

September 13, 2023

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on September 13, 2023, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Letcher, Commissioner Hammons, Administrative Assistant Jennifer Brown and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Meeting allows for Zoom participation. Present online were Rebecca Nelson Reporter-Tobacco Valley News, Cody Jensen, Donna Martin, Chanel Geer, Scott Shindledecker Reporter-Western News, Alaena Woody, Bree Adamson, Ryan Stang, Cindy Ruth, Alyssa Ramirez, Randy Wilson and Darren Short.

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

10:00 AM Planning – Final Plat Elk Estates & Hubbard Subdivision: Present were Jesse Haag, Thomas Sibson, Brian Berreman and Ray Stout Reporter-Kootenai Valley Record.

Jesse Haag Planning Director recommended approval of the final plat for Elk Camp Estates subdivision having met specified conditions. Jesse stated it is located across Highway 37 from the Town of Rexford. **Motion** to approve Elk Camp Estates final plat per Planning staff recommendations by Commissioner Teske. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried

Jesse Haag Planning Director reviewed the final plat of Hubbard Subdivision located west of Eureka north of Highway 37 near the airport. Jesse advised planning staff recommends approval having met conditions. **Motion** to approve final plat for Hubbard subdivision by Commissioner Hammons. Second by Commissioner Teske. No comments. Motion carried.

10:30 AM Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes/ FS Road Project Agreement: Present were Brian Berreman and Ray Stout Reporter-Kootenai Valley Record.

- Minutes of September 5, 2023, budget meeting for approval. Commissioner Hammons recused himself, as he was not in attendance for the September 5th nor 6th meetings. **Motion** to approve the September 5, 2023 minutes by Commissioner Teske. Second by Commission Letcher. No comments. Motion carried.
- Minutes of September 6, 2023, regular meeting for approval. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve the September 6, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Second by Commissioner Letcher. No comments. Motion carried.
- US Forest Service Road Project Agreement with Lincoln County: Lincoln County Roads Paving, Chip Seals and Mastication per Schedule A with USFS reimbursing the County not to exceed \$60,000. **Motion** to approve the contract agreement between Lincoln County and USFS for work on schedule A roads by commissioner Hammons. Second by Commissioner Teske. No comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Letcher presented a request for a property tax abatement and briefed on non-profit entity status and property tax legislative history. The Episcopal Church in Eureka did not get their non-profit status updated at that time. Property taxes in 2016=just over \$200/year, 2018=\$3,311 2019=\$2,279.44 2020=\$2,464.71 and 2021=\$229.44 due to proper paperwork filing. They are asking to abate the eligible unpaid portion of 2018, 2019 and 2020 taxes. Commissioner Letcher advised the Commissioners vote on it, if approved it will go to the Treasurer's Office who later sends it on to Department of Revenue and from there it will return to the Commissioners to process. Commissioner Teske confirmed their tax status was corrected in 2021. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve the tax abatement for the Episcopal Church in Eureka for 2018, 2019 and 2020. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Letcher advised the soccer field at the Eureka Sports Park was used last Saturday where about 500 people turned out for the first game.

10:45 AM Public Comment Time: Present were Brian Berreman and Ray Stout Reporter-Kootenai Valley Record.

No public comment

11:00 AM Lincoln County Chemical Dependency Discussion: Present were Ray Stout Reporter-Kootenai Valley Record, Jay Sheffield, Marcia Boris, Deb Burrell, Darren Short, Mavis Vaillancourt, Matt Cuffe, Kathleen Sheffield, Bree Adamson and Vanessa Williamson.

Vanessa Williamson Probation Officer advocated to bring in a chemical dependency center from Kalispell to alleviate supervision issues. Vanessa mentioned Flathead Valley Chemical Dependency Center was acquired by Gateway and Many Rivers now owns it, offering only tele-health services. Vanessa emphasized the importance of adhering to state statutes regarding levels of addiction counseling and the requirement for treatment at a licensed facility. Vanessa introduced Oxytocin LLC, which has received state approval to operate out of Lincoln County and is asking to provide a MOU and offer a temporary workspace until they are more established. Vanessa would like to see Oxytocin LLC get 100% of the alcohol tax, which includes individuals who can't afford treatment. Commissioner Teske clarified that the County would not be providing funding for this service and will review the current alcohol tax designees. Vanessa mentioned that the office next to hers, which was intended for behavioral health, is currently available due to state restructuring of the crisis grant. Commissioner Teske expressed willingness to provide the space as long as an effective MOU is in place and there is no cost to the County. Vanessa agreed to put together the MOU.

11:15 AM **Planning – North Star Landing Preliminary Plat Extension Request:** Present were Jesse Haag and Kristin Smith. Commissioner Letcher advised an individual on Zoom requests to record this meeting and the County Attorney will look into the statutes regarding that request.

Jesse Haag Planning Director reviewed history of the North Star Landing subdivision. Jesse advised Planning staff recommends approval of the requested 2-year extension with preliminary approval to expire on July 12, 2025. This approval would contain the same requirements of the previous extension, which required submission of an annual progress report including copies of all correspondence with DNRC and DEQ. As the likelihood of changes to the impacts reviewed under Section 76-3-608(3)(a) increase with time, it may be prudent to consider making this a stated final extension as an additional 2 years could push the project out 8 years post-review of the preliminary plat application. Submission of a new application at that time would allow an opportunity for the governing body to review and mitigate any newly identified impacts to the statutory review criteria which includes such things as effects on local services, and public health and safety. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons per planning staff recommendation to approve the request of a 2-year final extension of the North Star Landing with preliminary approval to expire on July 12, 2025. Second by Commissioner Teske. Cindy Ruth corrected a stated error that Larry Stewart with North Star has received a water right and noted that has at least three objections filed and is not final. Jesse confirmed that according to DNRC the permit had been issued but there was a period where people could object to it. Commissioner Letcher confirmed that is part of the process. No further comment. Motion carried.

11:31 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Josh Letcher, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board