

July 14, 2021

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on July 14, 2021 in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Letcher, County Administrator Patrick McFadden and Clerk & Recorder Robin Benson.

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

9:30 AM **Glen Lake Irrigation District (GLID) / Lincoln County Health Department ARPA Project:** Present were Tara Letcher, Kathi Hooper, Sheriff Darren Short, Brett McCully, Kenny Rayome Jr., and Derrick Perkins. Present via phone was Ray Stout. Present via VisionNet were Nikki Meyer, Mike Fraser, Joe Purdy, and Pamela Munroe.

Glen Lake Irrigation District:

- Commissioner Letcher opened the meeting and introduced Joe to talk about a proposed ARPA fund project for the Glen Lake Irrigation District and the Lincoln County Health Department. Joe discussed an upgrade and amendment to the GLID transport system. Through engineering analysis, there are obstructions in the canal. The grant request is to resize the culverts at crossings for improved delivery system. The grant would be through GLID and Joe asked if the county could support that through matching requirements. The proposal is to get water to the reservoir to control water taken out of streams to help keep a steady flow into the reservoir.
Total project cost is \$480,000
County Match in manpower, equipment and construction would be \$160,000.
The biggest constraint is spring breakup, and Joe suggested the best time for the project is next fall when the engineering is complete.
Commissioner Bennett commented that once the budget is done, the commissioners will be looking at the ARPA funds and project requests.

Lincoln County Solid Waste and Recycling:

- **Landfill Expansion:** Kathi said she is applying for the ARPA competitive grant for the landfill expansion project. Kathi said it was estimated the current landfill had 9.7 years current life, but the volume increase is at 30% and this seems to be our new volume. Kathi said landfill expansions do qualify for the grant. The expansion project is planned for two phases and phase 1 will establish another 10 years and phase 2 will establish an additional 20 years for the Libby landfill. Kathi said she has been working with Mike Fraser and she is requesting a 1 to 1 match with ARPA funds.
Commissioner Bennett asked if there are any other funds available. Kathi said she does have 1.6 million in cell development funds and mentioned potential loans and to review refuse assessments.
Mike talked about the importance of the landfill expansion and forward thinking especially with the increase in volume coming to the landfill.
- **Air Curtain Burner:** Kathi said the burner allows for burning without a permit because of low emissions. The purchase cost is a \$130,000 ARPA fund project. Kathi is requesting approval to go out to bid for equipment. Kathi said she would be grateful for a portion from ARPA funds and mentioned there is an equipment replacement fund.

10:00 AM **Health Department Update:** Present were Kathi Hooper, Jennifer McCully, Senator Mike Cuffe, Brent Teske, Derrick Perkins, Kenny Rayome Jr., and Tara Letcher. Present via phone were Mike Fraser and Ray Stout. Present via VisionNet were Nikki Meyer, Joe Purdy, and Pamela Munroe.

Environmental Health:

- **Sanitarian/Planner Increase:** Kathi said she is requesting approval for an increase for the sanitarian, county planner position. Requesting increase from Grade 17 to a Grade 20 based on the job duties have increased, increased DEQ requirements, conducting supervision in various programs, updated job description, and based on the current Land Specialist/GIS Tech wage. Planning fees and septic permit revenues have increased 83%. Kathi explained that part of the wages is paid from the air quality grant and that grant remains consistent. Kathi talked about state requirements and ongoing education required from the state.
Commissioner Bennett talked briefly about the difference in educating employees paid by the county and bringing an employee in from outside where the training is mostly complete and not paid by the county.
Kathi explained there was training involved through the state not paid by the county. Request taken under advisement.

Public Health:

- Jennifer is requesting a pay increase for the Zero to Five Coordinator from a Grade 12 to a Grade 14. Public Health has hired additional people through her grants written by the coordinator and the position has taken on more of a supervisory role. Position is paid through a grant. Request taken under advisement.
- **Congregate Living Coordinator:** Jennifer is requesting to hire a Congregate Living Coordinator that is paid for 2-years through a DPHHS grant. The congregate living coordinator will be focusing on nursing homes, jail, assisted living groups and other congregated type living spaces in Lincoln County.
Commissioner Bennett commented about allowing for positions as funding is available through grants, but adjustments when funding may end. Commissioner Letcher requested a job description outlining further what the position entails.
OU3 Messaging: Jennifer asked for input regarding if commissioners are open to hire Jeff Peterson to talk about messaging regarding fire and OU3.
Commissioner Bennett talked about how the position needs to be well defined and expressed concerns with cost overruns.

Jennifer explained the position would be looking at EPA studies, what is the public health messaging in case of fire, and consideration as to the level of communication and information with the public.

Brent commented that as we go along right now, EPA has to look at the messaging, forest service has to look at it also, then you have the approval process prior to sending the message out to the public. This position would provide a coordinated, more efficient and expedited process. Request taken under advisement.

- Eureka Phone: Jennifer said they are being billed for a phone line that is not working with Interbel. Cost is \$1200 per year and nobody uses it. Jennifer said she wanted to get Commissioner Letchers approval prior to eliminating the phone line.

Commissioner Letcher said if the phone line is of no use, there is no purpose to keep it.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were Senator Mike Cuffe, Brent Teske, Derrick Perkins, Kenny Rayome Jr., and Tara Letcher. Present via phone were Mike Fraser and Ray Stout. Present via VisionNet were Nikki Meyer, Joe Purdy, and Pamela Munroe.

- Robin submitted the minutes for July 7, 2021 regular meeting for approval. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve minutes as submitted. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.
- Robin requested a wage increase from Grade 8 to Grade 9 for the County Addressing Position. Robin commented that absorbing the addressing position in the Clerk & Recorder's Office saved the county extensively by not replacing the former position with a new employee. Address requests have more than doubled and addressing fees now go into the general fund instead of the planning department. Request taken under advisement.
- Commissioner Letcher read Resolution 2021-22 Emergency Resolution Prohibiting Open Burning Stage II in its entirety. The commissioners talked about the restrictions and that Lincoln County is experiencing high and extreme fire danger due to abnormal dry conditions for this time of the year.
Brent talked about the factors going into stage II, science and coordination with other fire managers within the region including other counties that have collectively agreed to moving into State II Fire Restrictions. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to pass Resolution 2021-22 as submitted. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.
Commissioner Bennett talked about Code Red and its effectiveness, and how it works alerting and getting information out to the public; a great feature the county provides.
- Robin submitted Resolution 2021-20 to set Superintendent of Schools Base Salary. Robin commented there was a name error on page 1 and will make that correction. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve Resolution 2021-20 Superintendent of Schools Base Salary with correction. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** County Planner Jake Mertes, Tony Penfold, Lydia Duff, Senator Cuffe, Tara Letcher, Kenny Rayome Jr., Sheriff Darren Short, Brent Teske, Jeff Forster, and Derrick Perkins.

Senator Cuffe wanted to extend an invitation to the commissioners to attend the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region Summit on August 15-19 in Big Sky. Mike said he would be honored if a commissioner would be able to attend. Mike gave an overview of the agenda, speakers and topics that affect counties.

Senator Cuffe also informed the commissioners that he is on the water projects/agriculture commission for ARPA funds.

11:00 AM **Route 56 RV Park Public Hearing:** Present were County Planner Jake Mertes, Brett McCully, Andy Evensen, Tony Penfold, Lydia Duff, Tara Letcher, Kenny Rayome Jr., Sheriff Darren Short, Tara Letcher, Jeff Forster, and Derrick Perkins.

Route 56 RV Park is located off MT Highway 56 North of Bull Lake. The project proposal contains 5.3 acres. Property owners/developers propose creating a 20-space seasonal recreational vehicle park and shower facilities. Four dry tent sites are proposed as well. Jake gave an overview of the Findings of Fact during the review process and 18 conditions. The Planning Board recommendation is to grant preliminary approval to Route 56 RV Park, subject to conditions and based on the findings in the staff report. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve Route 56 RV Park based on the planning staff recommendation and subject to 18 conditions. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried. Andy commented that DEQ approval is pending but comments have been minor and easily acknowledged.

11:30 PM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jerry Bennett, Chairman

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