

BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
February 22, 2022, Meeting Minutes

On Tuesday, February 22, 2022, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 9:32 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Dan Allhands, Ron Nye, and John Heckler present. Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Jim Kaatz, Landon Dybdal, Cody Marxer, Laurie Buyan, Vicki Tilstra, Paula McKenzie, Hannah Brook, Antoinette Bloem, Eric Deeg, Britani Allhands, Tommy Luksha, Phil Fortner, Lynda Holt, Emilie Sayler, Dale Grose, Kila Shepherd, and Jennifer Westfall. Ryan Wolter, IT Support Specialist, administered the Webex connection. Those who attended via Webex or by phone included Allison Veland, Craig Erickson, Becky Lawson, Lance Bowser, Gail Nelson, Justin Ekwall, Britani Allhands, Jani Flinn, Hanna Dietrich, Joe Brummell, T. Dowton, Brett Schriock, Lynda Holt, Pete Jaginski, Mike Callahan, Tammy Mahlstedt, Janie Alt, Jackie Lev, Jennifer Martens, Carmin Hill, and unidentified phone attendees.

Approval of Minutes: No minutes were available for approval.

Ruby Valley Medical Center Twin Bridges Medical Clinic: Jim Kaatz, Ruby Valley Healthcare Foundation, met with the Board to discuss the Twin Bridges Medical Clinic. Landon Dybdal, Ruby Valley Medical Center CEO, was present for this portion of the meeting. Jim presented and reviewed a proposal regarding the Twin Bridges Medical Center, developed after Tony Simonsen, Ruby Valley Medical Center Board, met with the County Attorney's office. Jim briefly reviewed the Clinic's history, described the property and surrounding properties using an aerial photo, and discussed a common boundary adjustment with the County lot adjacent to the Clinic property. The Board expressed support for helping with the Clinic's planned expansion, and discussion included surveying the property, the County gifting property to the Clinic, setbacks, approval from State Building Codes Division, evasion review procedure, potential environmental hazards, benefits to Ruby Valley of expanding the Clinic, quality growth planning, and the legal requirements for transferring publicly-owned property. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the transfer of County-owned property to Ruby Valley Medical Center, for the specific use of expansion of Twin Bridges Medical Clinic, upon approval by the Deputy County Attorney. The land to be transferred is generally described as all the land owned by Madison County south of and contiguous to the existing Twin Bridges Medical Clinic to within five feet of the existing old County shop building, and will be more specifically defined by survey. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Public Discussion on Items Not Listed on the Agenda but Within the Board's Jurisdiction: Dan said he had a phone conversation with Jeff Streeter, Montana Department of Transportation, regarding the DOT Roadway Functional Classification Review on last week's Agenda, and recommended that the Board arrange a conference call with him later this week to discuss and clarify the topic.

Claims: The Board approved claims.

Planning Office: Cody Marxer, Planner I, met with the Board to discuss the following topic.

- **Amended Plat – Stoneridge View #9:** Cody said the amended plat for Stoneridge View #9 is for a platted building envelope west of McAllister in the North Meadow Creek area, and it is a request to relocate the building envelope to an area with better drainage. It was submitted to exemption review after being approved by the homeowner's association. There was discussion about well and septic, and DEQ approval. Because the mylars lacked a signature box, the topic was continued to a later date.

Elected Board Appointments by Acclamation: The Board considered elected board appointments by acclamation. Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the Board of Commissioners, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance

Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Discussion included residency and/or ownership requirements, and Laurie will research the applicable statutes. Later in the meeting, Paula McKenzie, Clerk and Recorder, also said she will check the requirements. The topic was continued to later in the meeting.

Johnson Controls Annual Service Agreement for Madison Valley Manor: This topic was continued to a future agenda.

Finance: Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, met with the Board to discuss the following topic.

- **2021/2022 Fiscal Year GASB 75 Valuation:** Vicki explained that the GASB 75 valuation has been brought before the Board every two years. An actuary is hired to help the County come up with a required reporting figure, and even though the cost for the actuary is high the reporting is necessary for Federal funding. After discussion, John Heckler moved to hire Actuaries Northwest to perform the Madison County 2021/2022 fiscal year GASB 75 valuation and the 2022/2023 roll-forward valuation for the amount of \$11,200, plus expenses for travel and presentations, as set forth in the letter dated February 14, 2022. Ron Nye seconded the motion. Discussion included the data gathered by the Finance Office for the actuaries and their resulting report, and researching additional actuaries in two years. After discussion, all voted aye and the motion carried.

Employee Benefits (Insurance) Committee: The Board discussed the insurance committee and John volunteered to be on it. After review, Ron Nye moved to approve the insurance committee consisting of Laurie Buyan, a representative from HR (Kila or Jennifer), Britani Allhands, Gail Nelson, Rebekah Norton, and John Heckler. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Great West Engineering/SMA Architects: Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering, and Becky Lawson, SMA Architects, met with the Board via Webex to discuss the following topics. Hannah Brook, Grant Writer/Administrator, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Madison Valley Manor Kitchen Renovation Project:** Becky said she is still contacting general contractors regarding the MVM kitchen project and hearing they are not interested because they are involved in other projects, so there is no change to the project schedule at this point. There was discussion about alternatives to expedite the purchase and installation of the walk-in, Johnson Controls invoices, and scheduling a walk-through with the engineers to check on the generator and boilers and finish off that part of the project.
- **Department of Commerce (DOC) CDBG Grant Extension:** Craig noted the current CDBG contract with the DOC expires June 30, 2022, they have received the extension request but haven't responded yet, and he anticipates having an answer at next week's meeting.

First West Insurance: Antoinette Bloem and Eric Deeg, First West Insurance, met with the Board to discuss health insurance. Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Paula McKenzie, Clerk and Recorder, were present for all or a portion of this topic.

- **Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Insurance Update:** Antoinette is Madison County's life and health insurance agent, the County's current health coverage is with BCBS of Montana, and the plan is due to be renewed on July 1, 2022, so she and Eric came to discuss benefits and renewal projections. She reviewed the three health plan options offered to employees, noting that last year the Board approved contributing to premiums for employees with dependents. Eric reviewed a preliminary renewal estimate and executive summary for the upcoming plan year, including the factors that influence rates, County claims history, the benefits of the two high-deductible/HSA plans, insurance company options in Montana, BCBS claims projections, catchup of care due to pandemic, out-of-pocket costs, employee incentives, tools for improving individual health management, County demographics and health plan enrollment percentages, BCBS methodology for determining rates, and Eric's goal of a 0% increase in rates. There was discussion about how to cut expenses, attracting and retaining good employees, the long relationship with BCBS, employee engagement tools, incentivizing good health, and employee health tracking systems. The BCBS rates for the upcoming year will be finalized in late March.

Jefferson Ambulance District Data Transfer: Tommy Luksha, GIS Coordinator, met with the Board to discuss the Jefferson Ambulance District Data Transfer. Hannah Brook, Grant Writer/Administrator, Phil Fortner, Sheriff, and Lynda Holt, Communications Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting, and Joe

Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, participated by Webex. Tommy said he sent updated GIS data to Jefferson County for input into their CAD system, which should solve any Dispatch issues regarding 911 calls between the two Counties. There was discussion about 911 calls taking more time due to having different phone systems, streamlining the process to save minutes and save the caller from having to explain to more than one person, relaying the call instead of transferring because any transfer causes delays, how best to handle the calls for the fastest response, officer dispatch for non-911 calls, data not transferring with call transfers, future implementation of NG (Next Generation) 911 system, the current protocol of transferring the call but staying on the line with the caller, improving cross-county communications and relationships, Jefferson County integrating the data so their Dispatch personnel can clearly see a map of the ambulance district in northern Madison County, ability to dispatch ambulances from more than one district to enable the fastest response, and the requirement for Dispatch to respond within 90 seconds 90% of the time. After discussion, it was decided that Lynda will initiate setting up a coordination meeting with Jefferson County with all involved parties to get these issues worked out and streamlined, and the Commissioners will also stay in touch with the Jefferson County Commissioners.

Airports: Lance Bowser, Robert Peccia & Associates, met with the Board via Webex to discuss the following airport topics. Hannah Brook, Grant Writer/ Administrator, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **FAA Grant Amendment No. 2 – Ennis Big Sky Airport AIP 3-30-0090-021-2020:** Lance stated that FAA Grant Amendment #2 is a simple amendment that the County requested several months ago and is finally coming through. It allows the FAA to reimburse the County for additional eligible costs already incurred and is the last document to be filed before the grant can be closed. After review, John Heckler moved to accept Amendment No. 2 to Grant Agreement AIP Grant No. 3-30-0090-021-2020. Ron Nye seconded the motion. The document will be e-signed and forwarded to the County Attorney for signature, then forwarded to the FAA. Lance pointed out the FAA is holding 2.5% retainage of the grant amount and about \$500,000 is due to be reimbursed to the County, so he will submit everything as soon as possible. He also explained the AIP numbers, indicating that Ennis Airport has received 21 Federal grants. After discussion, all voted aye and the motion carried.
- **AWOS Maintenance Contract Renewal – Ruby Valley Field:** Lance explained the calibration and maintenance contract for tri-annual verification of the certified AWOS weather station at Ruby Valley Field, said he sent the airport a list of mandatory items to be included in the inspections, and Hannah pointed out the annual costs. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the agreement from DBT Transportation Services for aviation support and maintenance services as presented, at a cost of \$5,650 annually, for the Ruby Valley Field AWOS system. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Lance noted there is a push for the FAA to eventually take these AWOS systems over.

Public Health Office: Emilie Saylor, Public Health Director, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Dale Grose, Weed Program Coordinator, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **COVID Update including Nursing Homes Status:** Emilie updated the Board regarding COVID status. The County has had a total of 1,783 confirmed positive cases as of today with 9 currently-active cases, there have been 22 County deaths with two additional possibilities, and there are no known active hospitalizations. The State has had 263,358 confirmed positives, active cases are down to 2,315, there have been 3,125 fatalities, and active hospitalizations are down to 212. There has been a big decrease in the numbers as the Omicron surge is waning. She reviewed the chart of daily new cases showing an average of 2.4 cases per day compared to 12-14 cases per day during the Omicron surge, noted the test positivity rate is down to 11%, and said she expects further decreases in the next week. She compared current and cumulative active cases with other Montana counties, reviewed the vaccine dashboard map showing fully-vaccinated people in Montana at 54%, the County is holding at 45%, and reviewed vaccine uptake by age group. Madison Valley Manor currently has 21 residents and no staff or residents are isolated or hospitalized. COVID testing is done regularly for staff, and as needed for anyone symptomatic. Transmission rate in the County is high. Visitation is allowed with screening and testing prior to entry. Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center has 25 residents and is again in outbreak status as of February 17th. No residents are infected, quarantined, or hospitalized, but one staff member is in quarantine. Transmission rate in the County is high. Residents are tested when symptomatic, and staff are tested if symptomatic or unvaccinated. Visitation is allowed following CDC recommendations on testing and

screening. Staff vaccination rates are 86% with two more having had a first dose, and 96% of residents are vaccinated. Emilie when new variants come out she is informed about what to watch for, and she has not been contacted about any new variants. She noted that people were a lot sicker with the Delta variant than with Omicron.

- **Public Health Officer/Medical Director Appointment:** Emily updated the Board on the changes made this year to public health law in Montana under House Bill (HB) 121, and reviewed changes to the power and duties of health boards. The health boards no longer appoint health officers, but recommend any appointment to the governing body, which is the Board of Commissioners in Madison County. The Board of Health held a special meeting regarding the appointment of Margaret Bortko as Health Officer and Medical Director and unanimously recommended her appointment, and Emilie briefly described her background, qualifications, and history with the Board of Health. Emilie also noted that the Board of Health can no longer make new rules without Board of Commissioners' approval. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the recommendation of the Madison County Board of Health to appoint Margaret A. Bortko as Health Officer and Medical Director for Madison County Board of Health and Madison County Public Health Department, respectively. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Weed Office: Dale Grose, Weed Program Coordinator, met with the Board to discuss the following topic.

- **Revised Weed Management Plan:** Dale said the Weed Management Plan is revised every two years, pointed out that the fee for subdivision management plans was updated, and answered questions about several details in the plan. There was discussion about weed management at the gravel pits. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the Madison County Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan with corrections. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. There was additional discussion about using State Procurement pricing, highway contracts, and re-hiring trained employees for continuity.

Human Resources: Kila Shepherd, HR Director, and Jennifer Westfall, Human Resources, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Gail Nelson, TRMCC Administrator, participated via Webex in this portion of the meeting.

- **Compensation Rate for MVM Infection Prevention Officer:** Kila pointed out that Madison Valley Manor has not been able to recruit a nurse for the Infection Prevention Officer position and the Administrator is requesting advertising for the position to include applicants without a nursing degree who still meet certain requirements. There was discussion about the similar part-time position at TRMCC with Gail noting their IPO does not wish to cover both nursing homes for more hours, the job description, and the rate of pay being dependent on qualifications. Following discussion, John Heckler moved to advertise for an Infection Prevention Officer at Madison Valley Manor at a rate of \$24.63 per hour if the applicant is not an RN or LPN. Ron Nye seconded the motion. John stated that he wants to see the job description. All voted aye and the motion carried. John expressed a preference for a wage range for every new hire, and Dan stated he would like to see hiring documentation.

Human Resource Grievance: The Board discussed a grievance initiated by Human Resources. Justin Ekwall, Deputy County Attorney, participated in this portion of the meeting by Webex. Dan stated that after the Board's investigation into the HR grievance and consultation with the County Attorney and Deputy County Attorney, the HR grievance with the Madison County Sheriff's office is denied. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the Board of Madison County Commissioner's response of denial to the grievance filed by Kila Shepherd, HR Director, toward Phil Fortner, Sheriff, as presented. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Elected Board Appointments by Acclamation (continued): The Board briefly discussed questions regarding elected board appointments by acclamation. After review, John Heckler moved to approve County District Trustee Appointments by acclamation, excluding the two for Yellowstone Mountain Club Rural until more is learned from the County Attorney's office about resident requirements, as follows: John Anderson to the Alder Rural Fire District Board for a three year term that will expire in May of 2025; Lois Stephens and Lyman Bennett III to the Virginia City Rural Fire District Board for three year terms that will expire in May of 2025; Max Moltich and Bruce Peterson to the Sheridan Rural Fire District Board for three year terms that will expire in May of 2025; Dan Hoppel to the Harrison Rural Fire District Board for a three year term that will expire in May of 2025;

E. Otis Thompson and Jeffrey Sussman to the Madison Valley Rural Fire District Board for three year terms that will expire in May of 2025; James (Jim) Hageman to the Madison Valley Hospital District Board for a three year term that will expire in May of 2025; Pamela Ward and Carol M. Braach to the Ruby Valley/Sheridan Hospital District Board for three year terms that will expire in May of 2025; Dale Smail to the Alder Water and Sewer District Board for a four year term that will expire in May of 2026; and Terri McCarty to the Harrison Water and Sewer District Board for a four year term that will expire in May of 2026. Ron Nye seconded the motion. Dan read the declarations aloud, and the Yellowstone Mountain Club Rural appointments were continued to the next regular Commission meeting. All voted aye and the motion carried. Later in the meeting after adjourning to the Commissioner's office, the motion was amended by John Heckler to include approval of all of the candidates listed above, as well as Matthew Kidd and Mike DuCuennois appointed by acclamation to the Yellowstone Mountain Club Rural Fire District Board for three year terms that will expire in May of 2025. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Calendars: The Board adjourned to the Commissioner's office and reviewed calendars. Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant, was present for this portion of the meeting.

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

Next meeting: The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

Dan W. Allhands, Chairman
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: March 29, 2022

Minutes prepared by:

Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk

Attest: _____
Paula McKenzie, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County