

**BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**July 7, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

On Tuesday, July 7, 2020, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 9:33 a.m. in the Second Floor Courtroom of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Dan Allhands and Ron Nye present. Commissioner Jim Hart participated in the meeting by Webex. Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Melissa Brummell, Joe Brummell, Bonnie O'Neill, Alex Hogle, Vicki Tilstra, Laurie Buyan, Jani Flinn, Bob Bates, and several who participated via phone/Webex. Ryan Wolter, IT Support Specialist, was present to administer the public link to the meeting via Webex.

**Approval of Minutes:** No minutes were available for approval.

**Claims:** The Board approved claims.

**Public Health Office/DES – COVID-19 Update:** Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, and Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, met with the Board to present the COVID-19 update. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Melissa reviewed numbers of COVID cases in the County and State, which are climbing, discussed contract tracing and quarantines, said people are not distancing, and emphasized the importance of maintaining six-foot distances from one another. Joe reviewed nationwide numbers, said Gallatin County and the City of Bozeman are considering closing their offices, reviewed Phase 2 guidelines from the Governor, and discussed the country's response to mask mandates. Melissa and Joe talked about community surveillance testing in Virginia City this Friday, July 10, 2020, with the National Guard assisting and providing equipment/supplies. Additional discussion included maintaining directives from the Governor's office, calling the Sanitarian's office with questions about cleaning, and supplies coming from the national stockpile for courts and schools. Joe discussed upcoming weather, and reviewed fire activity, which is minimal in Montana so far. In response to online questions, Melissa explained that information released about local cases must be general enough that specific people can't be identified, due to HIPA and Federal privacy laws. Dan advised that everyone exercise caution to prevent returning to Phase 1 restrictions, and said businesses can't afford to be shut down again.

**Skyline Bus Budget Request:** The Board discussed the budget request for the Skyline Bus Service. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Jim said a request was received, but it seems that the service has funds left over due to shutdowns in the last few months, and may be satisfied with receiving less than requested. The topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting, to gather additional information and discuss in relation to final budgets.

**Planning Office:** Alex Hogle, Planning Director, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Planning Board Summary:** Alex said the Planning Board had their regular meeting last Monday, most of which concentrated on the Lee's Pool subdivision in Big Sky. He is working on documenting what happened in the meeting, said the Planning Board's recommendations differed from the staff report, and discussed timing for the Commissioners' review and consideration of Lee's Pool. Alex discussed activities in the Planning Department, which remains quite busy with inquiries and applications. He informed the Board about increased concern and inquiries about two particular subdivisions – Indian Ridge near Ennis, and Eclipse subdivision near Sheridan – and also mentioned an ongoing dispute in the Drinville Minor subdivision in Sheridan.
- **911 Addressing Conflicts in Spanish Peaks Area:** Alex described the addressing conflicts in the Madison County side of the Spanish Peaks area of Big Sky. He said all 28 addresses are incorrect according to ordinance and it would be best for the functionality of emergency response and other service providers to correct them all, even though it will be a substantial inconvenience for the

landowners. Tommy Luksha, GIS Coordinator, described the process via Webex. The Board agreed that the corrections should be made, and Alex will inform the Board when it's done.

**Big Sky Resort Area District Coordination with Madison and Gallatin Counties:** Kevin Germain, Lone Mountain Land Company, and Daniel (Danny) Bierschwale, Executive Director for the Big Sky Resort Area District, talked with the Board via Webex about district coordination between the Big Sky Resort Area and Madison/Gallatin Counties. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Kevin said part of the District's strategic plan is a more thoughtful and strategic approach to funding for projects and investments. As a follow-up, he and Danny are talking to both Gallatin and Madison Counties, asking that the agendas for their joint Commission meetings regularly include a time where members of the Resort Tax community can review and discuss jointly-funded projects (such as transportation districts, Search & Rescue, Sheriff's department, Gallatin River Task Force, noxious weeds, and 911 system), with the goal of having the funding process be more coordinated with both counties. He said the Gallatin County Commissioners were very receptive to the idea, and the Madison County Board expressed their support as well. Dates for the next joint Commission meeting are still being determined.

**Purchase of Courthouse Air Purifier:** The Board discussed the purchase of air purifiers for the Courthouse. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. All agreed that whatever is needed should be obtained, and having a spare wouldn't hurt. Jim Hart moved to approve having the Safety Coordinator purchase two air purifiers for use in the Courthouse. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Journal Vouchers:** Ron Nye moved to approve Journal Vouchers for the 6/20 accounting period. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Speed Study Request for Highway 84 out of Norris:** The Board discussed an inquiry regarding a speed study for the 12 miles of Highway 84 east of Norris. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. The resident who sent the inquiry lives along that stretch and expressed concern about safety, motorist speed, and having the study conducted in the summer when use is highest. Jim said the original study was requested at the end of 2015, and he answered the inquiry last week noting that MDT reviewed the area last fall, and that the Sheriff is aware of the issue.

**Safety Department Request for Additional Funds:** The Board discussed the Safety Department's request for additional funds. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. The Safety Department is tracking COVID-19 material expenses but unsure of when these expenses will be reimbursed either federally or by the State, and requests additional funds to cover these expenses for the coming fiscal year. Ron Nye moved to approve the request to add \$10,000 to the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Safety budget for the purchase of additional COVID-19 supplies. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Airports:** Jani Flinn, Airport Board Secretary, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant, were present for all or a portion of this topic.

- **Ennis Big Sky Airport – NorthWestern Energy Agreement:** There was no discussion on this topic.

**Human Resources:** Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, and Bob Bates, Safety Coordinator, were present for all or a portion of this topic.

- **Termination of Resolution 15-2020, Authorizing Hazard Pay to Nursing Homes:** Bonnie updated the Board regarding hazard pay for nursing home employees during the COVID pandemic, previously approved in Resolution 15-2020, and asked if the Board wishes to continue or terminate the Resolution. She said the additional \$2.50 per hour has amounted to \$121,047.46 since April 1, 2020, and the hiring of temporary staff, also included in the Resolution, has cost over \$23,000 to date, and said the Nursing Home Administrator asks that the Board consider extending it another 90 days. Vicki said the Resolution was created to allow for emergency funding, and noted that funds received so far are in a separate account per the advice of the auditor, awaiting guidelines. Jim said the Governor's

office is discussing opening nursing homes to families of residents, and opening other senior facilities. Bonnie said some nursing home visiting areas, with masks required, have been set up, which has been helpful for lonely residents and family members. Further discussion included mask wearing, which was supported by online comments, appreciation of nursing home employees, and keeping everyone safe. Jim noted that financial reimbursement from FEMA and the CARES Act is limited to specific services but all County employees are at risk, and recommended either terminating the Resolution or paying everyone extra. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to terminate Resolution 15-2020, a Resolution Authorizing Hazard Pay to Nursing Home Employees due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, effective after the next pay period. Ron Nye seconded the motion. Additional discussion included the additional temporary employees and determining when their 90 days is up, clarification on whether an additional resolution is needed, CNA staffing, traveling staff, and that this motion is only for the additional \$2.50 per hour pay, not to terminate the temporary staffing. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**IT – Replacement Phones for Madison Valley Manor:** There was no discussion on this topic.

**Purchase of Courthouse Air Purifier (continued):** Bob Bates, Safety Coordinator, came to discuss the purchase of air purifiers for the Courthouse. Bonnie O’Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, were present for this portion of the meeting. Bob said the recommendation from Buffalo Restorations was to use an air purifier in the downstairs restroom of the Courthouse and leave the doors open at night. Courthouse drainage and downspout re-routing were briefly discussed. Bob also said testing was done earlier today at the museum, accompanied by himself and a museum volunteer, and he expects a report in about 10 days.

**Public Discussion on Items Not Listed on the Agenda but Within the Board’s Jurisdiction:** Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, brought up having cleaning and sanitizing done during the day in the lobbies of the Courthouse and Administrative Office Building. She noted that the volume of people can be high, especially at the Treasurer’s/Motor Vehicle Office, and suggested surfaces be wiped down several times throughout the day since employees don’t always have the opportunity to do so. Bonnie said the Safety Department and Custodians have been discussing overnight sanitizers, noted the part-time custodial position is still being advertised with no current responses, and there is no one available to be assigned to daily sanitizing at this point. Face masks were discussed, and the Board encouraged the use of masks in public spaces.

**Calendars:** The Board reviewed calendars. With the increase of COVID cases in the State and several agencies discouraging their employees from attending in-person meetings, the Interagency Coordinating Group BBQ and meeting, scheduled for Thursday, July 9, 2020, was cancelled.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

**Next meeting:** The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Second Floor Courtroom of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

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Dan W. Allhands, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: August 4, 2020

Minutes prepared by:

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Jane Bacon, Commissioners’ Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathleen Mumme, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County