge that you have to know. Commissioner Peck commented on the complexities of planning and legal implications for every decision made; it's tough when you don't have the resources, also the vast array of issues that are necessary to be versed in. Commissioner Peck said his job is interesting but overwhelming when you don't have the support staff.

The commission agreed there is no financially skilled expert within the county and this is the missing criterion necessary. Commissioner Cole commented that the commission recognizes the deficiencies and is trying to improve which is the purpose of the assessment. Commissioner Larson said the county is continually looking at lack of resources, so we need to make the right decisions.

The commission agreed that moving forward with the RFP for auditor is a step in the right direction towards financial expertise. Commissioner Peck said the new administrator should be involved in the auditor selection. Commissioner Cole said he is hopeful the administrator will have the financial expertise that is necessary. Commissioner Peck expressed that we are trying to organize ourselves for success and build on the foundation now; Lincoln County has lost or not participated in revenue resources due to lack of expertise. Commissioner Peck spoke about how people's level of understanding on how to look at a budget operationally could be improved with training; there should be a basic understanding that the budget is more than numbers. Departments do need to have ownership of their budgets.

There was a brief conversation about working on a Lincoln County grant process that meets both state and federal law. The grant process needs to describe the unallowable expenses. The commission asked Matt to help with that. The commission agreed this is an issue that needs to be resolved.

Commissioner Peck stated that it is important to have an interview process for the administrator position and other elected officials need to have input as well. Commissioner Cole suggested it would be beneficial to formulate a questionnaire. Commissioner Peck added that a numbering system to use to pick the top 5 resumes. The commission agreed that as well as expertise, this position is also leadership and personality driven.

Scheduled work session to discuss the RFP for auditor is this Friday, October 14 at 10 am.
Matt said he would like to know what the county requirements are going to be in the RFP for auditor.

Matt and Commissioner Peck will coordinate efforts to set aside a time for a Black Mountain meeting; we have employees that need to know how to automate information so it does not have to be manually dealt with. The commission agreed it would be beneficial to get a black mountain representative to the county to visit with and help with employee training.

11:00 AM Meeting Adjourned:

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mike Cole, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Robin Benson, Clerk of the Board