

**August 25, 2025**

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a budget meeting on August 25, 2025, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Hammons and Administrative Assistant Nikki Fox.

Zoom participation: Commissioner Duram

9:57 am **Sheriff's Office:** Present was Sheriff Darren Short and Undersheriff John Hyslop

On August 25, 2025, the commissioners reviewed the Sheriff's Office budget. It was noted that detention services are not included in the current budget, but will be absorbed within the existing budget. Darren Short and John Hyslop advised they would be removing the proposed new radios and vehicles from the budget, resulting in a reduction of approximately \$556,000. Commissioner Teske suggested that the three proposed vehicles could instead be funded using PILT. All present agreed to this approach.

John Hyslop confirmed that pending retirements are accounted for in the proposed budget. Commissioners inquired about open positions in the Sheriff's Office and noted that they did not significantly increase the budget. Commissioner Teske asked about the transport van, to which it was confirmed that the state is covering detainee transport costs, and Discussions are ongoing regarding funding for mental health holds. John Hyslop shared that he is actively pursuing grant opportunities to help offset the budget shortfall. Commissioner Duram emphasized he is not in favor of layoffs and supports maintaining current personnel levels. There was open discussion regarding the temporary assistance deputies are providing to the City of Libby. It was noted that Libby should have adequate staffing within approximately 10 days, at which point county assistance will no longer be needed. Additional impact fee proposals were discussed. Commissioner Teske recommended that Darren Short and John Hyslop consult with the County Planner regarding the implementation of impact fees, and regulations surrounding their use.

10:17 am Adjourned

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Brent Teske, Chairperson

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nikki Fox, Administrative Assistant

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Zoom participation: Commissioner Duram

10:300 am **Library**: Present was Dustina Deans and Michael Mason

On August 25, 2025, the commissioners reviewed and discussed the library's budget. It was noted that the original levy sheet did not reflect an accurate funding amount. Commissioner Teske emphasized that budget cuts are necessary. Library Director Dustina Deans reported that the amount of \$394,000 is insufficient to cover employee wages and insurance costs. Commissioner Teske asked for a breakdown of employee employment status, which Dustina Dean confirmed there are 4 full time employees and 2 part time employees. The educational supplies budget was discussed and Commissioner Teske Commissioner Teske inquired whether this budget could be reduced. Dustina Deans expressed reluctance to reduce the educational supplies budget. Commissioner Hammons questioned the necessity of the repairs budget. Dustina Deans clarified that this mainly covers contracted cleaning services, which occur twice per week. Commissioner Duram proposed cutting the cleaning budget and instead funding cleaning expenses from PILT funds. All commissioners agreed to this proposal. Commissioner Hammons then asked about the Publicity/subscriptions budget, which Dustina stated was down \$18,000. Dustina Deans announced she will cut the communications budget entirely. Multiple budget areas were reviewed for potential cuts. Commissioner Teske noted that county investments could help offset increases in employee wage costs. Commissioner Teske discussed that the investments made by the county will help offset the increase of employee wages. Following a conversation in the hallway with a board member, Deans returned to propose reducing the "book budget" to \$5,000 for the current fiscal year only. She stressed that this level of funding is not sustainable for future years.

10:56 am **Adjourned**

**LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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Brent Teske, Chairperson

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Nikki Fox, Administrative Assistant