March 4, 2026

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on March 4, 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, Chanel Geer, Dallas Bowe, Feleisha Storkson, Jesse Haag, Jonathan Jameson, Josh Letcher, Kathi Hooper, Linda Ralph, Ray Stout, Sierra Gustin, TJ Boswell and Traci Street.

10:00 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. PILT Claims. Treasurer Discussion Regarding Check Purchase. Park District Cancelling Ballot (Rescind Resolution 2026-07). Commissioners' Report:** Present were Amanda Harcourt, Brian Berreman, Jim Germany, Melanie Howell, Rocky Schaver, Scott Shindledecker, Sedaris Carlberg, Stuart Crismore and Travis Sigea.

- Approval of February 25, 2026, commissioner meeting minutes. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the minutes. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
- PILT claims: none
- Treasurer Sedaris Carlberg provided an update regarding the purchase of new warrant checks following changes in banking arrangements. She explained that First Montana Bank declined to continue covering the insurance bond for balances exceeding $250,000, leaving the options of the County paying the bond cost or moving funds into a sweep account. Due to operational limitations with the sweep account, her office opened a new warrant account with Glacier Bank, which agreed to cover the bond cost. As a result, new checks were ordered for the County and various districts and departments in the smallest available quantities, and she requested that the cost of the checks be paid from PILT funds. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to pay $9,366.53 out of PILT. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of entities purchasing their own checks in the future, this is just for the transition. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Jim Germany of the Libby Park District requested the Commission rescind Resolution 2026-07, which had approved running a special district election. He explained that the district decided not to proceed with the election due to the school not participating, projected cost of approximately $10,000, flooding and channel changes near the Port that affected the project's water intake component and a recent change in project management. He stated the district plans to revisit the proposal and potentially return to the Commission in 2027. The Commission agreed to draft a resolution to rescind Resolution 2026-07 and proceed through the required process.
- Commissioners' Report:
    - Commissioner Hammons noted a special City/County Health Board meeting tomorrow to approve a time-sensitive letter to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry supporting grant funding.
    - Commissioner Duram reported on a meeting with biomass and waste energy stakeholders, the Forest Service and the EOC in Eureka, noting ongoing site visits and strategy discussions. The Commission discussed Port Director Kate Stephens' resignation and the temporary appointment of Jennifer Brown, noting that the next Port Authority meeting on March 16th will address board appointments. He noted that he had received a call regarding an IT issue with County email and reminded all County related IT issues with email need to go through the County IT person. He expressed interest in restoring the historical Hold Up Gulch signage along Highway 37and confirmed the SRS payment of $3,592,995 had been received, with funds allocated according to Title I and Title III rules.
    - Commissioner Teske reported that the City of Libby's drinking water advisory has been lifted. The boil order issued on December 11, 2025, was downgraded to a health advisory on January 16, 2026, and as of March 2, 2026, the advisory has been fully removed, with the city's water now in full compliance.

10:15 AM **ARP:** Present were Amanda Harcourt, Brian Berreman, Bryan Alkire, Dallas Bowe, Greg Bruns, Matthew Stull, Melanie Howell, Patty Rambo, Rocky Schaver, Scott Shindledecker, Stuart Crismore and Travis Sigea,

Amanda Harcourt requested Commission approval to hire a fourth ARP employee and promote the current employee, Steph, to Operations Manager. She advised the budget for the position has been approved by DEQ and is fully reimbursable and emphasized the increased need for staffing due to recent events, including flooding. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the fourth employee, operations manager for ARP. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of the role of this position. No public comment. Motion carried.

10:30 AM **Public Comment Time Non-Agenda Items**: Present were Brian Berreman, Bryan Alkire, Gordie Hull, Greg Bruns, Jennifer McCully, Matthew Stull, Melanie Howell, Patty Rambo, Rocky Schaver, Stuart Crismore, Scott Shindledecker, Rachel Reynolds and Travis Sigea.

Patty Rambo of the Kootenai River Stampede Rodeo reported they received a $30,000 grant from the LOR Foundation to improve arena lighting at St. J's Memorial Park. The upgrades will enhance safety for contestants and livestock and improve visibility for the audience. Ron Miller will coordinate the installation.

Gordie Hull of VFW Post 1548 voiced two requests for Commission consideration. The first was to establish Purple Heart parking in front of the VFW, which Commissioner Teske noted would need approval from the City Council since it involves a city street. The second request was regarding FEMA's designation of the area as a disaster zone; Commissioner Teske reported that no determination has been made yet.

Stuart Crismore of the Fisher River Valley Fire Department reported a serious accident the previous day in the FSA area outside of town that resulted in four fatalities. He noted the difficult impact such incidents have on a small department.

Patty Rambo noted she has been unable to hold her FVCC classes since the beginning of the year due to the facility's situation and emphasized its value to the community. Commissioner Teske stated that an agreement is in progress and work is moving forward to address internal structure issues.

Rachel Reynolds expressed concern that an FVCC crafts instructor was removed and urged that services and programs that benefit the community not be reduced.

10:45 AM **Discussion about County Administrator**: Present were Brian Berreman, Bryan Alkire, Dallas Bowe, Jennifer McCully, Jesse Haag, Greg Bruns, Matthew Stull, Melanie Howell, Rachel Reynolds, Rocky Schaver, Scott Shindledecker, Stuart Crismore, Tony Wickham and Travis Sigea.

Commissioner Teske reported receiving a resignation letter from Nikki Fox, prompting discussion on whether to replace the administrative assistant position or reestablish a county administrator. Commissioners reviewed the previous job description, discussed duties including budget oversight and grant monitoring and noted the former pay grade of 23 (starting at $41.13 per hour with an increase after six months), while also acknowledging budget constraints. Options discussed included assigning a commissioner to administrative oversight or hiring an administrator. During public comment, Greg Bruns of the County Study Commission shared feedback from community and employee interviews indicating support for a county administrator to improve accountability, communication and financial planning. Jennifer McCully noted that no change in form of government would fully address these concerns but that a professional administrator could provide consistent operational leadership. The discussion will continue at a future meeting.

11:00 AM **Disaster Debris Removal and Disposal Services Discussion:** Present were Brian Berreman, Bryan Alkire, Jesse Haag, Matthew Stull, Melanie Howell, Rachel Reynolds, Rocky Schaver, Scott Shindledecker, Tony Wickham and Travis Sigea.

Commissioner Teske reported discussions with ER Assist and the Department of Emergency Services regarding the disaster debris removal RFP process and clarified that vendors bid on general services, with project scope defined later during contract negotiations. He noted that the disaster declaration and funding remain uncertain, but the county would not be obligated if federal funding does not materialize. The board discussed moving forward with the process while retaining flexibility to scale the work if necessary. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to rescind our action last week on cancelling the RFP's. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.

The committee recommended CTC Disaster Response for disaster debris removal and disposal services based on evaluation scoring, with cost being a key factor. Administrative Assistant Nikki Fox noted that all submitting companies were highly recommended. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the review committee's recommendation to have CTC Disaster Response due debris clean up. Second by Commissioner Duram. Discussion of mobilization costs and the potential to hire local contractors to reduce expenses. Brian Berreman asked if CTC would use local subcontractors when awarded the contract. It was noted that the RFP allows for local hiring to manage mobilization costs and that final project scale and contract negotiations will determine actual deployment. Nikki confirmed the committee this factor was included in the scoring criteria. No further public comment. Commissioner Teske and Commissioner Hammons voted aye; Commissioner Duram voted nay. Nikki will make the notifications.

11:15 AM **Resolution 2026-09: The purpose of Defining Polling Place Locations and Drop Kiosk Locations:** Present were Brian Berreman, Kevin Peck, Melanie Howell, Rachel Reynolds, Rocky Schaver, Scott Shindledecker, Stuart Crismore, Tony Wickham and Travis Sigea.

Commissioner Teske introduced Resolution 2026-09, defining polling place locations and ballot drop kiosk locations, following discussion at a prior meeting regarding proposed changes to ballot drop box operations. Commissioner Duram **moved** to approve Resolution 2026-09. Commissioner Hammons seconded the motion. During discussion, Melanie Howell, Election Administrator noted corrections needed in the draft, including adding Eureka precincts 15 and 16, correcting the Troy ballot kiosk location to the Troy Police Department lobby rather than City Hall and addressing procedures for all-mail elections. Commissioners also noted existing security measures at drop box locations, including camera monitoring and secured boxes. Commissioner Hammons **moved** to amend the resolution to add the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office lobby drop kiosk in Libby, to operate 24 hours a day until Election Day and be closed on Election Day, consistent with the Troy and Eureka kiosks. Commissioner Duram seconded the amendment. During public comment Tony Wickham raised a point of order regarding the structure of the resolution and referenced MCA 13-19-307(5), stating that the statute designates the Election Administrator as the authority to designate ballot drop kiosk locations and hours and requires that drop sites be staffed by two election judges for the entire time they are accessible. Commissioner Teske stated the County Attorney had provided a differing legal opinion which the Commission was relying on. Troy Mayor TJ Boswell asked whether the ballot totals referenced for the Troy drop box represented only counted ballots or all ballots dropped at the location; Melanie clarified the figure represented the total number of ballots dropped at that site. The motion to amend carried. Due to the corrections identified during discussion, it was agreed to revise the resolution and bring it back for consideration at a subsequent meeting. No vote was taken on Resolution 2026-09.

11:30 AM **MACo PCT 2026 Bylaw Change:** Present were Brian Berreman, Kevin Peck, Rocky Schaver, Scott Shindledecker and Travis Sigea.

Kevin Peck, insurance agent, clarified changes to the Montana Association of Counties Property & Casualty Trust bylaws, including the updated definition of eligible insureds and the option for counties to use either an agent or an employee. Discussion included benefits of using an agent for continuity and expertise, particularly for smaller counties with limited claims activity. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to accept the bylaw changes. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.

Kevin also reviewed the insurance renewal process, including vehicle and equipment valuations, property coverage, and agent appointment agreements with Travelers, HUB, and MACo. The board agreed to sign the agent appointment agreements and proceed with the renewal process.

11:45 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board