

March 28, 2018

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on March 28, 2018, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Cole, Commissioner Bennett, County Administrator Darren Coldwell, and Deputy Clerk and Recorder Chris Nelson. Commissioner Peck was out of town on county business.

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

9:00 AM **Tim Their Fish and Game:** Present were John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker and Tim Their.

Tim said in 2015 he went out and captured elk and outfitted them with tracking devices to learn more about the elk in the north Lincoln County area. They outfitted 6 elk with transmitters to see where they went. Several stayed local and one went northeast of Fort Steele in British Columbia two years in a row. The data showed there were resources along the route the elk took that made it worth the risk of such a long route. The British Columbia government is subsidizing fencing to prevent the elk from damaging private property, which is an ongoing issue. Fish and Game does provide up to \$2,000 worth of fencing for ranchers. Tim said that the early season hunt was successful in that it pushed the elk out of the valley and into public lands leading to less damage to private citizens' property.

Tim said the Bighorn sheep by the border and on Lake Koocanusa are native sheep and not transplants as the rest of the bighorn in Lincoln County are. The biggest threat facing these sheep isn't predators but disease from domestic animals. Over the winter they took samples of 32 sheep and found no disease which he said is good and bad. If they had shown signs of any disease from domestic animals they would probably have developed a resistance to them but the blood results did not show that. Several were also outfitted with tracking collars that showed they headed across the border into Canada. All traveled independently but followed roughly the same path. The Lake Koocanusa herd's health exams was difficult but they did manage to capture two although the herd was considerably smaller than the one near the border. Tim said the mule deer populations have been decreasing over the last 10-15 years and they are not sure why. A study has begun and captured mule deer over the winter wrapping up a week ago. They have 30 collars out right now to see where the habitat is and find out if there is anything that can be done with forest management to improve the population numbers. Data shows Mule deer can handle snow and winters better than whitetail and they will continue to study to develop solutions.

10:00 AM **Adoption of Uniform Drafting Policy:** Present were Robin Benson, Josh Nemeth, John Blodgett and Alan Gerstenecker.

Robin told the commissioners she has been working on the county ordinances and wanted to make sure they are uniform and in a register. Robin said that two of her staff went through the commissioner minutes from 1893 to present and printed those containing ordinances. These were organized into groups depending on the department the ordinance pertained to then given to Deputy County Attorney Josh Nemeth to check legality.

A new process has been devised and templates and numbering system created for uniformity. Robin said the resolution before the board would adopt a process and policy for resolutions and ordinances moving forward. **MOTION** to pass Resolution 2018-01 by Commissioner Bennett. Second by Commissioner Cole. Commissioner Bennett said he would like to see new department heads trained. Commissioner Cole thank Robin and said this was a long time coming. Motion carried.

Robin next presented the commissioners with a resolution requiring a deed to be done anytime a property's legal description changes. She used the example that during a family transfer, a parent may give their kids a portion of property that get a deed. The issue becomes that the parents do not have a new deed made up showing this new legal description. Commissioner Cole tabled the adoption until next week.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were Charles Leighty, Alan Gerstenecker, John Blodgett, and Niki Meyer. Robin said Trego/Fortine/Stryker had no applications previously. This time they received one letter from Todd Swan to serve one of the three vacancies. **MOTION** by Commissioner Bennet to approve Tod Swan for the Trego/Fortine/Stryker FSA. Second by Commissioner Cole. Motion carried.

Charles Leighty was present to speak with the commissioners about his application. Charles said the process was not followed correctly and said it does not look good. Charles said he helped found the fire department and said no one has been put more time and effort into the department than him. He did say that he missed meetings due to a death in the family and fighting wildland fires. Charles said he is outspoken and possibly that could have led others not wanting him on the board any longer but he feels he is the most qualified person for the position. Commissioner Cole said he would like to send the issue back the board. Commissioner Bennett feels a letter needs to be sent and table the topic until then.

MOTION by Commissioner Bennett to approve the minutes of March 13, March 14 and March 19, 2018 as presented. Second by Commissioner Cole. Motion carried.

Darren Coldwell showed the Commissioners that the county is 75% through the budget year and expenditures are down. At the same point last year the county had spent \$13,514,821.12 and this year have only spent \$12,046,608.02, a savings of almost \$1.5 million. Commissioner Bennett said this just shows that hiring Darren as County Administrator was a good decision.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** Present were Alan Gerstenecker, George Booth, Tim Linahan, Mike Rooney, John Blodgett, and Niki Meyer

George Booth said he has been sandbagging at Pioneer Rd. but the ditch that provided area for water to go in has been filled in. He has contacted Marc McCully and he would like to see the ditch cleaned out. Commissioner Bennett said he will talk to Marc McCully when he gets back from his conference and will discuss cleaning the ditch and the culverts. Time Linehan and Mike Rooney presented a letter concerning selenium from Canadian mines and a draft resolution

11:00 AM: **Meeting Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mike Cole, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Chris Nelson, Deputy Clerk of the Board