

February 15, 2024

The Lincoln County Compensation Committee convened on February 15, 2024, at the Lincoln County Courthouse in Room 108, 512 California Ave, Libby, Montana.

11:00 AM **Attendees included:** Veronica Bovee-Anderson, JoAn Cuffe, Tricia Brooks, Marcia Boris, Jay Sheffield, Jennifer Brown, Brent Faulkner, Darren Short, Dallas Bowe, Brent Teske, Jim Hammons, Josh Letcher and Corrina Brown.

The Compensation Committee discussed various aspects, focusing on the issue of deputies' salaries being tied to elected officials' pay by statute and the challenge of providing a wage increase that accommodates all employees. Concern was expressed of Lincoln County's wages falling behind if elected officials declined pay raises. Brent Faulkner presented data comparing wages and benefits for sworn deputies in the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office over the last and upcoming fiscal years, including longevity considerations. He noted health insurance opt-outs and two retired long-term deputies were included in the efforts to find a balanced solution. The overall county budget concerns were raised and taxpayer pushback acknowledged. It was agreed county pay is equitable with the local service industry yet paid health insurance is still a perk. There was a recognition of the need for state legislation to assist counties financially. Additionally, concerns were voiced about the lack of industrial growth and the impact of lost industry on the county. Dallas noted anticipated increases in workers' compensation, health insurance, and retirement costs in the upcoming budget year. Discussion ensued regarding a proposed 1.5% to 3.5% wage increase, with JoAn supporting the lower end and Veronica leaning towards the higher end. Ultimately, the consensus was to pursue a 1.5% increase. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to increase elected official salaries by 1.5%. Second by Commissioner Teske. No further comments. Motion carried.

11:29 AM **Adjourned**

Josh Letcher, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board