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STATE OF MONTANA MADISON COUNTY

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Paula McKenzie, CLERK & RECORDER

Fee: \$ 0.00

BY: *Paula McKenzie*

To: FILED, ,

Madison County

Commissioners' Work Session Meeting

March 23, 2026, 10:00 am Mountain Time until concluded

103 W Wallace St, Virginia City, MT 59755, United States

First Floor Public Meeting Room

Administrative Office Building, Virginia City, Montana

Present:

Duke W. Gilman, Commissioner, District 1

Ron E. Nye, Commissioner, District 2, Chairman

William A. Todd, Commissioner, District 3

In attendance:

Ryan Wolter, IT Support Specialist, administered the Webex connection

Heather Thurs, BOC Clerk

Attendee List:

Kyle Nye

Allison Fread, Battle Ridge Builders

Kaleena Miller, MSU Extension

Kristi Millhouse, Director of Finance

Marissa Ford, MSU Extension

Bryce Lyman, COP construction

Shawna Lutgen, Grants Manager

Allen Rohrbach, Madison Valley Medical Center

Bryant Harp, Madison Valley Medical Center

Jim Hageman, Madison Valley Medical Center

Duncan Hedges, Sheriff

David Buchler, Madison County Attorney

Colton Lauer, Madison County Deputy Attorney

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

2. Public Comment (Please Limit to 5 Minutes Per Person)

None

3. Report of Committees

3.1. Madison County Courthouse Rehabilitation and Addition

Pat Jacobs, representing Architecture Trio, informed the Commissioners that last week's pre-bid meeting was successful. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting including prime contractors and subcontractors. There were several questions from bidders that will be addressed. The final addendum is due 3/24/2026 at 3:00 PM. The deadline for bids remains unchanged.

Comment: Jacobs. Discussion: Commissioner Todd

3.2. Nursing Home Discussion

Christine Preece reported the current census. TRMCC has 17 residents. MVM has 15, with one resident currently hospitalized. The curbs and gutters projects are progressing. A special meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2026 to review the MVM kitchen project. Third person surveys are in process.

Comment: Preece. Discussion: Commissioner Todd, Commissioner Nye, Commissioner Gilman

4. Unfinished Business

None

5. New Business

5.1. Sarah Bickford Historic Truck Garden

Pat Jacobs announced Architecture Trio will be leasing the Sarah Bickford property from the Montana Heritage Commission. The property is west of the campground, at the east end of Virginia City. The property was originally a garden and orchard that provided food to the miners of the area. The goal of the project is to redevelop food producing gardens on the property. She and Kristen Ruppel will be working together with the Virginia City Preservation Alliance and local organizations to procure grants for the garden, including Agri-tourism grants.

Comment: Jacobs. Discussion: Commissioner Todd, Commissioner Nye, and Commissioner Gilman

5.2. Bid Opening Lake Road Bridge

There were 5 bids presented. All bids met requirements to be eligible for consideration.

Battle Ridge Builders \$129,525.00

Highland Construction Services \$166,000.00

R. Rhodes Construction, Inc \$218,765.43

TCA, Inc \$139,450.00

COP Construction \$173,700.00

The bids will be taken under advisement, reviewed by the engineers, and considered for award.

Comment: Lutgen and Theys. Discussion: Commissioner Todd, Commissioner Nye, and Commissioner Gilman

5.3. Fairgrounds Parking Lot Design

Jeremiah Theys, engineer with Great West commented the permits are in process. The proposed constructions areas will need to be evaluated to determine the exact size of the area

that is identified as wetland. Once the Army Corp of Engineers acknowledges receipt of the buy-sell agreement, work can begin on the event center grading. The area will need to be staked and the documents recorded, prior to excavation. There are wetland mitigation credits to be applied to the project, saving approximately \$200,000.00. A citizen is willing to donate some excavation work toward the project. There will be a substantial amount site preparation required. The logistics of the site preparation will be further discussed in the future.

Comment: Theys and Nye. Discussion: Commissioner Todd, Commissioner Nye, and Commissioner Gilman

5.4. MSU Extension Program Update

Marissa Ford updated on the 4-H program. Currently there are over 330 children and over 500 adult volunteers active in the program. Recent program highlights included Achievement Day, Large Animal Science Workshop, Livestock Judging Workshop, and Clover Bud Day. Upcoming events include a Quality Assurance Training. This training is designed to teach members how to ethically raise happy and healthy animals.

Kaleena Miller updated on the Adult Education Program. Recently the County Extension hosted three round table events in Alder, Whitehall, and Ennis with a total of approximately 75 attendees. The recent calving simulator event in Alder was successful. Upcoming events include a Composting workshop and a Tree Planting and Pruning workshop. Extension is organizing a dual county, 9 month long, adult leadership program.

There was discussion regarding the proposed budget of the County Extension for the next fiscal year.

Discussion: Commissioner Todd and Commissioner Nye

5.5. Gravel Pit Policy

Commissioner Nye expressed concern that some activities occurring at the gravel pits may be in violation of the current lease. It was noted that current owners may not be aware of the non-compliance. Commissioner Todd stated that any non-compliance should be addressed immediately. Buchler commented the county attorney office is able to assist with communication, if needed. Commissioner Nye stated it is important for the county, and all parties involved, to be in compliance.

Comment: Lutgen. Discussion: Commissioner Todd, Commissioner Nye, and Commissioner Gilman.

5.6. Madison Valley Hospital District Resolution

Allen Rohrbach, CEO of Madison Valley Medical Center, updated the Commissioners on the recent Resolution passed by the Board of the Madison Valley Hospital District. The hospital district trustees have some concerns with the language of SB260. The new resolution was written by the trustees to clarify the intent of the Madison Valley Hospital District and to reiterate

the original purpose of the 4.8 voted mills was to support the successful operation and maintenance of the Madison Valley Medical Center. The purpose of the voted mills has not changed. The levy is a minimum, and additional mills can be added over the eight-year period. There is an eight-year reconciliation payment requirement. The hospital district would like to have the funds distributed through the warrant system. The board requested the Commissioners preside over the preparation, execution and maintenance of an interlocal agreement between the two districts. If the proposed Big Sky Hospital District vote passes, this agreement will need to be executed between May 5, 2026 and July 1, 2026.

Hageman commented the warrant system simplifies the administrative requirements. The warrant process is transparent and auditable. Distributing funds through the warrant process will also reduce the requirements for the interlocal agreement. Madison Valley Medical Center currently operates successfully on a month to month budget. The warrant system could ensure continuity of funding.

Commissioner Todd noted there is an absence of statutory language for the process. Commissioner Todd noted there is no statute for the Commissioners to have oversight in an interlocal agreement.

Comment: Rohrbach and Hageman. Discussion: Commissioner Todd, Commissioner Nye, and Commissioner Gilman

5.7. Finance – Pay Discrepancies

Kristi Millhouse, Finance Director, stated in the March 1st conversion from semi-monthly to biweekly paychecks, the number of paychecks remaining in the fiscal year changed from seven pay periods to eight. There was a miscalculation on the paychecks of salaried employees. The original calculation inadvertently included days worked outside of the fiscal year. Millhouse reported the calculations have been corrected, verified with WIPFLI, and employees have been compensated.

Comment: Millhouse. Discussion: Commissioner Todd and Commissioner Nye

5.8. MOA EPA Brownfields Coalition

County attorneys have reviewed the MOA and reported no concerns. The MOA can be presented for approval at the next meeting.

Comment: Buchler. Discussion: Commissioner Todd, Commissioner Nye, and Commissioner Gilman

Adjournment

RESOLVED: With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:02 am. The upcoming Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Administrative Building in Virginia City, Montana.

Signed: Ronald E. Nye

Date: 3/31/2026

Ronald E. Nye, Commissioner, Chairman

Date Approved: March 31, 2026

Signed: Heather Thurs

Date: 3/31/2026

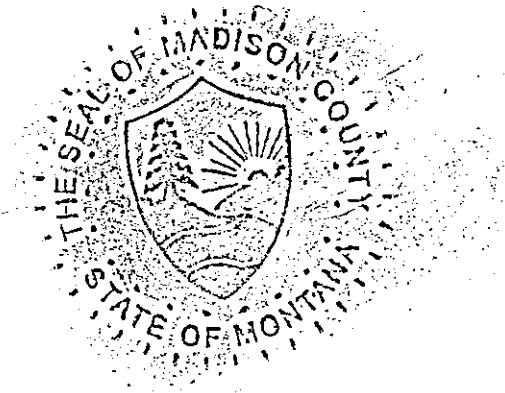
Minutes prepared by:

Heather Thurs, BOC Clerk

Attest: Paula McKenzie

Date: 3/31/26

Paula McKenzie, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County



Audio Type	Name
	Brett Schriock
VoIP	Brett Schriock
	Clint
VoIP	Clint
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	Emilie Saylor
VoIP	Emilie Saylor
	Justin Cole
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	Jeremiah Theys
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	Kaye C
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	Anne Sullivan
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	Christine Preece
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	Ben Rumson
VoIP	Ben Rumson
	John
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	Logan Williams
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	Janie Alt
VoIP	Janie Alt
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	Rebecca W Deboer
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