

February 5, 2025

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on February 5, 2025, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Duram, Commissioner Hammons, Administrative Assistant Jennifer Brown and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: Chanel Geer, Crystal Denton, Dallas Bowe, Jenny Ressler, Jesse Haag, Ray Stout, Scott Shindledecker, Sean Leahy and Traci Street.

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

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. Resolution 2025-09 Opposing Legislation Limiting or Prohibiting Montana Association of Counties Lobbying on Behalf of its Members:** Present were Brian Berreman and Paul Coon.

- Minutes of January 29, 2025, for approval: **Motion** to approve January 29, 2025, meeting minutes by Commissioner Hammons. Second by Commissioner Duram. Correction by Commissioner Duram that the flagpole at the Eureka Annex was donated by Flying Freedom Forward. No public comments. Motion carried.
- Resolution 2025-09 opposing legislation limiting or prohibiting Montana Association of Counties (MACo) lobbying on behalf of its members: Commissioner Teske cited proposed legislation that would prevent local governments from using public funds to lobby the state. He expressed concern that this would hinder representation, as it is impractical for all local officials to attend or remotely testify to every issue. He advised MACo, which advocates for both cities and counties, is key in gathering opinions and advancing local interests. He mentioned that MACo has asked for a resolution opposing such legislation. Commissioner Duram read resolution 2025-09. **Motion** to approve resolution 2025-09 by Commissioner Hammons. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion that proposed legislation would impact counties, cities and other organizations like forest advocacy groups and would be detrimental to transparency and representation, where MACo is well-versed in the numerous bills under consideration and that this resolution was reviewed by legal counsel. No public comments. Motion carried.
- Commissioner Teske noted a DocuSign request for a construction and maintenance agreement for Pinkham Creek, known as the Homestead Drive bridge. Commissioner Duram advised that the county road department submitted three bridge projects, with this one being selected for funding, mostly by the state, to replace the bridge. **Motion** to enter the contract with the state on the construction of a bridge on Homestead Drive by Commissioner Duram. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time – Non-Agenda Items:** Present were Brandon Haugen, Brian Berreman, Les Nelson and Paul Coon.

Les Nelson, a county resident of 35 years living at Parmenter Hill, expressed concerns about a recent increase in primarily residential development, which has led to a significant rise in traffic. He pointed out that Parmenter Creek Road is not designed to accommodate this volume of traffic, citing steep grades, sharp turns, the lack of centerlines, a roadway that is only 16 feet wide at best, no developed shoulders and just one speed limit sign on the hill. He also raised concerns about traffic safety, noting that there is only one egress, which has been impacted by mudslides and ice jams that disrupt access. He inquired about the possibility of creating an additional egress leading out to Woodway Park. Commissioner Teske mentioned that discussions had taken place regarding a road coming out at the bottom of Ski Dale and suggested Les follow up with EMA Boyd White to explore potential projects.

Brandon Haugen, Chair of the Lincoln County Junior Fair, requested an additional storage building as the current building at J. Neils Park is full. Commissioner Teske suggested they discuss this further after the meeting.

11:00 AM **Lincoln County Animal Shelter Discussion:** Present were Brandon Haugen, Brian Berreman, Christina Boothman, Dustin Webb, Julie Hopfer, Kathi Hooper, Toni Crace, Paul Coon and Zach Sherbo.

Commissioner Teske advised the Libby City Council declined the request that they donate roughly an acre of land at the animal shelter site and the county has explored and identified a county location. He advised Kootenai Pets For Life (KPFL) contract terminates February 28th. Dustin Webb, Environmental Health, presented an updated shelter operations proposal. Commissioner Teske noted it was once cost-effective to contract this shelter out, however that is no longer so. He stated the proposal is to put the animal shelter under county control, using county property and employees for long term management. Commissioner Hammons agreed, stating that contracting has no guarantee and pricing is subjective. Commissioner Duram pointed out there is a countywide animal issue. Discussion of seeking grant opportunities, donations and other funding. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons for the proposal of the county taking over the animal shelter, hiring two employees. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of partnering for donations, specifically with KPFL to spay and neuter, across the county. Public comment on the motion; Julie Hopfer advised she started KPFL in 2001 and is not opposed to the county taking over. She emphasized the importance of understanding all aspects involved; spaying and neutering, adoption, vaccinations, and medical needs. She recommended that someone with a network manage the operation, bringing in the appropriate entities to support the effort. No further comments. Motion Carried.

11:13 AM **Adjourned**

01:30 PM **WGM and NeighborWorks MT Update on Libby Creek Project Schedule and RSID:** Rescheduled.

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board