

April 17, 2019

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on April 17, 2019, in the Lincoln County Annex, Eureka, Montana. Present were Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Letcher, and Clerk and Recorder Robin Benson. Also present were Commissioner Peck, Libby via VisionNet and County Administrator Darren Coldwell via Skype. (Commissioner Peck left at 11:00am to attend another meeting in Kalispell).

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

9:30 AM Eureka Chamber of Commerce: Present were Tammy Lawler and Nikki Meyer. Also present were Alan Gerstenecker, and Wendy Drake, Libby via VisionNet.

Commissioner Letcher gave a brief history of the Eureka Chamber occupying a county building for many years with no official lease or agreement. Commissioner Letcher said he attended a Tobacco Valley Board of History meeting and was informed they currently administer the building except for the County Community Hall. Various organizations do use the building and some rent has been paid to the chamber, although the county is paying for electricity and water/sewer. Commissioner Letcher said this discussion is to determine agreement and responsibilities moving forward. Tammy said the chamber has had nothing to do with the building since 2016 and \$5800 in rent has been paid to the chamber. Commissioner Letcher said the chamber was administering the building at the time they were occupying it, but after the chamber moved out, some of that money maybe should have been paid to the county. Commissioner Letcher expressed he realizes the chamber is a 501(c)3 and does not want to create a financial burden for the chamber. Commissioner Peck suggested working out a deal for lifetime membership.

Tammy said she feels the chamber should pay at least the electric cost portion back to the county. Commissioner Letcher said he would ask Lincoln Electric for some specific numbers. Commissioner Bennett suggested to allow Commissioner Letcher and the Chamber to work this out and come back to the commission with a proposal for approval. Wendy said she could look up the Lincoln Electric bills. Commissioner Peck commented that he understands chamber finances and would not like to see putting it in a financial bind.

10:00 AM Bryan Donner/USFS: Present were Nikki Meyer. Also present were Alan Gerstenecker and Ben Kibbey, Libby via VisionNet.

Bryan Donner submitted the following agenda:

Lincoln County Commissioner's Meeting
April 17, 2019
Eureka, Montana



Updates from the Rexford/Fortine Ranger Districts:

- 1) Fire Season Update:
 - a. Seasonal firefighters are beginning to come back to work with a complete crew similar in size to previous years. The complete crew will be in place by June 1.
 - b. Some prescribed burning is hopefully being accomplished this week if we don't get too much rain. More sunny and warm days will be needed soon if we want to accomplish our desired program this spring.
 - c. Five firefighters are currently supporting Virginia National Forests operations and we have five Missoula Smokejumpers here this week to fill in.
- 2) Current planning projects:
 - a. Tenmile Sterling Fire Salvage Project – A Draft Environmental Assessment is being made available today with a 30 day comment period. A final decision is expected in August with the timber being sold before September 30.
 - b. Ten Lakes Travel Management Final EIS and draft Record of Decision is being prepared for release in early June. Cheryl Probert and I will be briefing the Regional Forester in Missoula this Friday.
 - c. Highway 93 Hazard Tree Removal Project – A scoping document will be sent out next week for a project to remove 40 – 60 trees along the east side of the highway between Murphy Lake and the Trego turn-off.
 - d. Abayance to Bridge Trail Construction Project is being put on hold to focus on higher priority projects that involve forest restoration.
- 3) West Kootenai Green Box Site relocation – Also put on hold and will be reassessing need to begin project in September.
- 4) Lake Koocanusa Scenic By-Way – also on hold.
- 5) Hired 11 YCC crewmembers from Lincoln County High School and 4 MCC crew leaders for this summer.
- 6) Timber Sales Update
 - a. Two of the three Caribou Salvage sales saw substantial amounts of volume removed this winter due to excellent winter logging conditions.
 - b. Eight large sales (>5MMBF) and 4 smaller sales are currently open in various stages of completion with 6 sales recently closed.
 - c. Preparation of a timber sale and restoration activities in the Gateway area along the border is waiting on joint Forest Service and Border Patrol funding for road reconstruction.

Bryan talked about fire preparedness for the upcoming fire season and said that at this time NW Montana is predicted to be the hotspot in Montana for this year's fire season.

Bryan said the trail project has been scoped and the forest service has received public comments to address concerns. The project has been delayed to work on more immediate fuels and vegetation work but will revisit the trail project in about 6 months. Bryan said a letter will go out to the commenters.

Bryan said he has met with Commissioner Letcher regarding the green box site; project is currently on hold. There is a potential new site to be investigated and the objective is to get everyone in favor of a new site.

Bryan commented the Scenic Byway Project between Libby and Eureka is also on hold but said as the trees grow the scenic value is diminished. Commissioner Bennett asked about the authority as either forest service designation or highway designation. Bryan said the forest service administers the scenic byway, but the project is coordinated with the highway department. Bryan said he would check on authority and get back to Commissioner Bennett with more

information. Commissioner Peck questioned if this project could be under Good Neighbor or a stewardship program. Bryan said he would check on that also.

Bryan discussed there are currently 8 large sales and 4 smaller sales; six of the larger sales are closed out. Commissioner Letcher asked about future sales. Bryan said sales are in Pinkham Meadows, Sunday Creek and there will be some salvage sales.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were Nikki Meyer. Also present were Alan Gerstenecker

- Commissioner Peck submitted a letter to Stan Christensen, EPA Region VIII Superfund Unit Chief regarding the Operational and Functional Start for Operable Units 4 and 7 Libby Asbestos Superfund Site. Commissioner Peck commented that it is important to put in writing our objections, so we are on the record. The letter states that justification for the determination in Mr. Christensen's March 12 letter is attributed to completion of the joint site inspection (JSI), and an assertion that "all agencies", including MDEQ, their contractors and Lincoln County are in agreement. Commissioner Peck expressed the JSI has not been completed. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the letter to Mr. Christensen as submitted. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Robin presented the minutes for April 10, 2019 for Commissioner approval. Robin said there were people in attendance during the 2:00pm meeting that were not included in the minutes, so she will add those names to the minutes. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to approve minutes with addition. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Darren said the Schedule A road list is currently being worked on but will take some more time to complete. Commissioner Letcher commented that he feels some of the Schedule A roads in Eureka may actually be Schedule B, but he will do more research to clarify.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** Present were Mike Cole, Alecia Davis and Nikki Meyer. Also present were Wendy Drake, Alan Gerstenecker and Ben Kibbey, Libby via VisionNet.

Nikki asked about the bleacher contract bids that were opened last week during the commissioner meeting. Darren said that since it is a grant, the Rodeo Association will accept the bid. Commissioner Bennett commented the county process still applies. Mike said 3 bids were received; bids were from Kootenai Sand and Gravel, Kooconusa Excavating and Glacier Excavating. Mike confirmed that low bid was from Glacier Excavating and they will receive the contract.

11:00 AM **Lincoln County Fair Board Update:** Present were Svea Jorgensen, Alecia Davis, Sharon LaBonty and Nikki Meyer. Also present were Alan Gerstenecker and Ben Kibbey, Libby via VisionNet.

Svea talked about the estimate for the youth building replacement saying that only one estimate was received out of Whitefish for \$44,565.00. Bid does not include wiring, insulation or a concrete slab. Contractor would be starting in May and would be completed by the fair dates this year. Svea said the fair received approximately \$22,000 from the insurance money, but there may be some local contributions. Svea asked if the commissioners were willing to contribute. Commissioner Bennett asked if Svea could confirm if the local funders are still on board. Svea said she feels the fair is short approximately \$16,000. Darren said the fair does have about \$27,000 in cash right now but does not know if that includes the insurance money. Darren asked Svea to call Wendy Drake to verify available fair operating cash.

Svea said the fair board met about goals/priorities and the first priority is to get the youth building complete. The second priority is the water/sewer system and infrastructure needs. Svea said the fair board is discussing some fundraising ideas. Sharon commented that rabbits are a big issue right now, but also said bathrooms, showers, signage at the buildings indicating what they are used for and she would like to see flowers back into the building. Commissioner Bennett talked about how maintenance for showers can be problematic and expensive to upkeep but may be manageable with the fair board overseeing it.

Commissioner Letcher said he has visited with Mike Fraser regarding water/sewer issues, but he is looking for old water/sewer plans at the fair property that were drawn up years ago but show where lines are located; starting over would be a huge undertaking.

Commissioner Bennett said it would be good for the commission to have a fair plan outlining short and long-term goals and priorities approved by the fair board, so that moving forward there is something in place.

1:30 PM **Planning Update / Canavan Split / Weyerhaeuser Split:** Present were County Planner Jake Mertes, Chris Nelson, Clyde Ross, Byron Sanderson, Brett McCully, Alan Gerstenecker and Ben Kibbey, Libby via VisionNet.

A. Basil Canavan Court Ordered Split: Jake said he is requesting any comment from the commission. The exemption review committee found no evidence to evade Montana Subdivision Platting Act. Jake said the planning staff recommends approval of the court ordered split. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve the A. Basil Canavan Court Ordered Split subject to planning staff recommendations and conditions. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.

Weyerhaeuser Agricultural Parcel Exemption Request: The exemption is intended to allow a landowner to create a parcel for gift, sale, or agreement to buy and sell, outside a platted subdivision without local review if the parcel will be

used only for the production of livestock or agricultural crops and no residential, commercial or industrial buildings, which require water or sewer, will be built on it.

Jake said the exemption review committee found no evidence to evade the Montana Subdivision Platting Act. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve Weyerhaeuser Agricultural Parcel Exemption Request subject to planning staff recommendation and conditions. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.

2:00 PM **MACo Insurance Update:** Present were Brad Salonen, Sharon Wilson, Kevin Peck and Alan Gerstenecker, Libby via VisionNet.

This meeting was posted incorrectly and is scheduled for May.

2:00 PM **Meeting Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mark Peck, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Robin A. Benson, Clerk of the Board