

February 11, 2026

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on February 11, 2026, 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: Alaena Woody, Amanda Eckart, Bryan Alkire, C Brackett, Chanel Geer, Danielle Faris, Darren Short, Feleisha Storkson, Jesse Haag, Melanie Howell, Ray Stout, Roland Jorgenson, Sam Scheer, Scott Shindlecker, Sierra Gustin, Tammy Brown and Traci Street.

09:30 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. PILT Claims. Commissioners' Report:** Present were Brian Berreman and Travis Sigea.

- Approval of regular meeting minutes **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve February 4, 2026 regular commissioner meeting minutes. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Approval of the February 5, 2026 special debris pre-bid meeting minutes: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
- PILT claims: Ugrin Alexander Zadick, P.C. \$444.61 Magnolia. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to pay the \$444.61. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
Ugrin Alexander Zadick, P.C. \$332 Torgison. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the \$332 claim for Ugrin Alexander Zadick. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Open bid for Flathead Valley Community College building interior repairs: Commissioner Hammons advised that one bid had been received and expressed a desire to re-publish the notice, emphasizing construction rather than restoration work. The bid was unsealed from Complete Restoration LLC in the amount of \$289,228.47. Discussion followed. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to deny the bid and open it back up for RFP. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Commissioners' Report:
 - Commissioner Teske noted working with disaster damage regarding permitting and road repairs.
 - Commissioner Hammons Commissioner Hammons stated the County's insurance agent, Mac Kirk, recommended the County consider bidding out its insurance contract due to costs nearing \$1 million annually and increasing substantially over the past two years. It was agreed it would be fiscally responsible to explore potential savings despite possible inconvenience in changing providers.
 - Commissioner Duram expressed support for a biomass facility with a 40–60 year planning horizon to manage waste sustainably and generate future income. He noted a Florida facility as a model, highlighting advanced technology with minimal emissions, less landfill needs and odor control. He discussed potential collaboration with nearby counties and the importance of investor input. Commissioner Teske advised the commissioners plan to tour the Stoltz biomass plant in Columbia Falls to review operations.

09:45 AM **Public Comment Time Non-Agenda Items:** Present were Brian Berreman and Travis Sigea. No comments.

10:00 AM **Health Department:** Present were Brian Berreman, Bryan Alkire, Kathi Hooper and Travis Sigea.

Kathi Hooper, Health Director, presented a proposed update to the Health Department fee schedule. House Bill 853 created new state categories for licensed food establishments (small, medium, large), requiring the County to align its plan review fees. The proposal includes maintaining the \$60 fee for small establishments, setting medium at \$115, and large at \$150. Mobile food establishments were also reclassified. Wastewater fee updates were proposed, including increasing the septic permit fee from \$150 to \$200, local review fees from \$200 to \$250, adding a \$500 multi-user system permit fee and establishing a \$400 variance request fee with \$100 for each additional variance. It was agreed that a resolution of intent will be drafted and public noticed. Discussion included the possibility of a moratorium or grace period to address existing non-compliant septic systems.

Kathi provided an update on the new animal shelter design from Animal Arts, noted an upcoming meeting to discuss next steps and advised a planning grant application was submitted.

Due to staffing and safety concerns at the current shelter, Kathi requested approval to hire a full-time Animal Shelter Manager. The shelter is currently staffed by three part-time employees with no backup coverage and many tasks require two people for safety. The proposed position would also focus on developing sustainable funding through grants and revenue generation. Estimated annual cost is \$67,300–\$71,800 plus insurance, with partial funding needed for the remainder of the current fiscal year. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to move forward with finding a manager for the animal shelter paid through PILT this budget cycle. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of Health Departments history of grant funded programs and employees. No public comment. Motion carried.

Kathi requested approval to hire a Landfill Laborer/Operator/Mechanic in anticipation of three pending retirements citing training needs. The position is budgeted and the commission granted approval to move forward.

Kathi discussed flood and wind debris at the landfill. Most debris was attributed to wind damage and is being tracked separately from flood debris for potential FEMA reimbursement. Bryan noted they have not been charging homeowners. The commission agreed not to charge residents for this debris disposal at this time. Commissioner Teske will follow up with Debris Management regarding reimbursement eligibility.

10:30 AM **Final Plat Review & Approval – West Pine Subdivision / Codiz-Talamentes Family Transfer – Planning:** Present were Brett McCully, Brian Berreman and Travis Sigea.

Kristin Smith, Planning, presented the West Pine Subdivision, located off Yaak River Road approximately 13 miles from Troy. She reported that the applicant has completed all twenty-three conditions of preliminary plat approval and the

Planning Department recommends approval. Discussion included confirmation that all conditions have been satisfied and mitigation measures for fire suppression in coordination with the McCormick Fire District. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the West Pine subdivision final plat per Planning. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.

Kristin presented the Codiz-Talamantes family transfer request, which includes placing the property in a trust for a minor, and reviewed the proposal details. She noted Planning recommends approval of the use of the family transfer provision subject to four conditions. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the Codiz family transfer with the four conditions. Second by commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.

11:00 AM Opening of Proposals for Disaster Debris Monitoring Service / Opening of Proposals for Disaster Debris Removal and Disposal Services – Present were Brian Berreman, Travis Sigea and Vanessa Cruz.

Debris monitoring bids:

-Thompson Consulting Services, LLC hourly rates: PM \$79, Ops Mgr. \$10, Billing \$65, Field Sup \$42, Load Monitor \$38, Debris Monitor \$37, GIS \$40, Drone w/Op \$50.

-Rostan Solutions hourly rates: PM \$100, Ops Mgr. \$150, Billing \$40, Field Sup \$70, Load Monitor \$27, Debris Monitor \$27, GIS \$10, Drone w/Op \$10.

-Debris Tech Inc. hourly rates: PM \$85, Ops Mgr. \$75, Billing \$75, Field Sup \$65, Load Monitor \$55, Debris Monitor \$55, GIS \$55, Drone w/Op \$95.

Debris Removal and Disposal bids:

Greenbelt Turf Management; mobilization \$17,250

Ceres Environmental Services; mobilization \$3,800

CTC Disaster Response; mobilization \$25,000

DRC Emergency Services; mobilization \$25,000

Noble Excavating; mobilization \$10,000

Thompson Contracting Inc; mobilization \$6,000

Commissioner Teske stated that the bids will be forwarded to a review committee consisting of representatives from Finance, Planning/Floodplain Administration, Engineering and Administration with a meeting to evaluate the proposals.

11:45 AM Ballot Box Discussion: Present were Brian Berreman, Melanie Howell, Travis Sigea and Tony Wickham.

Melanie Howell, Election Administrator (EA), advised that MCA 13-19-307 remained unchanged and gives the EA discretion to designate ballot drop locations. She stated her interpretation requires drop boxes to be staffed by two election judges from the time ballots are mailed through 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Due to budget and staffing shortages, she requested removal of the Troy Police Department and Libby Sheriff's Office lobby drop boxes, while retaining the Eureka location due to limited mail service in north county communities. She projected a staffing cost of \$18,683.70 for two upcoming elections. She cited limited usage at Troy (106 ballots in a recent election; approximately 300–400 in the 2024 primary) and the Sheriff's Office (207 ballots), compared to over 1,000 at the Election Office. She also noted ongoing judge shortages, particularly in Troy. The commissioners discussed impacts to remote communities and balancing convenience with secure elections while noting the former EA had been comfortable relying on 24-hour dispatch surveillance at these sites. Melanie advised ballots may still be mailed or delivered to polling locations on Election Day. Legislative clarification of the statute was discussed and Tony Wickham volunteered to seek legislative action with Representative Millett. It was agreed to review and revisit this next week.

12:06 PM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board