

BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Special Meeting Regarding Public Health Office Relocation
July 24, 2019, Meeting Minutes

On Thursday, July 24, 2019, a special meeting of the Madison County Board of Commissioners came to order at 1:05 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Ron Nye, Chairman, Jim Hart, and Dan Allhands present. Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the Madison County Board of Commissioners, was present to take minutes.

Others in attendance at the meeting were Phil Fortner, Sheriff, Bob Bates, Safety Coordinator, Kathy Barnes, Sheriff's Assistant, Brett Schriock, IT Manager, Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, Lynda Holt, Communications Coordinator, Missy Wood, Detention Officer, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Chris Tenny, Deputy Sheriff, Douglas Young, Board of Health Chairman, Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, Tina Pfertsh, Public Health Nurse, and Justin Ekwall, Deputy County Attorney.

Melissa Brummell opened the meeting by stating that she understands that the Public Health Office has been discussed as a replacement office for the Sheriff's Office. She stated that she and her staff have concerns about relocating the office which would disrupt the services they provide and make fulfilling statutory requirements extremely difficult if not impossible to fulfill. She added that patient privacy, confidentiality, and HIPAA are at stake and cited legal obligations of the Public Health Office as outlined in MCA 50-2-116.

Melissa listed several items that will need to be addressed before the office can be relocated including equipment needs; adequate space for daily operations such as room for staff, a waiting area, an exam room, and private staff areas for confidential calls and interviews; confidential storage areas for medical files; and updating insurance contracts.

There was much discussion about vaccine storage and the need for a state approved refrigerator that can be monitored remotely by wifi. Melissa also voiced concerns about confidential voice mails, internet connection, and wifi availability, noting that they need a dedicated and confidential fax machine that can't be accessed by anyone but the intended user. There was also much discussion about ADA compliance and patient privacy. Melissa provided the Board with dimensions of the current office furniture, file cabinets, and equipment and discussed space needs, stating that logistically the space that is being provided will not function for them. Doug Young discussed HIPPA regulations, restrooms, and privacy issues. He also asked about construction and a date the relocation would need to take place.

At this point the discussion turned to the possibility of relocating the Department of Revenue Office. Phil asked about the contract for office space and when it is due to be renew. Laurie responded that it is expired and currently on a month to month basis until the contract is renewed. She added that 30 day written notice is required if the County chooses not to renew the contract. After much more discussion, Dan Allhands suggested that to expedite the process, the Sheriff should move to the Department of Revenue Office, Public Health could stay where they're at, and Dispatch could stay where they are. Ron expressed the need to contact the Department of Revenue and have a discussion with them. Dan Allhands moved to notify the Department of Revenue that we're in an emergency situation with our Sheriff's Department and are looking at Department of Revenue space and to work with them to find something else, and that this will be their 30 day notice. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

The Board continued the meeting in the Commissioners' Conference room later in the day, with Brandy Hilton, Area Supervisor, Department of Revenue, present; and Mark Olson, Regional Supervisor, Department of Revenue, participating by telephone. Jim Hart expressed the need to relocate the Sheriff's Office and asked how many people would be in the office at any given time. Mark stated that there are currently seven people in the office and they are in the process of adding one more, making a total of eight.

Each of them works at least four days per week and are either in the office or in the field. There was discussion regarding the 30 day notice of the possibility that they will need to move. Mark stated that 30 days is really tight, that he would need to talk to their leadership team, and that they would require the same amount of space that they currently have. There was discussion about whether the office would need to be in Virginia City or if something in other areas would be acceptable. Mark stated that a majority of their staff currently lives in Ennis and that Ennis may have more availability. It was agreed that the 30 day notice should be made in writing.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Ronald E. Nye, Chairman
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: August 13, 2019

Minutes prepared by:

Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant

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