

July 10, 2019

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on July 10, 2019, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Letcher, Commissioner Peck, County Administrator Darren Coldwell and Clerk and Recorder Robin Benson.

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

9:00 AM **USFS Supervisors Office:** Present were Cheryl Probert, Jennifer Nelson, Ben Kibbey, Ray Stout and McKenzie Williams. Also present was Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Cheryl thanked and expressed appreciation to the commission for the welcome she received, support for the forest, and for their professionalism while she has been in Lincoln County.

Cheryl gave a brief overview of current and future forest service projects as follows:

Cheryl explained the rationale around the ESI being officially closed on Young Growth

Snow Shoe Road non-motorized use update

City Council easement on Flower Creek Dam update

Review of current timber sales on the Three Rivers District

Cheryl said she would like to see the forest service work with the county on a stewardship agreement for the Skidale area

The commissioners shared their appreciation for what Cheryl has done during her time in Lincoln County and for her communication and engagement with the county.

10:00 AM **Health Department Update:** Present were Kathi Hooper, Jennifer McCully, Jake Mertes, Dorey Rowland, Jennifer Nelson, Mark Decker, McKenzie Williams, Ben Kibbey, and Ray Stout. Also present was Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Kathi said she is advertising for the Environmental Health Specialist position and has contracted out to do some inspections to help get that caught up.

Kathi commented she would like to place signage in local areas that shows air quality and permitting requirement. Jake said there is money in the air quality grant for the signs.

Kathi informed the commission that she is trying to convert septic information/permits into the laserfiche software; current system is nonfunctional.

Kathi said she has a Master of Public Health Student reviewing refuse assessments and she is expecting to have a report by October.

Kathi said the Fortine green box site is going to be relocated next to the Trego/Fortine Fire Department. Signage is in place to inform residents.

Jennifer introduced Dorey Rowland as the 0-5 Initiative, Local Collaboration Coordinator. Dorey said she is working on building health and resilience to young children in our community and is engaging parents and family.

Jennifer said she is seeking approval for two grant contracts as follows:

- Renewable Immunization Action Program (IAP) Grant between Lincoln County Health Department and DPHHS. Purpose of the grant is to reduce the burden of vaccine preventable disease within Lincoln County by ensuring the oversight and provision of immunization services for children, adolescents, and adults. Grant award \$10,050.00.
- CDPHP Program Grant between Lincoln County Health Department and Flathead City/County Health Department to assist in providing Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program service to the residents of Lincoln County. This multi-county area consists of Flathead and Lincoln Counties. Grant award \$34,560.00

Motion by Commissioner Bennett to approve the grant contracts as presented. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer talked about available training for recognizing drug overdoses. County Nurse Trista Gilmore may be able to teach it along with her CPR/First Aid training classes.

Commissioner Peck talked about a property in the Chain of Lakes area. Kathi commented she has received complaints and the owner has been cited but lives out-of-town and does not accept certified mail from the county. Kathi said she will review the Community Decay Ordinance to determine what else can be done and will visit with the county attorney.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were McKenzie Williams, Ray Stout, and Ben Kibbey. Also present was Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

- Robin informed the commissioners that a position is vacant on the Upper Yaak FSA Board. Robin presented an application from Clinton Oster and a letter from the board requesting the commission to appoint. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to appoint Clinton Oster to fill the vacant position on the Upper Yaak FSA Board. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Robin presented the minutes for June 25 finance meeting and June 26, 2019 regular meeting for Commissioner approval. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Robin talked about a project she may be interested in doing in Lincoln County and is seeking Commissioner input. Robin said she read about another county that conducted a "50 in 50 Project", visiting 50 businesses in 50 weeks. The goal would be to learn about the business climate in Lincoln County from the business owner perspective.

Robin expressed that there could potentially be much to learn such as why choose Libby, positives and challenges, what types of businesses are growing, what types of business struggle, what can the county do to participate in and/or help economic development, etc...

Robin said she is hesitant because the project would be a yearlong time commitment, but still thinks it would be beneficial to learn directly from our own county business owners. Robin said if it is something the commission thinks would be a good project, she would like to place it on the agenda for further discussion. Commissioner Bennett said it would be a good collective source to hear from businesses across the county. Commissioner Peck expressed it would be very beneficial from a knowledge and relationship standpoint and feels business owners may appreciate the county interest. Darren suggested Robin visit with the city chambers for their input and/or participation. Robin said she would visit with the Chambers of Commerce and bring information back to the commission.

- Commissioner Letcher presented a lease agreement between Lincoln County and the Eureka School District; the lease agreement has been reviewed by the county attorney. The lease agreement is for use of a 20-acre parcel and is in effect for 20 years at \$500.00 per year. The county will pay the Eureka School District for premises to be used as a community sports complex by erecting and/or maintain appropriate and adequate facilities such as but not limited to an ice rink, soccer fields, tennis courts, jogging path, playground, access roads, parking area, gymnasium, pool, etc... **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve the lease agreement as submitted. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried unanimously.
- Commissioner Letcher presented a lease agreement between Lincoln County and the Eureka Sports League; the lease agreement has been reviewed by the county attorney. The lease agreement is for use of a 20-acre parcel and is in effect for 20 years at \$250.00 per year. The Eureka Sports League will pay the County for premises to be used as a community sports complex by erecting and/or maintain appropriate and adequate facilities such as but not limited to an ice rink, soccer fields, tennis courts, jogging path, playground, access roads, parking area, gymnasium. Pool, etc... **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the lease agreement as submitted. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Commissioner Letcher presented a lease agreement between Lincoln County and North 93 Services LLC; the lease agreement has been reviewed by the county attorney. North 93 Services LLC will use the premises for use as parking only. No decision was made; will be placed on next week's agenda.
- Commissioner Letcher commented that there are two Lincoln County positions on the Western Montana Area VI Agency on Aging. Commissioner Letcher is one county representative, and said JoAn Cuffe is interested in serving as the other county representative. Commissioners Bennett and Peck said JoAn would be a good member and appreciates her willingness to serve on the board.
- The Commissioners signed a letter of support for the USFS's Forest Legacy Program and its use in Lincoln County to conserve privately managed forestland and to increase access for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities, specifically the second phase of the Kootenai Forestlands Conservation Project. Stimson Land and Lumber Company's private timber ownership in Lincoln County provides economic, community-oriented, and ecological benefits.
- Darren requested commissioner approval for the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services grant in the amount of \$59,548. Darren said it is a 50/50 match grant, so Lincoln County is required to contribute a cost match in the amount of \$59,548 or 50% of the total approved project cost of \$119,096. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the Disaster Emergency Grant as presented. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Darren submitted the Service Provider Designation for Commissioner approval, designating state approved Chemical Dependency Service Providers to receive earmarked alcohol tax monies and/or state approval for the provision of chemical dependency treatment and prevention services in the county in accordance with 53-24-206 MCA. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the Chemical Dependency Service Provider(s) for the county. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Commissioner Bennett commented that he was questioned by a person recently about forest service roads, Schedule A roads and where the county is regarding maintenance. All names have been compiled that live off of forest service roads. During August there will be information sent out and a public hearing will be held. The budget still needs to be finalized and consideration given that Lincoln County did receive SRS monies.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** There were no public comments.

11:00 AM **Planning Department:** There were no items on the agenda for Planning.

11:15 AM **Rodeo Grounds Update:** Present were McKenzie Williams and Ben Kibbey. Also present were Mike Cole and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Mike said he sent pictures of the project to Darren but would like to take the commissioners on a walk-thru next Wednesday. Skyboxes will be set by this Monday. Mike said there were some problems but they were able to overcome those obstacles. Mike commented there will be improved plumbing, wiring, better infrastructure for many years. Mike informed the commission that the project is a little behind schedule, but still moving forward. Mike said the bid contractor is moving away because he had some bigger projects that came up, but the 2nd bidder will be completing the work; its been a smooth transition. Mike anticipated the hillside section to be completed by rodeo time.

11:30 AM **Hank LaSala Discussion of Troy Area Dispatch:** Present were Hank LaSala, John Righter, Bill Boss, Sheriff Darren Short, Kirk Kraft, Ben Fisher, Kimberly Mole, Meghan O'Brien, Jim Ward, Dennis Dupuis, Roger Gilligan, Katie Davis, Ray Stout, Ben Kibbey and McKenzie Williams.

Hank introduced himself and gave a brief history of the county boards he has served on and his years of engagement with the county to dissolve the Troy Dispatch District.

Hank talked about the Troy Dispatch services, how its paid and by whom, and the delay time in critical emergencies by transfer from Troy Dispatch to the Lincoln County Sheriff Department Dispatch.

Hank provided the statutes on Dissolution of Special District 7-11-1029 MCA, stating the commission can pass a resolution of intent to dissolve the Troy Dispatch District. Hank went through the statutes and explained how the process is to be conducted according to law.

Commissioner Peck commented about the former county attorney's ruling, and explained the sticky point is the cooperative agreement.

Darren Coldwell commented that in the cooperative agreement the commission does not have authority to dissolve the district, maybe if the city is in agreement. Darren expressed the importance of the vote for the district was 70% in favor.

Hank said what we are talking about at this time are these two documents (statutes for dissolution and the interlocal agreement).

Commissioner Peck expressed that his first concern is that in this day and age having citizens put on hold and transferred is completely unacceptable with the technology that is available; that we need to fix. As far as dissolution, its not as cut and dried as being presented, but that's not to say we don't pursue it. Commissioner Peck said he would like to look at consolidation; taxpayers are paying for 3 separate systems in Lincoln County. Flathead County dispatch has the technology to dispatch all of Lincoln County, not that we go there, the point is we are not providing the best service at the best cost to the citizens. The biggest issue at this time is the emergency call transfer.

Hank clarified that we are talking about the dissolution of Troy dispatch district, not the office, or their services.

Bill said he is required to pay for two dispatches and a transfer takes place. We should pay once for that service and get the best service.

Hank said he has run the calculations and the numbers of city property owners vs. cost to fund dispatch would be approximately \$300 per property to fund it as it is today. Hank said that is up to the people it serves.

Kim said the Troy dispatch does not benefit the people who live in the Troy/County District. We should not have to pay for it. Troy city residents can fund it, it does not benefit us. Kim expressed that there is a liability because of the delay of service.

Commissioner Peck talked about the dispatch system and 911 technology. We need to look at the entire way we are doing business to fix this and provide the best service, by taking the time to consider all options and make it a much better service and more cost effective. Commissioner Peck expressed that he believes we can lower the cost for everyone; we are all paying too much for dispatch services in Lincoln County. Commissioner Peck suggested putting together a committee including the City of Troy. Commissioner Peck stated we cannot rush right in and push it upsetting everyone. We have any opportunity to fix this, to put together a group of people from city, county and emergency services to figure this out, but we do need to fix right away the call transfer problem.

There was a brief conversation about rerouting calls and how the separate systems work.

Hank said he would like to see a commissioner vote right now to move forward with a resolution of intent as per the statute allowing for the public comment process. Hank explained the resolution process, timeline, and stressed it would be a resolution of intent, not actual dissolution allowing people who own property and pay taxes to comment. Not dissolving the local agreement.

Bill expressed agreement with Commissioner Peck to take 6 months and put together a group of intelligent people and figure out a way we can all work on this to get the best service and cost for everyone.

Commissioner Bennett stated that good government takes on new technologies and adapts for today. Commissioner Bennett expressed there is a willingness here to work on this, but we will not be backed in a corner to make quick decisions.

The commission agreed they are committed to diligently work on this over the current fiscal year.

Commissioner Peck said he is willing to give 6 to 8 months to figure this out and reassess; in 30 days to have a group of about 7 or 8 people that do not come in with an agenda. If in 6 to 8 months there is no progress, he is willing to look at the statutes. Commissioner Peck commented that he understands Hank's frustration; Hank has been working on this for several years and commended all his efforts and research he has put into this. Commissioner Peck said the committee will be expected to be laser focused on governance and fairness to everyone. Commissioner Peck expressed that he believes the dispatch service can be cheaper and better.

Hank thanked the commission for their time.

12:30 PM Meeting Adjourned
LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mark Peck, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Robin A. Benson, Clerk of the Board