

September 24, 2025

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on September 24, 2025, in the Lincoln County Courthouse Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Hammons, Administrative Assistant Nikki Fox and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: Commissioner Duram, BreeAnna Adamson, Chanel Geer, Dallas Bowe, Feleisha Storkson, Jesse Haag, John Hyslop, Melanie Howell, Michele Purcell, Ray Stout and Traci Street.

10:00 AM Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. PILT Claims. Bid Selection for County Courthouse Boiler Replacement. Bid Selection for Yaak Community Hall Renovation Project. Resolution 2025-33 Alter Boundaries of the Eureka FSA. Commissioners Report: Present were Brian Berreman, Craig Johnson, Joe Nagle and Scott Shindledecker

- Approval of the minutes: **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the September 17, 2025 commissioner meeting minutes. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Approval of the minutes from the Tim Shehee representative meeting: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the minutes from September 18, 2025. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
- PILT claims: none
- Bid Selection for County Courthouse Boiler Replacement: Joe Nagle, Maintenance Director, reported on the two courthouse boilers—one HVAC and one for public water—explaining the public water boiler had failed and was recently replaced. He presented three bids to replace the remaining HVAC boiler, recommending the lowest from Johnson Controls at \$96,954. Other bids included Comfort Systems at \$146,690 and Columbia Mountain at \$99,085. Commissioners agreed on the need for proactive maintenance ahead of winter, noting that the equipment has an estimated 16-week lead time. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the estimate from Johnson Controls for \$96,954 paid from PILT. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Bid Selection for Yaak Community Hall Renovation Project: Commissioner Teske opened the only bid received for the Yaak Community Hall renovation project, submitted by TCI in the amount of \$350,000. The proposal includes foundation stabilization and related concrete work. Craig Johnson, Chairman of the Yaak Community Hall, noted that the bid exceeds the expected budget. Following discussion about the scope of work and the inclusion of floor replacement, it was agreed to delay accepting the bid pending further review. A meeting with the project engineer and the building committee will be scheduled.
- Resolution 2025-33 Alter Boundaries of the Eureka FSA: Commissioner Hammons read the resolution. The boundary adjustments aim to enhance emergency response coverage and now include parcels in the Upper Pinkham Creek, Douglas Hill Road and Phils Lake areas. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve Resolution 2025-33. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Commissioners' Report:
 - Commissioner Duram reported of the recent Fair Board meeting, where updates were provided on ongoing sewer and electrical upgrades. Electrical repairs will require full code compliance, which may result in significant costs likely to be funded through PILT. He also reported from the MACo conference, where Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funding is a key topic. Both of Montana's congressional representatives are supportive, and efforts are ongoing to include SRS in the next continuing resolution. He also noted that MACo and the National Forest Counties Coalition issued a joint letter supporting the removal of the federal roadless rule. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is actively harvesting timber and there is optimism around the current administration's approach to forest management.
 - Commissioner Teske reported on his attendance at the Kootenai Stakeholders Collaborative meeting. The group received updates from the Forest Service, including progress on timber contracts, with approximately 69 million board feet currently let. The main topic of discussion was the federal roadless rule and the group successfully reached consensus on a comment letter, despite varying perspectives. He also noted a well-attended and impactful Forest Fair event as part of the education and outreach efforts, with approximately 150 attendees and participation from various agencies and organizations across the county.

10:30 AM Public Comment Time Non-Agenda Items: Present were Brian Berreman, Kate Stephens and Scott Shindledecker. No public comment.

10:45 AM Planning Department-Sherwood Estates Subdivision Final Plat Decision: Present were Brian Berreman, Bruce Vincent, Jesse Haag, Kate Stephens and Scott Shindledecker.

Jesse Haag, Planning Director, presented the final plat for Sherwood Estates, a two-lot subdivision north of the Eureka Airport. He confirmed all nine conditions of preliminary approval have been met, including utility installation and DEQ sanitation approval. A required notice was added to the plat regarding being in the airport hazard area and he recommended approving the final plat. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the Sherwood Estates subdivision. Second by commissioner Duram. Jesse advised that development permits in the airport hazard area are managed by Planning, not the airport board. He noted Sherwood Estates is an amended plat of Border Acres, where covenants limit further subdivision to a minimum of five acres, which still apply. No public comment. Motion carried.

11:00 AM Port Authority and Master Stewardship Agreement Update: Present were Brian Berreman, Bruce Vincent, Kate Stephens, Martin Dunbar and Scott Shindledecker.

Kate Stephens, Port Director, provided an update on recent activities, including wildfire mitigation efforts—over twenty home assessments completed county-wide with ten more scheduled in October—as well as community outreach through five events. She highlighted the execution of the first major project agreement supporting the Forest Service with berm and gate maintenance. The Pine Flats decision was finalized, marking a significant multi-agency effort involving the Forest Service, Good Neighbor Authority and National Forest Foundation, with both commercial and non-commercial timber work planned. Natural Resource Damage Program will visit in early October to review culvert and Best Management Practices prework needs in both timber and recreational areas. The Port is partnering with Vincent Logging on upcoming projects.

Bruce Vincent of Vincent Logging noted regarding the grizzly bear research project, the Forest Service has granted a permit to place cameras in roadless areas, with 80 cameras currently deployed across lands owned by Hecla, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the Forest Service. The project is a collaborative pilot effort to evaluate whether forest disturbance improves grizzly bear habitat, which would also benefit other species. Partners include the US Fish and Wildlife Service, American Loggers Council, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Salish & Kootenai Tribal College Native Plant Nursery, Evergreen Foundation and the Rocky Mountain Research Station, which is funding camera deployment, retrieval and data analysis through a contract with Vincent Logging and the Port Authority. The effort includes public outreach via updated educational materials—such as the You Tube *Grizzly Corridor Attempt* —funded by a recently approved LOR grant. A peer-reviewed white paper and broader public engagement are planned. The research site is south of Bull Lake and is part of a larger strategy to fire wise landscapes while improving wildlife habitat. Commissioner Teske emphasized shifting focus from security to habitat. Commissioner Duram noted concerns that, despite meeting 1973 recovery goals, the Cabinet-Yaak grizzly population remains listed. Bruce emphasized that the area is a distinct geographic and population zone, separate from the North Continental Divide and Yellowstone ecosystems. He stressed the importance of building suitable habitat locally to prevent wildlife from entering populated areas and that the region must stand on its own. He noted the Master Stewardship Agreement may help provide the product consistency needed to attract investment from the forest products industry.

11:20 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board