

June 11, 2025

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on June 11 2025, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Hammons, Commissioner Duram, Administrative Assistant Nikki Fox and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: Aleana Woody, Andy Belski, Chanel Geer, Dallas Bowe, Darren Short, Deb Burrell, Jay, Jen Brown, Jerry Regh, Jesse Haag, John Hyslop, Feleisha Storkson, Melanie Howell, Ray Stout, Sierra Gustin, Suzanne Resch, Traci Street, Travis Sigea and Wendy Drake.

09:00 AM Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. PILT Claims. Schedule A Road Agreement. Weed Department Grant Approval: Present was Brian Berreman.

- Approval of the minutes from June 4, 2025 regular commissioner meeting: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to accept the minutes. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
- PILT claims: Motion laid on the table last meeting: Consultant Richard Stem, a representative for the county in developing short- and long-term solutions regarding the KNF, \$1,995. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the invoice from last week as we have a contract with him. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of contract agreement. No public comment. Motion carried.
Environomics, Inc. \$540 Port MSA consulting. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the invoice for Environomics. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of this being a local resource. No public comment. Motion carried.
Container ONE \$4,898 purchase a 40' high cube watertight container for offsite record storage. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve it. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
Ascend Strategies \$4,250 commissioner advisory group and moderation of meetings for the MSA. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the invoice from Ascend Strategies. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of planning and development of MSA wrapping up. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Schedule A Road Agreement between Lincoln County and Kootenai National Forest 2025 Schedule A. Discussion of coordination between the county road department and the Forest Service to produce this document each year. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the Schedule A road agreement with the forest service. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Weed Department Grant Approval: Commissioner Teske read a summary of the Lincoln County Tansy Ragwort MDA Grant 2025-22 award of \$25,000 for wages. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to accept the Montana Department of Agriculture Tansy Ragwort Lincoln County grant. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
- The Commissioners agreed to add a standing agenda item to provide updates on the external boards they serve on, The item will appear monthly, with updates given if there is relevant information to share.
- Commissioner Duram advised of still working with the DEQ on the ARPA grant for the fairgrounds. A new will-serve letter from the city has been obtained and they hope to move forward, possibly with an extension from the state.
- Commissioner Hammons invited the commissioners to tour the old Troy ambulance barn being converted into county offices.

09:15 AM Public Comment Time – Non-Agenda Items: Present was Brian Berreman. No public comment.

09:30 AM NorthStar Landing Subdivision Group-Condition Amendment and Easement Request: Present were Brian Berreman and Jesse Haag.

Jesse Haag, Planning Director, presented a utility easement request of the North Star Landing Preliminary Plat for underground boring beneath Douglas Hill Road to connect water and septic systems across the development. It was agreed the easement will be updated with language regarding: All utility installation must be completed using underground boring methods to avoid road surface disturbance. The Eureka District Road Foreman shall be notified prior to any installation work. Lincoln County will not be held responsible for any damages resulting from the normal use and maintenance of the easement. **Motion** to approve the easement with the added language by Commissioner Duram, specifically the boring technique and damage. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.

Jesse presented a request to amend Condition 14 of their original plat approval, which had previously required the elimination of eight lots deemed too steep for development. Lots 45 and 46, after significant grading and verified resurveying, are now proposed to remain as standalone residential lots. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram for lots 45 and 46 to be allowed to stand alone as individual residential lots and not be required to be absorbed into adjacent lots. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Discussion of the overall lot count remaining within the originally approved number. Infrastructure, including roads, septic systems, and a shared water system, actively being completed, with DEQ final approval still pending. No public comment. Motion carried.

10:00 AM Preliminary Plat Review Schrieber Meadows North and Schrieber Meadows South: Present were Andy Evensen, Brian Berreman, Jesse Haag, Jonathan Jameson, Maggie Craig, Roby Bowe and Scott Shindledecker.

Commissioner Teske noted last week's public hearing and introduced the Schrieber Meadows North and Schrieber Meadows South preliminary plat review. Discussion of public comment received following the last meeting. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the preliminary plat for Schrieber Meadows North. Second by Commissioner Duram.

Jesse Haag, Planning Director, noted the 36 proposed conditions of approval for the Schrieber Meadows North subdivision. He noted the Planning Board recommended approval on a split vote, with one member voting against, one abstaining, and five in favor.

Public comment on Schrieber Meadows North subdivision preliminary plat:

Maggie Craig expressed concern that issues such as wildlife habitat, water rights, and wetland impacts were being overlooked in favor of tax revenue. She feels proposed mitigations primarily benefit future residents, not wildlife, and

stressed the lack of meaningful environmental protections. She questioned the legality of the developer's plan to use 27 wells, citing DNRC rules on combined water appropriations. Jesse clarified that two subdivision tracts are pre-2014 records, allowing 10 acre-feet of exempt well use each (North and South), and that DEQ standards limit individual usage to 0.28 acre-feet per lot. Discussion that water use plans must ensure compliance as a condition of final approval. Maggie Craig asked whether the Commission had ever denied a subdivision and raised concerns about development occurring before preliminary approval, potentially violating subdivision regulations. Commissioner Teske did not recall any denied during his tenure, though some fail at the Planning Board level. He advised motions are made in the affirmative per Robert's Rules and still require a vote. Discussion that subdivision approval is not driven solely by tax revenue; decisions balance personal property rights and county-wide considerations and environmental concerns, including water and wildlife impacts, are addressed through conditions that must be met before final plat approval and concerns about potential development prior to preliminary plat approval will be reviewed for possible regulatory violations. Andy Evensen, engineer, stated that no surface water rights are being proposed and any future water use would require DNRC approval. The project must comply with state non-degradation rules, and all conditions of approval, including DEQ review, must be met to get a COSA. He explained that wildfire mitigation and some infrastructure work were conducted legally under the right to build on the two existing parcels, regardless of subdivision approval. He requested reconsideration of condition #16, suggesting that existing IBC slope setback regulations be used instead of requiring a separate geotechnical report for Lot 10. He also questioned the creek buffer requirements in conditions #31, #32, and #34, citing evidence that Shreiber Creek may not qualify as a perennial stream and requested a reduced buffer similar to that for wetlands. It was agreed to review the stream classification and applicable regulations and revisit this next week.

Schrieber Meadows South subdivision: Jesse noted 34 conditions and the addition of conditions for driveway construction on lots 4 and 5 due to slope concerns. Andy Evensen confirmed the same general concerns apply. The Commission agreed to continue both linked subdivisions to next week's meeting, requesting planning and the developer collaborate on revised conditions for final recommendations.

10:30 AM **Troy Library Heat and A/C Bid:** Present were Brian Berreman, Jonathan Jameson and Scott Shindledecker.

Commissioner Teske presented two estimates for heat and a/c at the Troy Library: Columbia Mountain Mechanical \$11,332.63, Formula Fabrication \$14,700. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the lower bid from Columbia Mountain Mechanical paid for out of PILT. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion Carried.

10:45 AM **Norgard Trail Easement and Management Plan:** Present were Brian Berreman, Jennifer Nelson, Joe Taylor, Johnathan Jameson, Johnathan Knapp, Scott Shindledecker, Theresa Knapp and Zach Schad.

Commissioner Teske presented the Public Recreational Trail Easement Agreement of 1.66 acres between Ben and Heather Scott, Lincoln County and the Libby Park District. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the public recreation trail easement agreement for the Norgard Trail. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of the trail route and NRDP grant funding. No public comment. Motion carried.

Commissioner Teske presented the management agreement of roles and responsibilities to include county maintenance of parking lot and weed control. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to accept the management agreement. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.

11:00 AM **County Bid Selections:** Present were Brian Berreman, Ed Levert, Jennifer Nelson, Jonathan Jameson, Johnathan Knapp, Sam Scheer, Scott Shindledecker, Theresa Knapp and Zach Schad.

Bid Openings and Selections:

Gasoline & Diesel Supply:

Due to confusion with the current bid form, which vendors found unclear a revised, user-friendly bid form will be issued. Existing bids, including one from Golden State Oil, will not be opened and was returned.

County Printing – Display Advertising:

One bid was received from *Kootenai Valley Record*:

- First folio: \$1.25
- Additional folios: \$0
- Display: \$1.90
- Additional display: \$0

Motion by Commissioner Duram to approve. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.

County Printing – General:

One bid was received from *The Printing Press*, offering services at 5% below Franklin Estimating System.

Motion by Commissioner Duram to accept the bid. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Due to lack of specific pricing details, the Commission opted to seek clarification and tabled the decision for one week.

Hot Plant Asphalt Supply:

Two bids were received:

- *Noble Excavating*: \$73.58/ton
- *Granite Concrete Products*: \$72.90/ton

Motion by Commissioner Hammons to approve *Granite Concrete Products* for hot plant asphalt supply at \$72.90 a ton. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.

Gravel Crushing & Stockpiling (District 1):

Two bids were received:

- *Granite Concrete Products*:
 - 3/8" chip: \$45.00/cu yd
 - 5/8" road gravel: \$15.00/cu yd
 - 3/4" gravel: \$14.00/cu yd
- *Noble Excavating*: Noble's bid included multiple site options. \$6,650 mobilization cost (Troy)

Farm to Market Pit:	Sheldon Pit:
3/8" clean chip: \$21.12/cu yd	3/8" clean chip: \$10.50/cu yd
5/8" & 3/4": \$8.85/cu yd	

Motion by Commissioner Hammons to approve *Noble Excavating* for gravel crushing. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried. Jonathan Knapp noted dates require an extension of service into July.

11:30 AM **MSA Update – Bruce Vincent and Kate Stevens:** Present were Brian Berreman, Bruce Vincent, Ed Lavert, Jennifer Nelson, Jonathan Jameson, Kate Stevens and Scott Shindledecker.

Bruce Vincent and Kate Stevens outlined the development of a Master Stewardship Agreement (MSA) aimed at fostering cross-boundary collaboration to manage the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) and protect vulnerable communities from catastrophic wildfire risk. They stressed the importance of partnerships among counties, the Forest Service, and private landowners, noting that while tools like the State Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) help, multiple strategies are needed. The MSA, inspired by successful models like Tehama County, California, focuses on managing approximately 135,000 acres to create defensible spaces around homes and towns. Discussions included identifying processing sites for forest products, such as the Port Property, and building organizational capacity for implementation. Grant funding has supported initial efforts, and a recent trip to Washington, DC, helped secure key contacts and future funding opportunities. Kate highlighted ongoing staff efforts and recent grants, emphasizing cooperation with the Forest Service. Bruce addressed questions about potential fiber production plants and air quality concerns, noting modern technologies comply with EPA standards but supply uncertainties remain. Transportation grants were also discussed as a way to reduce hauling costs, increasing supply. They emphasized the need to address upfront agency costs, and the growing public and insurer focus on fire risk management. Bruce advised Lincoln County is noted for both confronting these challenges and leading stewardship efforts in Montana’s first MSA of its kind.

12:03 PM Break

01:30 PM **Lincoln County Compensation Board Meeting:** Present were Brian Berreman, Dallas Bowe, Darren Short, JoAnne Cuffe, John Hyslop, Johnathan Jameson, Marcia Boris, Trisha Brooks and Veronica Bovee-Anderson.

The Lincoln County Compensation Board reviewed the 2025/26 salary and budget, noting an 8.8% increase in health insurance costs and a 5.6% increase in casualty and liability insurance expenses. There was limited investment returns from tribal funds—about \$243,000. The board emphasized the need for competitive raises to address staffing difficulties, employee retention and specialized positions. Sheriff salaries remain below comparable counties, with some pay disparities within departments. The board agreed on a 5% salary increase for elected officials, funded partly by the \$243,000 investment return plus an additional estimate of \$70,000 from the budget. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve a 5% increase for elected official salary. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. The motion was carried by a vote of 9 in favor, with Commissioner Duram voting in opposition.

01:48 PM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board