

**June 6, 2018**

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on June 6, 2018, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Peck, County Administrator Darren Coldwell and Clerk and Recorder Robin Benson. Commissioner Cole was absent.

Commissioner Peck opened the meeting with the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were Under Sheriff Brian Griffeth, Thomas Hill, Jim Swanson, George Wood, Ken Preston, Sindy Filler, Scott Kessel, John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker, and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Darren submitted the annual Hospital Provider Agreement between Kalispell Regional Medical Center, Inc. and Lincoln County to the commissioners for approval. The county represents patients admitted to the hospital under the conditions of an "Emergency Detention" and negotiates fees for medical services provided for under Montana state law. **Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the **Hospital Provider Agreement** as submitted. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried.

Sindy submitted the DUI Task Force Annual Plan for FY 18/19 for commission review. Sindy explained that the DUI Task Force prepares an annual plan to be submitted to the state and the plan requires commissioner approval. Sindy pointed out that it can be difficult to get current data at the state level and some numbers are old numbers, but the Lincoln County data is current information. The report states that "in spite of the small population, Lincoln County continues to be on the top 5 counties in Montana where alcohol and drugs were a factor in fatal and serious injury crashes". There was a total of 205 DUI cases filed in 2016 and 146 in 2017 throughout Lincoln County. Sindy informed the commission the drug driving or drug/alcohol is increasing; not just marijuana, but other dangerous drugs including prescription drugs is increasing in our county. Commissioner Peck expressed his frustration regarding the prescription drug issue in our country.

Sindy mentioned that one concerning fact is Lincoln County people are driving very drunk; the average blood alcohol level for the past two years has been double the legal limit but for some months it has been as high as more than 4X the legal limit.

The DUI Task Force in partnership with local and state agencies, plan to more actively participate in prevention, education and enforcement activities in the 2018/2019 fiscal year. Students are involved, bringing this conversation to the dinner table for discussion in the home.

Sindy said the enforcement part is a goal; to help law enforcement agencies with cameras and other equipment.

Commissioner Peck said it would be interesting to know of the DUI offenders, how many left bar establishments vs. leaving home, private parties or recreational outings. Commissioner Peck commented that he feels the owners of local bars/taverns are not tolerating drunkenness and are refusing continued drinking in their establishments. Commissioner Peck asked about providing options for people to get home after drinking; is there a more positive approach to rewarding responsible types of behavior. Sindy said the task force did provide a bus during logger days, but it was not used much. Chief Kessel said that we need to do more to promote it.

Commissioner Bennett commented that we are always attempting to treat instead of focusing on the problem; kids need to know they have support. The more we can instill in kids to take on responsibility, strength, and courage, and to actually target kids and grow them up stronger with a healthier vision for their life.

**Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the **DUI Task Force Annual Plan** as submitted, recognizing the FY 18/19 budget to be set at \$30,100. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried.

***The DUI Task Force Annual Plan can be obtained in its entirety from the Clerk and Recorder's Office.***

Robin presented the minutes for May 23 regular meeting and May 29, finance meeting to the commission for approval.

**Motion** by Commissioner Bennett to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried.

Commissioner Bennett mentioned he will be traveling to Butte next week to speak at an event regarding I-186.

Commissioner Bennett said he will talk about the perils/detriment I-186 will have on the mining industry in our country.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** Present were Thomas Hill, Jim Swanson, George Wood, Ken Preston, Brian Griffeth, Alan Gerstenecker, Ruthanne Dolezal, Tiffany Nixon, and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Ken spoke about the Happy's Inn, Chain of Lakes area regarding a lack of communication at times when phone service is lost during storms. Ken said that in the Happy's Inn area, the residents are used to losing power, but the problem is with the phone system; sometimes the phone system works, sometimes not. Ken said the phone system needs some major work and he has lived in the same place for 12 years and every year he is told the same thing, "in two years we should have a cell tower". There was a brief discussion about a tower, leasing the tower, receivers and improvement options. Ken expressed frustration, saying it seems the conversation is studied to death without solving any problems. Ken is asking if the commissioners can assist, at least help promote a united effort.

Commissioner Peck said he recently talked with Jeremy Holm of Montana Sky and he would be very interested in sitting down for discussion. Commissioner Peck said he will help facilitate the meeting and get the right people sitting at the table. Tom commented there are opportunities for grants for this type of thing, but it starts with a government agency. Commissioner Peck said that from an emergency services standpoint, this needs to be acknowledged and dealt with.

11:00 AM **Kootenai Valley Christian School:** Present were Ruthanne Dolezal, Tiffany Nixon, John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Ruthanne, discussed the efforts for new playground equipment at the Kootenai Valley Christian School (KVCS).

Ruthanne commented the playground at KVCS is used by the neighborhood children, not just for the school kids and improved play equipment is a draw for the whole community. Ruthanne said the school is looking at the bigger picture



than just the needs for the KVCS. There has been a lot of fundraising efforts by the KVCS; there is currently \$41,012 raised. Tiffany said funding has come from many different ways including individuals, grants and community organizations. The minimum amount for the grant has been met, but there is one grant per region and there is at least one other competitor in our region, so it's unknown at this moment if the grant has been awarded to KVCS. Tiffany shared 3 playground project proposals, depending on if the grant is received. The goal is to max out the grant, and the install date is scheduled for the second week in August; equipment will be based on total funds received. Ruthanne commented this is an opportunity for the community to invest. Currently KVCS is a little under \$9,000 to max out the grant.

The commissioners agreed to look at their park and economic development funds before committing to a dollar amount. Commissioner Peck suggested KVCS to visit with the Libby Park Board. Robin commented that Flathead Electric Round Up for Safety Grant Program has donated to Libby for playground equipment and may be a good funding resource.

**11:30 PM Misdemeanor Probation Officer Discussion:** Present were County Attorney Marcia Boris, Undersheriff Brian Griffeth, JP Jay Sheffield, John Blodgett, Alan Gerstenecker and Nikki Meyer, Eureka via VisionNet.

Darren explained he is seeking direction from the commissioners. Commissioner Peck expressed his support. Commissioner Bennett commented that we need to try to quantify what the savings will be, realizing it may take several years to get those numbers. Jay reminded the commission that the misdemeanor probation officer position is a mandatory component in the application for the treatment court; we need this position to be in place. Jay said not having jail cost, housing and medical care in itself will be a savings in addition to helping with the overcrowding in the detention facility. Darren informed everyone that we will need to send the policy to MACo for approval. Marcia said we want this in place to hire someone beginning new fiscal year. Commissioner Bennett said that we can approve this, but in 3 to 4 years, if we do not have a way to see how it benefits the county, we will not want to continue the program. Commissioner Peck suggested an annual review, but historically this position is cost effective. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to approve the Misdemeanor Probation Officer position to be reviewed annually for effectiveness and presented to the commissioners. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried. The position and budget will fall under the Justice of the Peace. Jay expressed it will be successful and feels there will be no issues with MACo because the policy follows state standards.

**1:00 PM EMA Update:** Present were EMA Director Brent Teske, and Alan Gerstenecker.

Brent presented the May EMA Update as follows:

5/2 Hazmat incident at Happy's Inn; Hazmat personnel came in from Kalispell

5/3 Corps of Engineers Flood Team annual inspection

5/8 Lincoln County Safety Committee Meeting-stockpiling N95 masks for fire season, key access for Clerk of Court, installing a metal detector for the courtroom

5/14-16 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Montana Threat Assessment Conference in Bozeman, put on by the FBI

5/17 Lincoln County Safety Audit; MACo Emelia McEwan was impressed with the safety committee efforts

5/18 Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Application for equipment has been completed and sent in

5/21 Black Butte Generator maintenance/service; back up and running

5/30 NW Montana Zone Wildland Fire Workshop in Kalispell

Calls for service: minimal flooding, sand and bags delivered to Burnt Dutch in the Yaak and West Kootenai Fire Hall  
Motor Vehicle Accident on Lake Creek Road (pickup in Falls Creek), no spill, assisted MHP with traffic

**1:30 PM Planning Department: Cancelled**

**2:00 PM Lincoln County Library Update:** Library Director Alyssa Ramirez, Chuck Gerheim and Marilyn McDougall.. Alyssa submitted at a glance fact sheet for commission review. Last year there were 68,217 checkouts, 38,523 titles and 5,182 registered patrons.

Crates: 16,442 outgoing items; 14,819 incoming items; equal sharing between Kalispell and Lincoln County libraries.

At the library there were 62,673 visits, 14,957 computer and wireless use, 22,648 reference questions answered, 253 programs offered with 3,830 people in attendance.

Staff has changed from 9 full time equivalent employees in 2002 to 5.5 full time equivalent employees currently. There is a lot of movement for less than 6 full time staff employees.

Alyssa talked about the planned programs for all ages being offered to the communities and explained the *Implications for Museums & Libraries Program* and how she wants to move the library forward. Libraries fill the gap, helping needs in the workforce. Alyssa said her goal moving forward is looking at collaboration, expressing that the library is not just about books, its being in the community, providing programs, assisting the workforce, being technology minded, being more diverse with innovative learning programs, and being engaged in community connectivity programs.

The commissioners commended Alyssa for her skills and professionalism that is being brought to the Lincoln County libraries under her leadership.

**2:30 PM Meeting Adjourned**

## LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Mark Peck, Acting Chairman

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Robin A. Benson, Clerk of the Board