

July 5, 2017

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a special session on July 5, 2017, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Cole in Eureka via VisionNet, Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Peck, County Administrator Darren Coldwell and Deputy Clerk and Recorder Chris Nelson.

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

2:00 PM Sheriff's Office A/C Discussion: Present were Dallas Bowe and Sheriff Roby Bowe.

Sheriff Bowe met with the commissioners and gave a brief update on current capacity issues in the jail. On July 4th, 3 people were cited and released simply because they did not have any room in the jail. They've had at least 40 people in the jail since last week and reached a high of 44 inmates. Roby said the detention officers are getting overworked and the prisoners, due to the overcrowding and heat, are getting restless.

Commissioner Cole asked what the temperature check of the cells showed. Roby said the temperature check on the night of July 4th showed a temperature of 87 degrees. There has never been any air conditioning in the cells only fresh air circulated from outside. Roby said the only thing from keeping it from getting warmer is how cool it gets at night. They are going to be looking into short term and long term solutions and will be talking to outside groups to see what possible solutions would be acceptable.

Commissioner Bennet said if the county has to spend 50 or 60 thousand dollars, it needs to be done not just for the inmates, but staff also. Commissioner Cole asked about the engineer's findings that looked at expansion opportunities for the jail. Roby said there has been a delay as they wait to find out whether there would be a requirement to provide outdoor recreation. The county is currently grandfathered in and not required to have any outdoor recreation for the prisoners.

There was a brief discussion about other buildings in Libby that could be utilized to modify into a jail. Darren said it is time to think outside the box to find a solution. Two locations mentioned were the community college building and the old Asa Wood building.

Commissioner Peck said that a group needs to be put together to look at the issue and find solutions and should include an employee from the detention staff. The Department of Corrections can assist in the process. Another option would be to move non law enforcement, attorney or courts to one of the other buildings and retrofit the courthouse.

Commissioner Bennett stressed the importance of making a good faith effort to show that they are trying to address the solution.

Darren said he would gather some information for the commissioners, talk to Flathead Corrections, and make contact with MACo.

Meeting adjourned at 3 PM.

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mike Cole, Chairman

ATTEST:

Chris Nelson, Deputy Clerk of the Board