

**March 7, 2018**

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on March 7, 2018, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, 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**.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were Montana House Rep. Mike Cuffe District 2, John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Robin informed the commission that she will need to create a new board roster for the Port Authority Board. Robin asked the commission to clarify at the next Port Board meeting, of the two new board members, who is appointed for the 2 year term and who is appointed for the 3 year term as advertised. Robin also asked the commission to remind the Port Board that all minutes are to be submitted to the Clerk and Recorder's Office.

Robin informed the commission that the Road Abandonment Petition was submitted by Steve Byington and has been filed in the Clerk and Recorder's Office. All signers were verified as county land owners. Robin asked who the viewers are that conducted a site visit. Commissioner Peck said he and Marc McCully are the viewers and McCully will submit a Viewers Report. Commissioner Peck said McCully will coordinate the day and time for the public hearing.

Robin presented the February 27 & 28, 2018 minutes to the commissioners for approval. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the minutes for February 27 & 28, 2018 as presented. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Cole commended Robin for her thoroughness, and Commissioner Bennett thanked Robin for getting the minutes to the commission early for review.

The Commissioners signed appreciation letters to the applicants that applied for the Port Authority Board, but were not selected.

The commissioners signed the MDOT Mileage Certification Form indicating Lincoln County road mileage is as follows:  
Off System-2340.285, Secondary/Urban System-75.224, Total 2415.510  
County road mileage is required to determine fuel tax allocations distributed to Montana counties.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** Present were Montana House Rep. Mike Cuffe District 2, Tina Oliphant, Brett McCully, John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

- Cuffe said he attended a recent conference and had discussion with legislators, including the Columbia River Basin Treaty Negotiator about the Columbia River Basin Treaty. Comments and support for Cuffe's proposal were a significant part of the discussion. Cuffe said he is still persistent pushing Lincoln County for compensation, but expressed that Article 13 that would allow Canada to divert water should be removed from the treaty. Cuffe stated there is no question selenium is a very serious issue and needs to be taken seriously and it should be addressed in the treaty.
- Commissioner Peck said he would like to meet with Mike Cuffe and Steve Gunderson on forest issues and projected state funding. Cuffe said he would like to be a part of that discussion.

11:00 AM **Port Authority Update:** Present were Montana House Rep. Mike Cuffe District 2, Wendy Drake, Tina Oliphant, Brett McCully, John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Tina said last week she discussed Opportunity Zones; each state is to come up with 25 census tracts to be selected by the governor's office. Census Tracts selected opens the door for investment monies. Tina said her intent is to go to the city for the city's census tract and move that boundary to include the Port Authority. If the application submitted by the county includes more than one tract, the county needs to prioritize because only one tract is selected. Tina said her focus is Port Authority and encouraged Commissioner Cole to have a qualified person in Eureka submit an application for that area.

11:15 AM **VOIP Contract and Discussion:** Present were Natalie Chiles representing Frontier Communications, IT Director Ernie Anderson, Wendy Drake, John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet. Also present via phone conference were Lon Williams representing Frontier Communications and Rick King and Mike Foreman representing MITEL.

Rick provided a web training presentation explaining the VOIP System and its features. It was noted the system would allow county phone numbers to be mobile when traveling to trainings and conferences and the system would be beneficial to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during fire season and other emergency situations.

Lon explained the primary servers would be placed at the courthouse and sheriff's department. Natalie said other small departments such as the Weed Department would have a stand-alone phone that will be tied into the main server which would significantly reduce costs. Natalie said the new 911 System can be integrated with the VOIP System, but does not need to be if that is the preference. Ernie presented a PPT presentation explaining the proposal cost break down switching to the VOIP System. Ernie submitted the Phone Replacement Project by Frontier to the commission for review.

Current county phone system cost is \$4,036/month

Frontier Proposal cost is \$1,410/month

Savings \$1,800 to \$2,000/month includes taxes and surcharges

Commissioner Peck commented that any major business or government agency has converted to the VOIP System. We need to take some of this monthly savings and put it into a capital improvement plan for future upgrades.

Ernie will provide information to the Commission to include how the VOIP System can be provided to Eureka departments.

*The **Phone Replacement Project by Frontier** and the **Frontier VOIP Phone System Proposal** are available in their entirety from the Clerk and Recorder's Office by calling 283-2301 or emailing [lcclerk@libby.org](mailto:lcclerk@libby.org)*

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

**2:00 PM Unite for Youth:** Present were Sheriff Roby Bowe, Vel Shaver, Maggie Anderson, John Blodgett and Alan Gerstenecker.

Maggie briefed the commission on the grant opportunities Unite for Youth is applying for. Maggie said she appreciates all the efforts going into the opioid crisis, but it is mostly reactive; we want to raise the importance of prevention. Commissioner Cole asked how we gauge success; there must be success based on statistics. Maggie commented on alcohol, and prescription drug use decrease in our youth, we are making progress by raising awareness and getting education into our communities and schools. Maggie noted the marijuana use among kids is going up. Maggie clarified that youth perception is that marijuana is used by 80% of kids when in reality marijuana use with kids is much lower. Maggie talked about the efforts going into raising awareness to parents and students during high risk times such as graduation celebrations. Awareness focuses on safety and consequences of providing alcohol to minors. Discussion centered on expectations and consequences not only on kids, but on parents and community leaders to collectively to be saying the same safe, healthy messaging to our kids. Maggie elaborated that there must be consequences to both kids and parents in order to change behavior. Maggie said alcohol is still the number one drug of choice in our community, although marijuana is on the rise. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to accept the application for the Drug Free Communities Grant. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried unanimously. The grant is for \$125,000 a year for the next 5 years.

**2:45 PM Meeting Adjourned**

## **LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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Mike Cole, Chairman

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