

December 9, 2025

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a special session on December 9, 2025, in the Lincoln County Courthouse Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Hammons, Commissioner Duram and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: none

11:00 AM **Community Action Partnership Update:** Present were Cassidy Kipp, Jesse Haag and Tracy Diaz.

Cassidy Kipp and Tracy Diaz from the Community Action Partnership of Northwest Montana provided an update on the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), noting that 9% of Lincoln County residents received assistance last year and emphasizing the importance of the block grant as the “glue” that supports their programs. They reported that the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) remains the largest assistance program and that demand for Emergency Energy Share is rising as more households—particularly elderly women over 65 and an increasing number of homeowners—face potential heating shutoffs. Tracy noted the trend intensified during the recent federal shutdown, when LIHEAP funds were temporarily frozen and 46 Energy Share requests were reviewed in a single meeting. Cassidy described how CAPNM tracks community needs and supports national CSBG goals by promoting self-sufficiency through employment and training programs, realistic budgeting tools, receipt reviews and practical life-skills instruction that help participants, including those with disabling conditions, remain housed.

Tracy added that rising food and living costs are forcing residents to choose between groceries and utilities. She outlined the top five community needs identified in the recent assessment: housing, affordable wages, mental health and substance abuse services, energy assistance, and child care. She expressed concerns over HUD’s proposed reduction of permanent housing funding to 30%, which could affect 60–70 high-barrier clients who rely on rental support.

Commissioners discussed that the Lincoln County Health Department is launching a behavioral health program that may support CAPNM’s referral needs and he emphasized the value of credit-building, first-time homebuyer education and life-skills training. Cassidy noted that many residents need buy-in for family life-skills programs. They advised that HUD’s proposed rules may require mandatory participation—an approach CAPNM supports but has previously been unable to implement due to state restrictions. Tracy added that CAPNM plans to offer expanded life-skills classes once their new facility opens. Commissioner Teske read the proposed letter of support for the CSBG work plan for FY 2026–2027.

Motion by Commissioner Hammons to approve the letter of support. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion that the new budget is unavailable due to the shutdown and that funding typically aligns with the previous award of approximately \$490,000 to cover Lake, Lincoln, Sanders and Flathead counties. Motion carried. The commissioners expressed appreciation for CAPNM’s work and interest in future collaboration as housing projects and behavior services continue to develop.

11:38 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board