

May 24, 2017

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on May 24, 2017, 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**.

10:00 AM **Kootenai Pets for Life (KPFL)**: Present were Judy Hyslop, Eileen Carney, Bobbi McCause, Edwina Smith, Tammy White, Connie Holthaus, Cory Cromer, Kathi Hooper, and Alan Gerstenecker.

Judy introduced herself and other staff members of Kootenai Pets for Life. Judy gave a brief history of KPFL that was started in 2001 to provide a no kill shelter for the stray and abandoned pet population of the Libby/Troy area. KPFL is a non-profit, all volunteer animal shelter. KPFL has adopted out over 3,200 pets since 2001 and has facilitated the spay and neuter of almost 7,464 pets. The feral cat program has spayed or neutered over 650 feral or stray cats since 2011 and is funded by a Sands Foundation grant. KPFL has microchipped over 530 pets by end of 2016. In 2016, there were 162 cats spayed or neutered. Judy said KPFL receives \$3,800 annually from the county and explained all those funds are spent on spay/neuter expenses. Judy said she realizes budgets are tight, but expressed appreciation for the support and is hopeful the county will continue supporting KPFL. The commission expressed their appreciation to KPFL volunteers for their hard work and diligence to help the county animal population and public education.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues**: Present were

- The Commissioners read the minutes for of May 9 and 10, 2017. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve minutes as submitted. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried unanimously.
- Darren said the department budgets are being submitted and he is meeting with department supervisors.
- Darren informed the commission that a lease agreement with FVCC should be completed soon and he will be meeting with the City Council to discuss back taxes/fees owed.

10:45 AM **Ray Orsborne Presentation**: Present were Alan Gerstenecker and John Blodgett.

Ray stated that he is a retired combat soldier and is here to discuss water damage to the basement of his home on Parmenter Creek Road. Ray feels that 2 culverts that have been plugged on the county road is the cause of the flooding and he has an attorney out of Great Falls ready to take on his case. Commissioner Bennett commented that if the culverts are the cause of the flooding and they are unplugged then the issue would become worse. Ray said he is aware the county declared a disaster is looking for financial assistance. Commissioner Peck clarified that the State of Emergency declared was not FEMA, but county only. Ray stated that his father did find water below basement level during construction to their property. Commissioner Bennett said he has talked with the county insurance and a claim number has been assigned. Commissioner Bennett explained the county cannot just issue a check and that there will need to be hydrology studies to prove county involvement or liability. Ray said he could not afford repairs and asked the commission for guidance on what he should do. Commissioner Cole explained that it is his property to do what he feels needs to be done.

11:00 AM **Public Comment Time**: There were no comments.

11:15 AM **Port Authority/Tina Oliphant Concerning BSTF Project**: Present were Alan Gerstenecker, John Blodgett and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Tina is requesting a letter from the commission requesting a Contract Amendment; MT-BSTF-1-10-01F, Equipment Purchases in the Kootenai Business Park, formerly Stinger Welding, Inc. granting a one (1) year extension. Tina said initially the funding was for only Stinger Welding to employ 96 people for at least 2 years at county average wage. After the closure of Stinger Welding, Inc., the grant criteria opened up to account for any job on the Port Authority Site. There is still \$172,000 owed and only 75 jobs have been created that meet the criteria outlined in the BSTF grant. Tina feels that more jobs will be created over the next year which will bring down the amount owed. Commissioner Bennett asked if the Port Authority was capable of paying the full amount owed. Tina answered yes. Darren commented that there is \$172,000 lingering as well as approximately \$340,000 taxes due on the Stinger building and another \$340,000 (approx.) on the LIV Golf Carts grant. Darren questioned how and when will there be an end to all of this. Commissioner Peck expressed his concern that equals around ¾ million long term liability looming in owed money and that he is not at all comfortable with that from a budgeting standpoint. Robin asked if the Port Authority is obligated to pay back the \$172,000 and the back taxes owed on the Stinger building. Tina said she does not know about "obligated", but the Port Authority Board does feel it is their responsibility to pay back the questioned amounts owed and not the county. The Commissioners agreed that the issues facing the county was not any person's fault and we all had high hopes for Stingers success and contribution to the economy, but now we are all dealing with its closure and the issues resulting from litigation. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to grant a one year extension as requested, conditional that this is the last extension that will be approved. Second by Commissioner Peck. Motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Peck commented that he wanted to be clear that this is the last time he would vote in favor of an extension. Commissioner Peck requested a meeting set up with representatives from the Port Authority Board, Tina Oliphant, Darren Coldwell and the Commissioners for further discussion.

1:00 PM **Presentation of data collected from County Survey**: Present were Wendy Drake, Dallas Bowe, Alan Gerstenecker, John Blodgett, and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Darren showed a PowerPoint presentation reflecting the results of the public survey reflecting county services and demographics in Lincoln County. The highest rated level of services were Parks and Recreation, Law Enforcement and Emergency services. The highest rated courthouse services were Treasurer, Motor Vehicle and Clerk and Recorder's Offices. Sheriff's Office and Road Maintenance were rated as the most important services. Statistics of the surveys showed that citizens were willing to pay more taxes to maintain or improve road maintenance, emergency services, snow

removal and sheriff protection but not for junk vehicle removal, weed control, or recreational parks. Statistics showed that citizens were more supportive of a user fee as a method to finance services vs. special property tax. Sheriff's Department, Motor Vehicle and Clerk and Recorder's Offices were rated highest in effectiveness. Road Maintenance, Industry Recruitment, Law Enforcement and higher paying jobs was rates the top 4 issues Lincoln County should address in the next year. All recreational services in Lincoln County were rated excellent or good. *The survey results in its entirety can be obtained from the Clerk and Recorder's Office.*

2:00 PM **Callahan Creek Update: Meeting Canceled.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mike Cole, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Robin Benson, Clerk of the Board