

December 18, 2024

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on December 18, 2024, in the Lincoln County Annex, Eureka, Montana. Present were Commissioner Letcher, Commissioner Hammons, Commissioner Teske and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: Administrative Assistant Jennifer Brown, Boyd White, Chanel Geer, Crystal Denton, Dallas Bowe, Darren Short, David Harper, Jesse Haag, Joe Gibbs, Kathleen Sheffield, Feleisha Storkson, Maggie Anderson, Mike Bradeen, Ray Stout, Robert Soppe and Sage Harper.

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

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes / Board Appointments / Annual Safety Committee Report / SPP Weed Management Plan Approval / Engineering Services RFQ Selection / Eureka Dune Runner Lease Renewal**: Present were Noel Duram and Traci Street.

- Minutes of December 11, 2024, for approval: **Motion** to approve the December 11, 2024, minutes by Commissioner Teske. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
- Clerk & Recorder, Corrina Brown, presented the following county boards openings and applicants.
 - Port Authority (2 vacancies): 3 applicants – Tony Petrusha (re-applied), Troy Douthit, and Chris Bache. The Board recommends reappointing Tony Petrusha and adding Chris Bache. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve the board's recommendation to reappoint Tony Petrusha and add Chris Bache. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
 - Board of Health (1 vacancy): 1 applicant – Jan Ivers (re-applied). **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to reappoint Jan Ivers to the Board of Health. Second by Commissioner Teske. No comments. Motion carried.
 - Weed Board (3 vacancies): No timely applicants.
 - EM Kayan W&S District (3 vacancies): 7 applicants – Mary Ann Arnold, Cathleen Broers, and Robert Soppe (re-applied), David Harper, Joseph Gibbs, Sage Harper, and Ed Croucher. The Board recommends reappointing Mary Ann Arnold, Cathleen Broers, and Robert Soppe. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve the board recommendation and reappoint Mary Ann Arnold, Cathleen Broers and Robert Soppe. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Sage commented that with seven applications, interviews would benefit their community. Robert Soppe introduced Angelica Pankey, Board Chair, who read a letter expressing their reasoning for supporting the continued service of existing board members. Sage mentioned one board applicant is an electrical engineer, which would benefit the water district and noted that no interviews were conducted. Commissioner Teske pointed out that, traditionally, the commission supports board's recommendation, as they work with the people and are familiar with the operations. No further comments. Motion carried.
 - Wilderness Plateau W&S District (3 vacancies): 3 applicants – Dave Helmrick, Peggy Smith and Jackson Garrison (re-applied). The Board voted to approve Dave Helmrick, Peggy Smith and Jackson Garrison. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve Dave Helmrick, Peggy Smith and Jackson Garrison to the Wilderness Plateau Water & Sewer District. Second by Commissioner Teske. No comments. Motion carried.
 - Eureka Cemetery (1 vacancy): 1 applicant – Pam Pluid (re-applied). **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to reappoint Pam Pluid to the Eureka Cemetery board. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
 - Tax Appeal Board (1 vacancy): 1 applicant – Tillie Butts (re-applied). Board Secretary, Jennifer Brown, passed on appreciation for Tillies' contributions to the board. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to reappoint Tillie Butts to the Tax Appeal Board. Second by Commissioner Teske. No comments. Motion carried.
 - Troy Lake Creek TV District (2 vacancies): 2 applicants – Michael Giesey and Ted Dodson (re-applied). The Board voted unanimously to accept both candidates to continue on their board. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to reappoint Michael Giesey and Ted Dodson to the Troy TV District board. Second by Commissioner Teske. No comments. Motion carried.
 - Fair Board (3 vacancies): 1 applicant – Wes D'Aponti (re-applied). **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to reappoint Wes D'Aponti as a Fair board member. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried. Discussion of a late applicant from Troy with two remaining vacancies.
 - Planning Board (4 vacancies): 4 applicants – Scott Mattheis, Jim Gibson, and Veronica Bovee-Anderson (re-applied), Roberta McCanse applied. Jesse Haag advised the planning board voted to approve all four applicants. **Motion** to approve the four applicants as recommended by the planning board by Commissioner Teske. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
- Safety committee member Corrina Brown presented the 2024 Safety Incentive Program report, which resulted in 151 participation gift cards totaling \$7,163, paid out of the safety budget. Commissioner Teske noted that the safety program has been successful in reducing claims, resulting in refunds from the Montana State Fund. He also mentioned a recent security screening of the courthouse, which will lead to security enhancements.
- SPP Montana LLC Noxious Weed Management Plan 2024 approval: Mike Bradeen advised that the Weed Board approved the plan for Southern Pines Plantation and requested commissioner approval. There was a discussion regarding the significance of this being a substantial landowner and the importance of the plan's impact on a large area. **Motion** to approve the Southern Pines Plantation Noxious Weed Management Plan for 2024 by Commissioner Hammons. Second by Commissioner Teske. No comments. Motion carried.

- Engineering services RFQ selection: Commissioner Letcher stated qualifications were received from Foley Engineering and Evensen Engineering. He noted Evensen Engineering has local representation available for needed assistance and a lot of history within the communities. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to move forward with Evenson Engineering and Consulting, Inc as the county engineer. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Commissioner Teske stated a discussion of fee will follow. No further comments. Motion carried.
- Eureka Dune Runner Lease Renewal: Commissioner Letcher noted a corner of county property near the Road Department on Airport Road is leased to the Eureka Dune Runners. He advised they host multiple annual mud bogs and other events bringing people to the community and presented a request to extend the lease agreement until December 31, 2034, with updated insurance requirements. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to renew the ten-year, simple lease with Eureka Dune Runners. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Teske noted that the current county coroner, Steve Schnackenberg, had previously submitted a letter of resignation along with a recommendation of Robert Craig Riddle for a new county coroner. He advised this position must be filled before December 31, 2024. **Motion** by Commissioner Teske to approve Robert Craig Riddle as the new Lincoln County Coroner until he can be duly elected. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Teske noted ongoing discussion regarding how to disperse the alcohol tax between Oxytocin and Unite for Youth. It was agreed to carry this over to the next meeting.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time – Non-Agenda Items:** Present were Noel Duram and Traci Street. none

11:00 AM **EMA Update – Boyd White:** Present were Noel Duram and Traci Street.

Boyd White, EMA, provided the following update to the commission. The Pinkham Tower project is complete and a timely fix to the Pinkham generator vent was successful. The Black Butte project is also complete and functioning well; however, Crown Castle is unwilling to end the contract early, though the Highway Patrol may use the antennas from Crown Castle. He noted that the update to a thermal electric generator at the Marston site was completed and is working well. MT Department of Transportation has requested access due to new plowing responsibilities and a contract will follow. The mountaintop budget will see a loss of \$13,000 annually with MT Sky pulling out of Blue Mountain and King as of January 1, 2025. The IPAWS alerting program is moving forward, with final certification scheduled for this Monday, followed by training. The hazard mitigation plan is currently under review by FEMA. He advised the AED program, through the safety committee, grant has not been funded this year and Stryker is seeking alternative grants to meet our needs. A work group has been established to address community needs during power outages, with a follow-up meeting scheduled for January 22nd, 2025. He emphasized the importance of considering community members with health concerns and limited mobility during these outages. Boyd also mentioned the safety evaluation at the courthouse and the emergency response plan, which has been distributed for department-specific feedback. He noted this goes along with the departmental emergency evacuation plan. He highlighted the November Western Region DES workshop, where the local disaster manual and management plan were discussed. Discussion on the importance of training employees and law enforcement through a 'train-the-trainer' model to help train the community, benefiting both employees and the entire county. A discussion followed regarding follow-up on security measure recommendations and implementation progress.

*Commissioner Teske noted this was Commissioner Letcher’s last meeting and presented a card and plaque in appreciation of his service as a Lincoln County Commissioner.

11:19 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Josh Letcher, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board