

**May 31, 2023**

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on May 31, 2023, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Letcher, Commissioner Hammons, Administrative Assistant Jennifer Brown and Clerk & Recorder Corrina Brown.

Meeting allows for teleconferencing and VisionNet availability. Present online were Rebecca Nelson-Reporter Tobacco Valley Newspaper, Scott Shindledecker-Reporter Western News, Ray Stout-Reporter Kootenai Valley Record, Chanel Geer, Ruth Dresser Economic Development Specialist for Governor's Office, EMA Tom Lane, Sheriff Darren Short, Director of Planning Jesse Haag.

Commissioner Letcher opened the meeting with the **Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer**.

09:45 AM **Lincoln County Updates / Economic Development Specialist Ruth Dresser**: Present was Veronica Bovee-Anderson.

Ruth Dresser Economic Development Specialist requested updates regarding Economic Development going on in Lincoln County. Ruth advised they have completed the legislative session and will kick off a 56 County Tour soon. Commissioner Teske advised Nomad, a company based out of Flathead County purchased a building adjacent to the Lincoln County Port Authority and has expanded manufacturing operation. Commissioner Teske advised they are continuing to renovate the building and are currently up and running with a couple projects. Commissioner Teske advised LCPA has a couple prospective purchasers of property; chip plant / industrial type pallets facility as well as a local construction company are looking to purchase a portion of the port and move their construction business and develop some commercial properties as well. Commissioner Hammons advised The Sleeping Indian of Troy is a clothing manufacturer looking to grow their product line, they currently employ 7-8 and seek a new building to accommodate expansion to the product line. Commissioner Teske advised the Town Pump in Troy is expanding their facility and employees. Commissioner Letcher advised Tobacco Valley Industrial Depot provides facilities for new businesses to get established in the Eureka area. Commissioner Letcher stated they have several properties nearby that are for sale yet they are off the beaten path and highway 37 is in rough condition. Commissioner Letcher commented manufacturing/delivery is impeded due to highway 37 condition impacting inter-county commerce and development. Commissioner Letcher advised they have almost 5,000 acres of irrigatable land within the Glenn Lake Irrigation District runs the irrigation canals and systems feeding farms and they have bonded acres making it an agriculture center for farm land. Commissioner Letcher commented they welcome any sustainability ideas or grant information the Governor's office may be aware of. Ruth asked the specific issues with Highway 37. Commissioner Letcher advised the road base has held up well for over 40 years, yet the surface has deteriorated in recent years. Commissioner Teske requested Ruth email the commissioner regarding specifics.

10:15 AM **KDID Spillway Construction Update**: Present were Veronica Bovee-Anderson, Anthony Yoo General Council WR Grace, Tony Penfold WR Grace and Nick Raines WR Grace.

Anthony clarified his organization brings regulatory, DHS to the mix, focusing on environmental health and is here to get a sense of the community. Nick estimates completion 3-5-year period. Nick advised they are hosting a public meeting *Tuesday June 6<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm Ponderosa Room* with updates from the County Health Department, EPA and Forest Service management, and WR Grace along with DNRC on the spillway development. Nick displayed a video showing current progress as of the 18<sup>th</sup> of May with the last slab poured on this upper portion. Nick advised the bid for the lower half will be put out for the next construction season and jobs are advertised locally. Nick advised of 188,000 man-hours without a single recordable incident. Commissioner Teske questioned the reopening of roads. Tony advised they are clearing Rainy Creek Road of any encroaching trees. Nick advised TCI is finishing up the gates and working with Forest Service regarding road access and signage.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes / Kootenai Business Park Grant / Schedule A Road Agreement**: Present was Veronica Bovee-Anderson.

- Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown submitted the minutes of May 24, 2023, regular meeting for approval. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve minutes of May 24, 2023. Second by Commissioner Teske. No public comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Teske advised Kootenai Business Park MAG grant will fund the sewer portion of the new road and utility access into the Park and they are still working on engineering. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve ARPA MAG grant for Lincoln County sewer Improvements in the Kootenai Business Park and sign the contracts with DNRC and 3BD Services. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Commissioner Hammons advised Tina Oliphant will manage the administration of the grant. No public comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Teske reviewed Road Project Agreement between USDA, Forest Service, Kootenai National Forest and Lincoln County, RAC funding of Flower Creek Road Paving with two agreements of \$57,501 and \$87,580. **Motion** to approve Road Agreement between USDA, Forest Service, Kootenai National Forest and Lincoln county for the Flower Creek Road pavement agreements by Commissioner Teske. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Teske advised NRD consulted to WR Grace some time ago regarding recreational opportunity projects in the area. Commissioner Teske asked for guidelines, definitions or examples projects. Commissioner Teske advised tomorrow afternoon they have a zoom the commissioners can attend at 1 pm.

- Commissioner Letcher advised he met with the District Ranger of the Forest Service on starting over the snow vehicle travel plan in the Eureka area involving closing off additional areas.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** Present was Veronica Bovee-Anderson.

No public comment. Commissioner Teske advised they have received little to no public comment on the speed zone study of highway 37. Veronica will send another letter from the HOA.

11:00 AM **Eureka Dispatch Upgrades Decision:** Present were Donna Smith Eureka Dispatch, Sheriff Darren Short and Undersheriff Brent, EMA Tom Lane, and Gary Huntsberger Rotary Club.

Donna with Eureka Dispatch advised as of July of last year her board members have been bringing in upgrades and is seeking financial help to refresh 911 approximately \$150k, along with a few incidentals; upgrade battery backups of phones, computers and a generator. Donna advised in 20 years they have been within budget yet they don't have the means for this upgrade. Commissioner Teske asked what the refresh entails. Donna advised computer software for 911 with some newer mapping technology. Donna advised their vendor Lumen is quick to assist with issues. Commissioner Teske asked who Libby Dispatch uses. Undersheriff Brent Faulkner advised they use Solacom which includes host remote operations thus allowing Troy and Eureka to operate as hosts to a main server and avoid buying three separate identical systems. Sheriff Darrin Short advised the biggest cost for E911 is equipment not software as they recommend upgrading every five years and software is updated on a contract basis. Brent advised maintenance in Eureka and Troy have not been done in many years and should be a budget item. Commissioner Teske advised there is a need for communications between the dispatch centers. Donna confirmed they are doing this. Brent advised the refresh is always going to be a bit cheaper. Brent advised of they look at the entire county prior to putting out an RFP with 3 responses. Brent advised of no guarantee of the host remote is the best way to go technology-wise. Commissioner Letcher questioned the host remote having to have a connection. Darrin advised if the connection breaks they are currently set to run independently. Commissioner Teske advised this needs a permanent, consistent fix rather than revisiting it every five years. Donna questioned what to do in the meantime. Commissioner Letcher questioned the timeline to review the RFP. Brent advised they would need a study on both Troy and Eureka sites to bring in a system. Commissioner Teske clarified Eureka Dispatch is looking at a new surveillance system and battery backup for the entire server room whereas the building power is on the generator. Commissioner Teske questioned the bid for the generator being spec'd at the correct KW. Donna advised NW Electric consulted with Brent Holder on the generator specs. EMA Tom Lane advised the Homeland Security Grant would be a fit for this request. Donna and Tom confirmed they will work together on a grant. Brent advised they are working on getting a system that will accommodate all three dispatch centers and it's under review with Brian of 3<sup>rd</sup> Signal. Commissioner Teske advised long term financial funding should be in place as these upgrades are known. Brent will get back with the commissioners and Donna after the quotes are reviewed.

11:30 AM **Agricultural Exemption Review - Grady:** Present were Director of Planning Jesse Haag and Kristin Smith.

Kristin Smith KMR Consulting advised they received a request from Phillip Grady regarding a property on the Idaho border to create two additional 5-acre agricultural timbered, steep parcels exempt from subdivision review. Kristin advised the subdivision regulations have a number of criteria to determine the intent of this application. Jesse advised the intent of this law is truly for agricultural purposes. The Planning Department is recommending denying this requested use of this agricultural exemption citing II-D-3.c.ii.iv. Commissioner Teske read the regulations; the land owner must layout the intended use of this property. **Motion** to deny the use of Agricultural Exemption request by Phillip Grady by Commissioner Hammons. Second by Commissioner Teske. Commissioner Teske advised they did not put an effort into defining the use of the land. No public comments. Motion carried.

12:00 PM **Break**

01:30 PM **Planning: Budget Meeting – Sheriff's Office**

Present were Lincoln County Undersheriff Brent Faulkner, Sheriff Darrin Short and Director of Finance Wendy Drake.

Director of Finance Wendy Drake presented the Sheriff's Office budget. Undersheriff Brent Faulkner advised EBMS insurance increase of \$75,000. Brent advised the increase in labor puts the Sheriff's Office on the proper pay scale. Commissioner Letcher questioned the Youth Detention. Brent advised Sandpoint charges a lot, however, Missoula may reimburse up to \$10,000. Commissioner Letcher inquired of the Machinery & Equipment budget. Brent advised they have been unable to take delivery of two vehicles in the current budget period as availability has been pushed back to next budget year. Wendy commented the allocated cash may be put in a CIP. Sheriff Darrin Short advised forfeiture expenditures far exceed revenues. Brent advised GIS expenditures were covered with an addressing grant. Commissioner Hammons questioned the total increase of over 1.5mil since 2019. Brent advised vehicle expenses are way more now than a couple years ago and insurance has gone through the roof. Brent advised the number of employees is the same.

02:33 PM **Adjourn**

**LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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Josh Letcher, Chairman

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board