

January 3, 2024

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on January 3, 2024, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Hammons, Commissioner Letcher, Administrative Assistant Jennifer Brown and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Meeting allows for Zoom participation. Present online were Darren Short, Jesse Haag, Rebecca Nelson, Ray Stout, Michelle Byrd and Chanel Geer. Commissioner Letcher opened the meeting with the **Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer**.

09:30 AM **Proclamation -National Human Trafficking Month:** Present were Veronica Bovee-Anderson and Kathleen Sheffield.

Commissioner Teske read the National Human Trafficking proclamation. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve the January 2024 proclamation as National Human Trafficking Month. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Kathleen Sheffield Lincoln County Victim Witness Advocate emphasized the importance of addressing human trafficking as well as stalking and provided posters for distribution. No further comments. Motion carried.

09:45 AM **Annual Resolutions: 2024-01 Establishing Regular Meeting Dates & Elect Presiding Officer / Resolution 2024-02 Establishing a Location for Posting Public Notice / 2024-03 Establishing 2024 Holidays, Mileage and Meal Rates:** Present was Veronica Bovee-Anderson.

- Commissioner Letcher read Resolution 2024-01 establishing regular meeting dates and a presiding officer. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve Resolution 2024 -01 as submitted. Second by Commissioner Teske. Commissioner Teske congratulated Commissioner Letcher, presiding officer for 2024. No further comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Teske read Resolution 2024-02 establishing a location for posting public notice. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve Resolution 2024-02 as read. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Hammons read Resolution 2024-03 establishing 2024 holidays, mileage and meal rates. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve Resolution 2024-03 as presented. Second by Commissioner Teske. No additional comments. Motion carried.

10:00 AM **USFS:** Present were Chad Benson, Heidi McRoberts, Veronica Bovee-Anderson, Scott Shindledecker, Jerry Regh, Sylvia Maffit, Gerald Wallace and Brian Berreman.

Chad Benson from the USFS introduced a revised method for calculating and managing BORZ (Bears Outside Recovery Zone). The implementation of this method hinges on entering a newly formed project area. They gave deference to a couple of hundred thousand more acres, proposing to use BORZ metrics when initiating a project in that area. Essentially, the aim is to maintain the current bear presence while considering road infrastructure. The approach dictates that when entering a project area, roads cannot be added without a corresponding removal elsewhere. For instance, if an area has 100 miles of road upon entering a project, it will have the same amount or less upon completion. Chad explained that this amendment stemmed from reman work for the court for Ripley They utilize these metrics to refine the biological assessment for the FWS. Chad outlined the projects scheduled for 2024: Ripley, East Fork Fire, Castle Edna, Glen Sinclair, Snowshoe Granite, OU3 Jackson (now known as Mitchell Jackson), Norman McCedar, and Tuscor. There was discussion about Trojan Defense being on track for 2025, alongside Knotty Pine and Black Ram. Chad estimated approximately 50 million acres of timber harvest this year, involving a significant amount of local contracting. Heidi McRoberts from the USFS mentioned that Montana DNRC (Department of Natural Resources and Conservation) has two active good neighbor agreements in the Kootenai, with contracts totaling \$3.8 million. Last year, these agreements resulted in five completed timber sales, amounting to nearly \$2 million. Heidi stated restoration efforts combined generated \$765,000. The Snowshoe trail was discussed as a collaborative effort, with a planned push to advance this project. Chad provided updates on enhancements to Lake Kooconusa’s recreation facilities on the northern end.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes / Board Appointments / Resolution 2024-4 Intent for Annexation-Bull Lake Rural Fire District:** Present were Veronica Bovee-Anderson, Scott Shindledecker, Jerry Regh, Sylvia Maffit, Gerald Wallace and Brian Berreman.

- Review of regular meeting minutes for approval: **Motion** to approve the December 13, 2023, minutes by Commissioner Teske. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Commissioner Teske requested clarification stating PILT funded the Fisher River Valley Fire Service Area fire engine loan payoff. No further comments. Motion carried.
- Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown presented board applicants as follows:

<i>McCormick Fire District (1):</i> No applicants	<i>LC Weed Board (1):</i> no applicants
<i>EM Kayan Water & Sewer District (2):</i> John Verbeke and Cathleen Broers per board term recommendation	<i>LC Planning Board (3):</i> John Damon and Earnest Anderson
<i>Eureka Cemetery District (2):</i> Leigh Erickson and Wendy Eaton	<i>Tobacco Valley Industrial District (5):</i> LeeAnn Shermerhorn
<i>LC Fair Board (5):</i> Daniel Williams, Svea Jorgensen, Twila Webb, Steve Eckels and Linda Ralph	<i>Tax Appeal Board (1):</i> Laura Schrader. add Feleisha Storkson per board recommendation, as alternate
<i>Troy Lake Creek TV District (2):</i> Deanise Killingsworth and Karen Helmrick	

Motion to approve the board appointments as presented and per board recommendations by Commissioner Teske. Second by Commission Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.

- Commissioner Letcher read Resolution 2024-04 Intent for Annexation of Cabinet Vista Subdivision into Bull Lake Rural Fire District. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve Resolution 2024-04. Second by Commissioner Teske. Commissioner Teske reviewed the location and conditions, emphasizing the public hearing will take place on January 31, 2024. No further comments. Motion carried. Gerald stated the board has the ISO letter showing the reduced rating and following the public hearing, it will be sent.

- Commissioner Teske advised the Oxytocin MOU is currently with the county attorney and noted that they've secured a local facility, necessitating a modification to that clause prior to consideration at the next meeting.
- Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown mentioned the ongoing necessity of GIS work for addressing and 911 purposes. She presented a proposed contract renewal with Outlaw GIS on an hourly, as-needed basis while the county initiates in-house GIS. Commissioner Teske expressed a desire to include a severability clause in the contract, allowing both parties an option to terminate the agreement at any time, a modified contract will be presented.
- Commissioner Teske read the public hearing notice for establishing 2024 days/hours of operation for county offices to be held January 31, 2024, at the courthouse.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** Present were Veronica Bovee-Anderson, Scott Shindledecker, Jerry Regh, Sylvia Maffit, Gerald Wallace and Brian Berreman. No public comment.

11:00 AM **Williams Ag Exempt Application:** Present were Brian Berreman and Jesse Haag. Planning Director Jesse Haag advised this application to split a 70-acre property near Rexford was withdrawn yesterday.

11:15 AM **Victim/Witness Advocate Grant Request:** Present were Scott Shindledecker and Brian Berreman.

Kathleen Sheffield, Lincoln County Victim Witness Advocate, sought permission to apply for the 2024/26 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant. Kathleen highlighted that her office currently manages over 220 open cases in Lincoln County by providing assistance to victims, witnesses, survivors of violent crimes, and underserved populations. She intends to apply for the maximum grant award of \$250,000. Her objectives encompass recruiting and retaining volunteers for the program, establishing a transportation system for victims of rape and undertaking educational initiatives to empower the citizens of Lincoln County. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve moving forward with the Victim Witness Advocate grant application. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.

11:30 AM **School Equalization Payment 3rd Tax Bill Discussion Re: 95 Mills:** Present were Scott Shindledecker, Brian Berreman, Sedaris Carlberg and Suzy Rios.

Commissioner Letcher discussed the 3rd tax bill concerning the School Equalization payment regarding the 95 mills. He advised counties received guidance from MACo, recommending sending out a 3rd tax bill due to the Montana Supreme Court's clarification. This 3rd tax bill addresses the difference between the department-calculated 77.9 mills and the 95 mills requested by the state. MACo suggests including a letter with the tax bills explaining the situation to recipients. Lincoln County Treasurer Sedaris Carlberg advised this evaluation will not be fun and most county treasurers statewide prefer to execute this in February or March, opting to re-bill for the 2nd half, due at the end of May. Sedaris will review with the commissioners the letter MACo recommends including with the tax notice. School Superintendent Suzy Rios advised OPI requests the 95 mills approval be signed as an amendment to the budget, even if it was approved under protest. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve, under protest, the revised school equalization 95 mills to include the letter as recommended by Montana Association of Counties be sent along with the revised tax bill. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No further comments. Motion carried.

12:00 PM **Break**

01:30 PM **Planning Department-Public Hearing: Shelley Subsequent Minor / South Sider Final Plat / Snowy Valley Final Plat / Indian Springs Ranch Phases 3 & 4 Final Plat / Cernick Preliminary Plat:** Present were Jesse Haag, Kristin Smith, Byron Sanderson and Calen Williamson. Commissioner Hammons was excused.

* Kristin Smith reviewed Shelley subdivision application. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to grant preliminary approval to Shelley Subdivision subject to the fifteen conditions and based on the findings of the staff report. Second by Commissioner Letcher. Byron questioned the road construction need to be signed off on by a licensed engineer. Kristin added this required condition. Commissioner Teske amended his motion to sixteen conditions. No further comments. Motion carried.

* Kristin presented Cernick subdivision application. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to grant preliminary approval to Cernick subdivision with fifteen conditions based on findings in the staff report. Second by Commissioner Letcher. The discussion on road structure resulted in Commissioner agreement to modify condition one to include a turnout. No comments. Motion carried.

* Jesse Haag Planning Director presented South Sider subdivision. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve South Slider Subdivision final plan. Second by Commissioner Letcher. No comments. Motion carried.

* Jesse presented Snowy Valley subdivision. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve Snowy Valley subdivision final Plat. Second by Commissioner Letcher. No comments. Motion carried.

* Jesse reviewed Indian Springs Ranch Phase 3 subdivision. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve Indian Springs Ranch Phase 3 final plat. Second by Commissioner Letcher. No comments. Motion carried.

* Jesse presented Indian Springs Ranch Phase 4 subdivision. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve Indian Springs Ranch Phase 4 final plat. Second by Commissioner Letcher. Discussion of storm water easement. No further comments. Motion carried.

02:10 PM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Josh Letcher, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board