

August 20, 2025

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on August 20, 2025, in the Lincoln County Annex, Eureka, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Hammons, Commissioner Duram, and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: Administrative Assistant Nikki Fox, Alaena Woody, Bailey Bronson, Brian Berreman, Bryan Alkire, Chanel Geer, Darren Short, Feleisha Storkson, Jesse Haag, Joe Nagle, John Hyslop, Kathi Hooper, Landfill, Ray Stout, Scott Shindledecker and Traci Street.

- 09:45 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. Resolution 2025-26 Proposed Landfill Fee Schedule and Refuse Assessment Structure. J Neils Park Discussion. PILT Claims. Board Updates:** Present were Mary Duram and Traci Street.
 - Approval of the minutes: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the minutes from the August 13, 2025 meeting. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
 - Resolution 2025-26 Proposed Landfill Fee Schedule and Refuse Assessment Structure: Commissioner Teske noted this item was carried over from the previous week for further review, with Kathi Hooper researching legal aspects. He noted a **motion** and second were already on record. Discussion followed on limiting the assessment to residential housing only, with concerns about applying fees to undeveloped parcels and an emphasis on tracking newly developed properties moving forward. No additional public comment. Motion carried; resolution passed.
 - J Neils Park Discussion: Joe Nagle, Maintenance Manager, presented concerns regarding the presence of Forrest Black, who resides in a trailer at J Neils Park under an informal verbal agreement made years ago. He cited ongoing vandalism, lack of reporting by Mr. Black and no known financial or maintenance contribution. Discussion followed regarding the origin of the agreement, potential county liability and improvements already made to park security, including lighting, cameras and increased patrols. The Commission agreed the arrangement offers no clear benefit and instructed Joe to consult with the County Attorney and begin the legal process for issuing a notice to vacate the park property.
 - PILT claim: Ugrin Alexander Zadick, P.C. total due \$4,731.47 including Pathfinder Appraisals. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to pay the \$4,731.47. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No comments. Motion carried.
 - Commissioner Hammons coordinated final budget meetings for the Sheriff's office and Library on August 25, 2025.
 - Board Updates: Commissioner Duram noted that the DEQ decision on the county's petition regarding selenium standards is still pending and signs regarding green box violations and disposal procedures are being posted. Commissioner Teske reported on the recent Port Authority meeting: The Family Health and Wellness easement is under legal review, and updates are being made to the rail storage agreement and swim pond classification for insurance. A budget amendment is needed, and an appraisal was received for the remaining 76 acres at the industrial park. New staff policies were approved, and board training is set for October. The Libby School District recommended Rob Delmas as its representative per Senate Bill 3 and the Port Authority board nominated Bill Clark to fill the remaining vacancy. The master stewardship agreement, wildfire mitigation and grant work is ongoing.

10:15 AM **Public Comment Time Non-Agenda Items:** Present were Mary Duram and Traci Street.

Mary Duram noted that the Eureka Food Pantry operates two days a week for two hours, assisting approximately 65 families and handling a few emergency requests each month. She reported the pantry distributes about 100 Thanksgiving food boxes and 80 at Christmas. The pantry is located at 17 First Avenue West, near Eureka Auto and Riverside Park.

Brian Berreman referenced the sealed bid process for the county vehicle, noting that his bid notice did not include a minimum. He suggested the county use an auto auction, as this is the third time the vehicle has been advertised.

10:30 AM **FWP: Montana Great Outdoors Presentation:** Present were Amber Steed, Brian Hobday, Eric Schallon, Leah Breidinge, Mary Duram and Traci Street.

Brian Hobday of Green Diamond Resource Company and Amber Steed of Fish, Wildlife and Parks presented the Montana Great Outdoors Phase 2 Conservation Easement, which covers nearly 53,000 acres primarily in Lincoln County. The easement aims to protect working forest lands from development while maintaining sustainable timber management. Funded largely by the USFS Legacy Program, with support from Green Diamond, Habitat Montana and landowner donations, it ensures the land remains privately owned but permanently conserved. The easement provides wildlife habitat, supports year-round public recreational access and helps reduce wildfire risks by limiting development. Currently in the approval process, final decisions from the Montana State Land Board are expected later this year.

11:00 AM **Public Hearing: Proposed Amendment to The Eureka Fire Service Area (EFSA) Boundary:** Present were Mary Duram, Ron Komac, Ron Morgan and Traci Street.

Commissioner Teske opened the public hearing regarding the proposed amendment to the Eureka Fire Service Area boundary, following the adoption of Resolution 2025-27, a resolution of intent to alter the boundaries. Fire Chief Ron Komac stated the expansion is necessary due to residential growth following the original boundary formation. No public comment was received. Maps of the proposed expansion areas—Upper Pinkham Creek, Douglas Hill Road, and Phils Lake—are posted at the North Lincoln County Annex and the Courthouse bulletin boards and on the county website under public notices. A second public hearing is scheduled for September 17, 2025, at 11:00 am at the North County Annex.

11:15 AM **Detective Pay Discussion and Proposal:** Present were Mary Duram and Traci Street.

Sheriff Darren Short submitted a letter to the Lincoln County Commissioners regarding an increase in the Detective pay rate from 88% to 89% of the sheriff's salary to match the Sergeant rate. This change, effective August 23, 2025 aligns with MCA §7-4-2508, which outlines salary guidelines for the undersheriff and deputy sheriffs based on the sheriff's salary. **Motion** by Commission Hammons to approve the rate change from 88% to 89% for detective pay. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comments. Motion carried.

11:17 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board