

BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
April 14, 2020, Meeting Minutes

On Tuesday, April 14, 2020, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 10:00 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Dan Allhands, Jim Hart, and Ron Nye present. Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk, was present to take minutes. Ryan Wolter, Information Systems Computer Support Specialist, was present to administer the public connection to the meeting via Webex.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Vicki Tilstra, Bonnie O'Neill, Craig Schroeder, Brett Schriock, Alex Hogle, Shelly Burke, and Jani Flinn.

Approval of Minutes: No minutes were available for approval.

Claims: The Board approved claims.

Open Health Insurance Proposals: The Board received four bids for the open health insurance proposals. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, Craig Schroeder, Undersheriff, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. The Insurance Committee will review the bids and compare plans, with assistance from Vicki and Jim, prior to making a recommendation to the Board. Craig discussed an informal poll taken by a Committee member, finding that the majority of counties contacted pay \$1,000 or more per person for insurance, and he noted that the cost for families in this county has gone up to \$1,200/month, which he said no one can afford. Vicki has received pushback from single payers about covering families. Discussion ensued, including Webex participants, about how helping employees with families will aid in retaining employees, competitive wages and benefits, planning for the future, the consequences and costs of employee turnover, the difficulty of comparing health plans, and the timeline for developing a recommendation. This topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.

Planning Office: Alex Hogle, Planning Director, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, Brett Schriock, IT Director, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for all or portions of these topics. Darlene Tussing, Planning Board President, and Pat Bradley, Planning Board Member, participated via phone/Webex.

- **Resolution of Road Name Change – Axolotl Ranch Road:** Alex noted one property owner that has not made contact since being notified of a proposed road name change to Axolotl Ranch Road, so the resolution is postponed.
- **Planning Board Virtual Public Hearings:** Alex, with members of the Planning Board via phone/Webex, recommended postponing the public hearing scheduled for April 27, 2020, until public hearing standards can be met successfully using a virtual meeting format, possibly the end of May, not knowing when COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted. Discussion included the complexities of scheduling and conducting public hearings, requirements for public participation and input, technical difficulties experienced by the Planning Board in practice meetings, ideas for increasing ease of use, decisions made in other counties, and the possibility of the Planning Board standing down until restrictions are lifted. The push to move forward with the development process and reschedule delayed hearings, especially by developers and property owners, was acknowledged. In consideration of the comments from the Planning Board and Planning Director, the Board approved delaying the public hearing until the following month, or when public access to virtual meetings can be made easier and more workable. Alex reviewed ideas his staff is exploring to make documents easily viewable during virtual meetings, and will work with the Planning Board to conduct additional practice sessions.

Great West Engineering: Jeremiah Theys, Great West Engineering, met with the Board via Webex to discuss the following topic. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, Brett Schriock, IT Director, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Great West Engineering Amendment #1 – TRMCC Site Improvements:** Jeremiah discussed Amendment #1 to the Agreement dated December 4, 2018, for the TRMCC Site Improvements project. He reviewed conversations with the nursing home Administrator who expressed financial concerns, and prioritized completion of the sidewalk to minimize liability and satisfy CMS requirements. Dan further explained financial concerns in light of undetermined COVID-19 costs, and discussion ensued about the importance of getting the sidewalk completed, ramifications of holding off on other parts of the project, details and revised costs, and including ADA access/parking in the initial phase. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to approve advertising for bids for TRMCC sidewalk replacement and extension, and ADA-compliant parking area and signage, pending concurrence by the Nursing Home Administrator. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Great West Engineering: A call was made to Dan McCauley, Great West Engineering, to discuss the following topic. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Jeremiah Theys, Great West Engineering, participated via phone/Webex.

- **Courthouse Drainage:** Dan M. said his team looked at drainage around the old courthouse about a month ago, and voiced no concerns about its structural integrity. The water coming into the building was observed, he suggested options for cleaning and dehumidifying, mentioned cosmetic and other concerns, and suggested the water is either surface or ground water, likely both, but said dealing with surface water first is easier and less expensive. He laid out surface water options, including drains, downspouts and rain gutters, storm sewers, sloping sidewalks, fixing window wells, quick removal of snow, ice, and rain debris, all with an emphasis on directing water away from the building. He suggested rebuilding adjacent ground with permeable materials to direct and drain water away from the foundation, not all at once but in phases, but noted that simpler solutions may solve the problems and be less intrusive than digging a trench. He also reviewed ideas for dealing with ground water issues, but only if problems persist after surface water solutions are implemented and observed up to a year. Timing and costs were discussed, as well as maintenance history, and Kacey Smart, Sanitarian's Assistant, commented via Webex that there were no water problems prior to the time when a small building in back of the Courthouse was torn down and made into a parking area, where snow is piled in winter. It was agreed that the first step is to install rain gutters, strong enough to handle snow sliding off the roof, and then discuss other drainage solutions.

Golf Course Taxes/Exempt Status: The Board discussed County Golf Course taxes and exempt status. Kristi Lyons, Golf Association Accountant, participated via phone/Webex. Shelly Burke, Treasurer, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Kristi and Jim, who is the Commission-designated representative on the Golf Association Board, discussed the relationship between the Association, who runs the golf course, and the County, who owns the course and its assets. For the past several years the Association has paid the property taxes, which amounted to a few hundred dollars per year, in spite of the fact that their agreement with the County specified they would not pay any taxes, and Kristi reviewed Association staffing history. The course was recently re-assessed by the State at a much higher rate, as a golf course with improved lands, like other highly-profitable courses are taxed, and the tax bill suddenly increased to over \$3,000 for 2019, all as a delayed result of legislation passed a few years ago. In conversations with the State, Kristi was told the golf course itself, i.e. the County, would need to apply for an exemption and include a description of its relationship with the Association. She explained 501(c)4 status and how it differs from the charitable nature of a 501(c)3. She and Jim laid out current options: since the Association is not actually responsible for any taxes, the County can pay the increased rate, wait to see whether an exemption is granted by the State, or the Board can decide to abate the County of the tax. Jim clarified that the County does get revenue from the subdivision surrounding the golf course, per the current agreement. Kristi recommended negotiating a new lease agreement with the Association to clarify the payment of taxes, even though the current lease doesn't expire until 2022, said it should be re-named a management agreement, and suggested that the County consider reimbursing the Association for some of all of the taxes it has paid for past years. Following discussion, this topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.

Airports: Jani Flinn, Airport Board Secretary, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. A call was made to Lance Bowser, Robert Peccia & Associates, to participate in the discussion of these topics. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Twin Bridges AIP 3-30-0080-014-2019 Final Report:** Lance said this Airport Improvement Project (AIP) at Twin Bridges is the AWOS project which has been completed and inspected, said that most of the grant amount has been reimbursed to the County, and this final report is required before the final payment can be processed. Following review, Ron Nye moved to approve the final closeout report for the Twin Bridges AWOS AIP 3-30-0080-014-2019. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Ennis/Big Sky Airport

- **AIP 3-30-0090-022-2020 Grant Offer:** Since this grant offer for AIP 3-30-0090-022-2020 has not yet been received, this topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.
- **SK Construction Notice to Proceed:** Lance briefly reviewed the status of the SK Construction Notice to Proceed, which is contingent on the receipt of grant documents. This topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.
- **Longhorn Ranches Avigational Easement:** Lance discussed the Longhorn Ranches Avigational Easement. He is working with the Montana Land Reliance to determine whether gravel is saleable within the terms of the conservation easement, since a substantial amount of material will be graded. This topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.
- **State of Montana (DNRC) Land Use License:** Lance described the DNRC Land Use License for disturbance of State land outside the existing right of way, including a \$200 fee, and the land will be reseeded after grading is completed. After review, Jim Hart moved to approve the State of Montana DNRC Land Use License No. 3073395, in the amount of a \$200 fee. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Discussion on Items Not Listed on the Agenda but within the Board's Jurisdiction:**
 - Lance discussed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Airport Grant Program, intended to provide economic relief to airports around the country affected by the COVID-19 public health emergency. He discussed 100% FAA funding, said Twin Bridges Airport could be allocated up to \$20,000 and Ennis/Big Sky Airport up to \$30,000, with some requirements and restrictions. Further discussion included managerial expenses and payroll, paperwork procedures, and other expenses that might be covered.
 - Lance discussed airport water wells. He reviewed the Airport Board's recommendation, options, requirements, future needs, water rights, pumping, costs, and getting quotes.

Abby St. Lawrence: Because Abby St. Lawrence was unable to attend today's meeting, the following topics were continued to the next Commission meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2020.

- **Pony-Mammoth Road: Review of FRTA Application; Update on conversation with surrounding landowners on potential reconstruction; determination of next decision points**
- **Adobetown Road: Discussion of current access and options for future action**
- **County Road 45: Review and approval of draft letter regarding blocked access; Discussion of next steps pending response to letter**

Furniture for Jury Room: The Board discussed the purchase of furniture for the new jury room in the Administrative Building. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Alternatives were discussed, including having work done at a prison, or purchasing furniture to match what is in the Public Meeting Room. Ron Nye moved to approve the bid from Lee's Office City to provide tables and chairs in the upstairs Jury Room of the Administration Building, at a cost of for \$5,430. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

COVID-19 Emergency Staffing: Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, reviewed COVID-19 Emergency Staffing at the nursing homes. She reported that several people have been hired at both facilities, but more are needed since travelers are still being utilized to fill shifts.

Asphalt Pavement Repair Proposal – RID-80: The Board discussed Asphalt Pavement Repair Proposal – RID-80. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Following review, Jim Hart moved to accept the bid by High Country Paving, Inc., as submitted by RID consultant Gaston

Engineering, for asphalt pavement repair on Big Sky Resort Road in the amount of \$1,350. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Beaverhead Cooperative Agreement for Sanitarian Services: The Board discussed a cooperative agreement with Beaverhead County for sanitation services. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. After reviewing the document, Ron Nye moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for Back-up Sanitarian Services between Madison County and Beaverhead County, effective today, April 14, 2020, and terminating on March 16, 2021, unless terminated earlier by either party with a thirty-day written notice. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Great West Engineering Task Order #29 – Grandstand Stairs: This topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.

Madison Valley Manor CDBG Grant - Updated Management Plan: The Board briefly discussed the updated management plan for the MVM CDBG Grant project. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Bonnie referenced group emails and a project schedule sent by the Project Manager, and anticipated the project will be moving forward, depending on building accessibility.

Discussion on Items Not Listed on the Agenda but within the Board's Jurisdiction: The Board discussed a letter of support for a Canty Boots grant application. Jim Hart moved to approve sending a letter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in support of Canty Boots, LLC's application for a Rural Business Development Grant. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Calendars: There was no discussion on this topic.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Next meeting: The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 21, 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: May 12, 2020

Minutes prepared by:

Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk

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