

BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
March 2, 2020, Special Meeting Minutes

On Monday, March 2, 2020, a special meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 9:40 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Dan Allhands, Chairman, and Ron Nye present. Commissioner Jim Hart was absent as he was attending a NACO meeting in Washington, D.C. Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the Board of Commissioners, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Chris Christensen, Tommy Luksha, Lois Stephens, Tom Luksha Sr., Patty Davis, Alex Hogle, Tammy Mahlstedde, Bonnie O'Neill, Kacey Smart, Craig Schroder, Steve McNeece, Jani Flinn, Kathleen Mumme, Elizabeth Barnett, Phil Fortner, Karen Miller, and Van Puckett.

Hiring a Private Investigator for Investigation of a Grievance: Chris Christensen, County Attorney, discussed a recommendation from the Montana Association of Counties to hire an independent investigator to investigate an employee grievance. He discussed two investigators that are available, noting that this type of investigation usually runs around \$4,000 unless it gets very involved. He added that either of the two can start right away. Ron Nye asked about a time frame for the investigation. Chris stated he couldn't say for sure how long it would take but guessed it would be 30 days or less. He stated that a fair amount of it would be done by telephone and it would depend on what they want to look in to. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to hire Michelle Puiggari from Missoula at \$100 per hour for work time and \$40 per hour for travel time. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Further discussion included questions such as why the County can't handle the investigation, to which Chris responded that there needs to be an unbiased investigation; if the County will provide an attorney to be present when people are being questioned, to which Chris responded that if someone being questioned wants an attorney present they will need to provide their own; why the County Human Resource Department is not able to handle the problem, to which Dan responded that it would be a conflict of interest; and if the person whom the grievance is about has been notified, to which Chris responded that they have been notified. Sheriff Fortner stated that people don't have to answer if they don't want to and questioned the legality of questioning employees in their workplace. He added that an investigation will probably create more questions and lower morale.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Next meeting: The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

Dan W. Allhands, Chairman
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: March 31, 2020

Minutes prepared by:

Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the
Board of Commissioners

Attest: _____
Kathleen Mumme, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County