

May 6, 2026

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on May 6, 2026, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Duram, Commissioner Hammons and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: Alaena Woody, Bryan Alkire, Chanel Geer, Dallas Bowe, Darren Short, Jeremy Britton, Jesse Haag, Jessica Jenson, Jonathan Jameson, Kathi Hooper, Marc Watkins, Melanie Howell, Ray Stout, Sierra Gustin, Traci Street, Wendy Drake and Will Lausen.

09:45 AM **DES floodplain Funding:** Present were Brian Berreman and Jesse Haag.

Jesse Haag, Planning Director, updated the Commission on a DES funding opportunity providing \$50,000 through year-end for floodplain-related work. He noted the grant requires a \$10,000 match, which may be met through in-kind contributions and requested a letter of commitment from the Commission to proceed. He stated the funding would likely be used for a contract employee with floodplain expertise, while longer-term funding is pursued for an in-house position to assist with the ongoing four-year floodplain compliance process. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons for a signed match commitment letter on letterhead that says the county commits to meeting the match if awarded. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried. Jesse also updated the Commission on the NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program, noting that seven landowners were identified to receive assistance for flood mitigation and property protection projects. He also discussed a potential partnership between DES and the County to help manage additional projects using other identified funding sources and the Commission agreed to move forward.

10:00 AM **Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. PILT Claims. Commissioners' Report:** Present were Brian Berreman and Scott Shindledecker.

- Approval of the April 22, 2026, regular session commissioner meeting minutes: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the minutes. Second by Commissioner Teske. No public comments. Motion carried.
- Approval of the April 23, 2026, special session FEMA recovery scoping meeting minutes: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the minutes. Second by Commissioner Teske. No public comments. Motion carried.
- Approval of the April 29, 2026, minutes: **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the April 29, 2026, regular commissioner meeting minutes. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comments. Motion carried.
- PILT claims: None
- Commissioners' Report:
 - Commissioner Hammons reported that the Yaak Community Hall floor replacement project remains short of funding and another grant application is being submitted with the County serving as the pass-through entity and a letter of support was submitted for the grant application.
 - Commissioner Duram thanked residents for participating in the recent election and noted the Eureka school bond did not pass. He reported the Fairgrounds sewer and electrical projects are nearing completion, provided an update on the Kootenai Falls concession stand project and summarized visits with Senator Tim Sheehy regarding DEQ, flooding, FEMA and local infrastructure issues. He also noted the Troy utility company received recognition from Senator Sheehy's office for its service efforts.
 - Commissioner Teske reported on a workforce growth roundtable hosted by Nomad, attended by more than 30 representatives from schools, colleges, state agencies and local organizations. Discussions focused on Nomad's planned expansion from approximately 88 employees to potentially 170–220 employees, workforce skill demands, housing needs and apprenticeship and training opportunities. He noted that Libby High School recently received a Haas CNC machine donation to support student training/workforce development programs.
 - Commissioner Duram reported that the CAP homes located near the college currently have vacant units and are seeking qualified applicants via the Health Department. He noted prior applicants did not meet eligibility requirements and outreach is ongoing to fill the remaining units for the low-income housing program.

10:15 AM **USFS:** Present were Brian Berreman, Chad Benson and Scott Shindledecker.

Chad Benson, US Forest Service Supervisor, provided updates on disaster recovery funding, infrastructure repairs and ongoing forest management projects. He reported that temporary bridge replacements on Lower Granite and Ramsey are scheduled to be awarded after May 13, with construction expected to continue through the summer while permanent federal highway funding is pursued. He also discussed engineering assessment and design work for the damaged Lake Creek Bridge on West Fisher, along with coordination on temporary and permanent access solutions. He highlighted progress on multiple Good Neighbor Authority and wildfire resilience projects, including road improvements, thinning operations, vegetation management contracts and salvage efforts, with approximately 56–60 million board feet of timber volume planned this year, including roughly 20 million board feet already under contract. He provided an update on Ross Creek Cedars, noting the site remains open for biking and walking while crews continue assessing long-term road, trail and site restoration needs following extensive flood damage. He also discussed ongoing environmental compliance and litigation matters, including the Ripley and Naughty Pine projects and encouraged public participation and support through comment opportunities on active forest management projects. He noted ongoing prescribed burning and wildfire response work, as well as continued coordination on environmental compliance, litigation and stewardship agreements with partner agencies. He provided employment and staffing updates, noting the Forest Service was approved to hire 15 seasonal employees across the forest after recent years of severe staffing shortages, while additional temporary and limited permanent hiring opportunities are beginning to reopen.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time Non-Agenda Items:** Present were Brian Berreman and Scott Shindledecker. None

11:00 AM **Hauling Contract Bid Opening:** Present were Andy Ewing, Brian Berreman, Bryan Alkire, Jen Bernosky, Kathi Hooper, Matthew Stull, Michael Jackson and Scott Shindledecker.

Commissioner Teske reported that one bid was received from Evergreen Disposal for solid waste services. The proposal included a base rate of \$441,000 for year one, with a 5% annual increase each year over a five-year term, increasing to approximately \$536,038.26 in year five. The bid will be reviewed for compliance and consideration at the next meeting.

11:15 AM **Jail Design Meeting with Elevatus Architecture – Sheriff’s Office:** Canceled

11:30 AM **Disaster Debris Removal Services Contract:** Present were Brian Berreman, Jennifer Brown, Jesse Haag and Tony Petrusha.

Commissioner Teske with advise from the County Attorney and CTC representative, Marc Watkins, reviewed the disaster debris removal services contract and confirmed required updates, including clarifying in Section 19 the venue as “State of Montana”, completing administrative blanks and striking Section 23 (no construction against drafting party). Discussion also addressed permitting requirements for disposal sites and FEMA compliance. Jeremy Britton noted that a county resolution may be needed to authorize site use and will work with DES. The contract will be revised and returned for final execution. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to enter into the contract agreement with CTC Disaster Debris Removal. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Discussion that the intent is to move forward with priority sites identified as potential hazards ahead of any future high-water events to better position the County for response and recovery. No public comment. Motion carried.

11:45 AM **LCPA Trail Easement Discussion:** Present were Brian Berreman, Jennifer Brown and Tony Petrusha.

Jennifer Brown, LC Port Director, discussed ownership and maintenance of the Port walking paths, noting they were originally constructed with county grant funding and historically maintained by the County. She noted the Port currently lacks capacity to maintain them. She requested a cooperative arrangement in which the Port would retain ownership of the underlying property while granting the County an easement to maintain and manage the walking paths, specifically the section from the haul bridge along the east side of Libby Creek. It was noted that significant damage exists in one area and FEMA reimbursement is tied to ownership at the time of event. Tony Petrusha clarified that the proposed recreational easement applies only to the walking path and nature trail system on the west side of Libby Creek, including the loop walkway around the Turtle Ponds and the trail connection from Hall Bridge to Highway 2 via Fishpond Drive and Spencer Road. Discussion that the easement does not include the ponds, surrounding property or other park features and is intended solely to preserve public recreational access to the designated pathway system regardless of any future property sale or license agreement changes. The Port will provide a completed agreement and legal description for County Attorney review prior to further action.

11:52 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board