

October 21, 2026

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on October 21, 2026, in the Lincoln County Annex, Eureka Montana. Present were Commissioner Teske, Commissioner Hammons, Commissioner Duram, County Administrator Matt Williams and Clerk and Recorder Corrina Brown.

Zoom participation: Alaena Woody, Alyssa Ruttenburg, Ann German, Anthony Jenson, Boyd White, Bree Dahm, Brian Berreman, Chanel Geer, Dallas Bowe, Darren Short, DC Orr, DJ Welch, Jesse Haag, Jessica Jenson, John Boyke, Katie Anderson, Kyle Corwin, Linda Ralph, Melanie Howell, Michael Miller, Michelle Bianco, Mike Lee, Patty Rambo, Ray Stout, Rocke Gifford, Roland Jorgenson, Sandra, Scott Shindledecker, Sierra Gustin, Suzanne Resch and Tim Dougherty.

10:00 AM Administrative Issues/Old Business: Approve Minutes. PILT Claims. Claim Approvals. Action to Terminate Debris Removal Contract at Ross Creek. Actions to Approve Environmental Testing at FVCC Campus. County Administrator's Report. Commissioners Report: Present were Jennifer Nelson, Kerry Finley, Linda Hill and Nikki Meyer.

- Approval of Minutes: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the October 14, 2026, minutes. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
**it was noted for the record that the October 14th meeting's recording contained a brief gap due to the recording site reaching capacity and switching to a new recording. The interruption was attributed to an IT issue, with no further concerns noted.*
- PILT Claims: Leavitt Great West Insurance Services, LLC cobra coverage \$50. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to pay from PILT \$50 to Great West. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
RS Security LLC Consulting – jail feasibility study \$5,827.92. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve the invoice from RS Security LLC for \$5,827.92. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Claim Approvals: **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to approve the claims received last week. Second by Commissioner Hammons. No public comment. Motion carried.
- Action to Terminate Debris Removal Contract at Ross Creek: Administrator Williams recommended immediately terminating the contracts with CTC Disaster Response and Rostan Solutions LLC for the Ross Creek project due to significant discrepancies between reported and independently measured debris quantities, potentially jeopardizing FEMA reimbursement. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to terminate the contract with CTC Disaster Response and Rostan Solutions LLC in regard to the Ross Creek Project. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Administrator Williams addressed efforts to recover county funds and confirmed that additional invoices would be withheld pending reconciliation. Nikki Meyer received clarification that the removal contractor and monitoring contractor had jointly reported the quantities. Kyle Corwin, State of Montana, explained FEMA monitoring requirements and confirmed the state's support of the County completing remaining work. No further public comment. Motion carried.
- Actions to Approve Environmental Testing at FVCC Campus: Administrator Williams advised that he had been working with Flathead Valley Community College and Complete Restorations regarding mold and asbestos concerns at the campus building. He reported that initial testing identified a location where drywall joint compound contained asbestos, which could pose a concern during removal and remediation. He recommended approving a comprehensive mold assessment by MT Mold Dogs LLC for about \$5,500 and asbestos testing by Kirby Environmental, with costs estimated between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The testing would help determine the appropriate scope of abatement and restoration work. **Motion** by Commissioner Hammons to approve a \$5,500 contract with MT Mold Dogs LLC for mold testing and a contract with Kirby Environmental for asbestos testing, anticipated to cost less than \$5,000, with final cost based on the number of samples required. Both contracts to be paid from PILT funds. Second by Commissioner Duram. No public comment. Motion carried.
- County Administrator's Report: Administrator Williams reported that the Elections Office continues to meet all statutory requirements and is performing its duties effectively. Absentee ballots were mailed October 9th, and returned ballots are being scanned as received. Election judge training is scheduled in Eureka, Troy and Libby, with self-paced online training beginning Saturday. Sufficient election judges have been confirmed, and efforts are ongoing to establish a reserve team. Required election notices and advertisements will be issued shortly.
- Commissioners Report:
 - Commissioner Teske reported that the Lincoln County Port Authority met and elected Kevin Peck as Vice Chair. The board discussed the revolving loan fund for brownfield projects to support property and economic development. The Tahoe remains open for bids. Repairs to flood-damaged embankments were approved, with an estimated cost of \$113,000 and anticipated FEMA reimbursement. The board also discussed a winter road maintenance agreement for Industry Way involving the Port Authority and adjacent property owners, with the goal of finalizing the road project next year. Two applicants, Patty Rambo and Phillip Erquiaga, were approved for appointment to fill vacancies on the board, pending approval by the County Commissioners.
 - Commissioner Duram reported meeting with the Port Authority and forester.

10:15 AM Discuss County Forester Position and Action to Advertise for Position Opening: Present were Jennifer Curtiss, Jennifer Nelson, Kerry Finley, Linda Hill and Nikki Meyer.

Jennifer Nelson, County Forester, requested approval to advertise the County Forester position as a full-time position, noting the position is budgeted through Title III funds at a base wage of \$66,000 annually and an estimated total cost of \$78,000, including benefits. She reported that three of her four grants have been closed and she is completing the remaining Tidbits grant, which would allow for an overlap period to assist with the transition. Motion by Commissioner Duram to advertise for a County Forester. Second by Commissioner Hammons. Jennifer advised duties include development and maintenance of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, grant writing and administration, burn permits, Fire Safe Council coordination, website oversight and management of county and park lands. Discussion of the position benefit given that approximately 98% of the county is forested and the need for coordination with state and federal agencies. Michelle Bianco expressed appreciation for the scope of duties and voiced support for filling the position. No further public comment. Motion carried.

10:30 AM Public Comment Time Non-Agenda Items: Present were Jennifer Curtiss, Jennifer Nelson, Kerry Finley, Linda Hill, Nikki Meyer and Scott Mattheis.

DC Orr congratulated the Commissioners on moving forward with filling the County Forester position and expressed hope that a qualified replacement would be found. He raised concerns regarding the County Health Department and County Health Officer, citing the history of lung disease concerns in Libby and the former CARD Clinic. He urged the Commissioners to consider replacing the County Health Officer with someone who would earn the public’s trust.

Scott Mattheis, Airport Board Chair, inquired about the U.S. Forest Service lease extension at the Libby Airport. Administrator Williams confirmed receipt of the lease extension and that it will be on the agenda for next week’s meeting.

10:45 AM **Kootenai Forest Winter Collaborative Presentation & Request for Endorsement:** Present were Jennifer Curtiss, Kerry Finley, Linda Hill, Nikki Meyer and Scott Mattheis.

Scott Mattheis presented the Kootenai Forest Winter Travel Collaborative’s legislative proposal to establish designated motorized, quiet recreation and wilderness management areas. Tim Dougherty of Idaho Forest Group provided an update on the proposal and the Forest Service’s decision to pause the current environmental impact statement process pending changes to federal planning requirements. The proposal also includes active forest management to protect the Glen Lake Irrigation District watershed. Michelle Bianco recommended contacting Senator Tim Sheehy’s office for assistance, citing its involvement in forestry issues and support for wildfire management legislation. **Motion** by Commissioner Duram to fully endorse the Kootenai common ground legislation proposal and later **amended** the motion to direct the County Administrator to draft a letter to be approved. Second by Commissioner Hammons. **The Kootenai Forest Winter Travel Collaborative open meeting will be held at the Forest Supervisor’s office on October 22 at 2 pm.*

11:00 AM **Republican Central Committee - Presentation of Candidates for Impending District 2 County Commission Seat Vacancy:** Present were Jennifer Curtiss, Kerry Finley, Linda Hill, Nikki Meyer and Scott Mattheis.

Jennifer Curtiss, Lincoln County Republican Central Committee Chair, outlined the process for selecting candidates to fill the District 2 County Commissioner vacancy. After receiving seven applications and two withdrawals, the committee recommended Mike Lee, John Boyke, and Tony Wickham. She encouraged the public to reach out to both Commissioners Duram and Teske. Ann German inquired how many committee members participated in the selection process and Jennifer advised that ten committee members submitted their three candidate choices for consideration. Rocke Gifford stated that he had spoken with the commissioners and recommends considering candidates from Troy. D.C. Orr expressed concern about appointments resulting from resignations, stating that he believed the process had historically been political and not necessarily in the public’s best interest.

11:15 AM **County Administrator Report on County Boards and Governance:** Present were Kerry Finley, Linda Hill and Nikki Meyer.

Administrator Williams reported on his review of bylaws for county boards, commissions, districts and committees following recent board governance training through Montana State University. He identified inconsistencies and outdated provisions and recommended developing standardized model bylaws to improve compliance with state law, clarify procedures and promote consistency. He advised that he intends to bring a proposed resolution to the Commission following review by the County Attorney. Commissioners expressed support for the initiative, noting that standardized bylaws would improve governance, reduce confusion and assist boards in maintaining current policies.

11:30 AM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Brent Teske, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Corrina Brown, Clerk of the Board