

May 17, 2017

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on May 17, 2017, in the Lincoln County Annex, Eureka, Montana. Present were Commissioner Cole, Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Peck, County Administrator Darren Coldwell and Clerk and Recorder Robin Benson.

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

9:00 AM **USFS Rexford/Fortine Ranger District/Bryan Donner:** Present were Nikki Meyer, John Blodgett, Libby via VisionNet.

**Seasonal employees** are arriving at the high school June 19. Bryan invited Commissioner Cole as guest speaker welcoming new employees to Lincoln County.

**Penco Fun Days Update:** This is an annual motorized recreational event held last weekend. Bryan said that attendance was down but felt Mother's Day contributed to the decline in attendance.

**Current large planning projects:**

- Galton Vegetation and Fuels Management Record of Decision signed May 3. Two timber sales are moving forward.
- Ten Lakes Travel Management EIS is in progress. Comments are numerous and complex but the Forest Service is going through those comments at this time.
- Young-Dodge Litigation: Forest Service was upheld on all points.
- Salvage of recent blowdown in Murphy Lake/Ant Flat/Trego area: The Forest Service will be selling some of the material.

**Green Box Sites:**

- West Kootenai: Bryan expressed appreciation for fixing the hatches.
- Pinkham/Othorp: Requesting if gravel is available. There was a brief discussion on how to dispose of the slash.

**West Kootenai main county road cattle guard installation:** Bryan said he toured the area with Road Supervisor Ray Price and agreed on a location and reposition of the cattle guard. A metal band will be placed perpendicular to the rails for easier snow removal.

**Ksanka Creek Restoration:** Bryan requested a signature from Commissioner Cole for the financial report. Agreement is through RAC to have engineering completed. Commissioner Cole signed the financial report.

**Status of Gateway Road near border:** The Forest Service is looking for access necessary for the Gateway Project. Commissioner Cole asked for more time to conduct research. There is confusion on road ownership/alternating ownership on sections of road. Commissioner Peck commented that he is hesitant to do anything that may decrease public road access for recreation.

**There are currently two road closures** because of water runoff; Steep Creek and a small road coming off FDR. There are no wash outs at this time and road runoff is being monitored.

**Capitol Christmas Tree Update:** Eureka Rendezvous events were very well received.

**Lake Koochanusa Scenic By-Way Update:** Conversations are taking place to see what can be done to help remove trees that are obscuring the view of the reservoir along Highway 37.

**Sewer Line installation on NFS land and County Fairgrounds update:** Bryan said he can propose a plan to have the county request a permit and the FS waive all future fees if the county would incur all costs of installation. Commissioner Bennett asked what the annual fees were. Bryan said approximately \$125.00 per year. The commission took the proposal under advisement.

**Timber Sales Update:** No change in large and small sale activity since last month and no sales are currently active.

9:30 AM **MACo Discussion:** Present were Shannon Shanholtzer, Colleen Wood, Brad Salonen, Vic White, Myles Hickman and John Blodgett, Libby via VisionNet.

Shannon presented the MACo Property & Casualty/Worker's Compensation 2017/2018 to the commission and went through it in its entirety providing explanations. The insurance cost including liability loss, property loss, cyber liability, and administrative costs is increasing 20.48% for a total of \$455,943. Once the final list of insured vehicles/properties is complete, the total may be reduced significantly. Darren said he would meet with Colleen and finalize the list potentially by end of week. Shannon explained the renewal cost compared to FY 16/17, liability policy changes, property policy changes, loss control report, and claims update.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:**

- The Commissioners read the minutes of May 9 and 10, 2017. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve minutes as submitted. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried unanimously.
- Commissioner Peck said he is donating \$3,000 to Turner Mountain to be paid from the Libby Economic Development fund.
- Commissioner Peck explained that currently the county employs a full-time contractor at the Happy's Inn green box site. The Environmental Health Department is requesting permission for a temporary/part-time employee. The new position would be \$12.00 hour/2 hours per day. Commissioner Peck said the Environmental Health Department is looking at going to timed gate access or card access for people who live in that area. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to hire a temporary/part-time employee at \$12.00 hour/2 hours per day/4 days per week at the Happy's Inn green box site. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Peck commented this will be a significant cost savings until gate options are resolved.
- Commissioner Bennett informed the commission that he has spoken with Ray Orsborn about water damage to his house. MACo will start the claims process. Commissioner Bennett will place this on the commissioner's regular agenda for further discussion.

10:45 AM **Eureka Fairgrounds:** Present were Lois Sciligo and Nikki Meyer.

Lois said the Fair Board and Rodeo Association met and looked at how far reaching into the community the fairgrounds is and the impact to the community. Lois shared posters on the wall reflecting how valuable and important the fairgrounds is to the community.

Lois explained that the Youth Exhibit Building at the fairgrounds had significant damage to its roof and structure during the heavy snow season. Lois said she had contractors look at the building for estimates. To purchase a kit would be approximately \$84,000 and would not include the slab. The current building is made of steel creating difficulty with removal. Commissioner Cole expressed that the entire building needs to come out and started over. There was a brief discussion about size options. Darren asked what if the building was not finished this year, potentially buy just the shell this year. Lois said that would create difficulty for students to display their 4-H exhibits without walls. Darren suggested doing some shopping around on metal buildings, stating the insurance check is approximately \$23,000. Commissioner Peck said he would communicate with some construction businesses to see about attaining some donated materials. Commissioner Bennett agreed that costs may be reduced by donations and there may be some avenues for donated materials. Lois said there would be electrical wiring costs and additional cost for pouring the slab.

Lois asked if she should get bids. Darren suggested meeting with Lois to come up with a couple options for commissioners to look at combined with contributions and donations of materials. Commissioner Bennett said it would be beneficial to know what the finished product cost would be. Lois said she will be meeting with the Fair Foundation to request a fund-raising campaign to help pay for display cases and other needed materials for the kids to display their projects. Lois stated the importance of the building for the county 4-H Program. Commissioner Peck pointed out the time crunch to get all this accomplished before the fair.

11:00 AM **Public Comment Time:** Present were Myles Hickman and Robin Haidle.

Myles, on behalf of the Lyons Club would like to purchase a bench in honor of Jay Yost along the Ksanka View Trail. Commissioner Cole stated there may still be some funding left for signage and benches. Commissioner Cole suggested meeting with Myles to work out the details. Jay Yost was a member of the previous Lyons Club and was a very active member of the community. Commissioner Cole said he would attend a Lyons Club meeting.

Robin Haidle inquired about a newspaper article regarding the county taking over some forest management.

Commissioner Cole said that Jerry Okonski formulated a plan, his visionary thought on what Lincoln County can do to become more self-sufficient.

Commissioner Peck said the plan in theory has some real merit, but it's getting through the detail of management that will be difficult. Commissioner Peck said there is opportunity for the county possibly to manage timber lands and the county could sell the timber. This is in its infancy; there are a lot of big pieces and discussions still to take place. Forest Service land would be put into a trust for the county to manage; pilot projects. Still very preliminary but is a very viable concept. Commissioner Bennett said part of the argument is protecting us by managing areas around our communities as a safety issue. Commissioner Peck said it will not prevent fires, but would prevent the intensity of fires by fuel reduction.

11:15 AM **Community Action Partnership of Northwest Montana (CAPNM) Discussion:** Present were Robin Haidle, Alan McCurry and Nikki Meyer.

Robin Haidle said he is the Chairman of CAPNM and introduced Alan McCurry as the Libby representative. Mr. Haidle submitted a 2016 Summary Report for commission review. CAPNM is a four-county agency representing Flathead, Lake, Sanders and Lincoln Counties. The main emphasis is housing, fuel assistance and weatherization. CAPNM is now managing the Treasure Manor in Libby offering 32 units of affordable housing. CAPNM has negotiated to buy and manage Green Meadow Manor but has been unable to move forward with this. CAPNM is looking to acquire properties so they do not fall into fair market housing instead of affordable housing units. Mr. Haidle said this is a difficult process. Commissioner Cole said he is aware that Ksanka Court property is interested in maintaining the property as affordable housing units.

Al commented on how the agency tries to help people who need housing. He said they have handed out sleeping bags to people sleeping in their cars and that there is a desire to help people with acute needs. CAPNM acknowledges disabilities and tries to help find work that accommodates abilities. Mr. Haidle said that every 5 years CAPNM conducts a community needs assessment to determine what the needs are and how those needs are being met. Literacy and work skill programs are being pushed to help eliminate barriers to get into the work force.

Commissioner Cole mentioned the homelessness in each community and asked if CAPNM addresses those needs. Mr. Haidle said that CAPNM is not directly involved in homelessness, but does give out homeless kits that provides basic essentials. Mr. Haidle said Lincoln County has no shelters.

Commissioner Bennett asked about the process to help first time home buyers who may want to sell or refinance but there are big obstacles as they try to move forward as their finances increase. Commissioner Bennett asked if CAPNM has ever considered partnerships with faith based organizations; churches to provide labor and expertise to upgrade homes and CAPNM would pay for materials.

Al said his lease agreement at the Annex expired last fall. Darren said he would look into it and update the agreement. Mr. Haidle said moving forward he would like to touch base at least once a year, but is willing to communicate more often if necessary.

1:30 PM **Planning Department: Cancelled**

**Meeting adjourned** at 11:45 M.

**LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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

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