

BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
April 3, 2020, Special Meeting Minutes

On Friday, April 3, 2020, a special meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 1:35 p.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 Ryan Wolter, Bonnie O'Neill, Joe Brummell, Melissa Brummell, Phil Fortner, Vicki Tilstra, Chris Christensen, and Laurie Buyan.

Approval of Minutes: No minutes were available for approval.

Airports: A call was made to Lance Bowser, Robert Peccia & Associates, to discuss the following airport topic.
Ennis/Big Sky Airport

- **SK Construction – Contract and Notice to Proceed:** Lance discussed the contract with SK Construction for work at the Ennis/Big Sky Airport. He reviewed grant funds, the original bid terms, the idea of executing a partial contract and proceeding with the remainder of the contract when funds come through, and waiting with the notice to proceed pending bonding insurance confirmation. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to proceed with the contract with SK Construction in the amount of \$13,191,691.50 for work at the Ennis/Big Sky Airport. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Lance said SK wants to break ground next week, if they get their insurance in place and are given a notice to proceed. He went on to discuss stimulus money and various grants, the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on airports and financing, airport safety measures, and Ennis airport construction.

Human Resources: Tammy Mahlstedt, Human Resource Generalist, and Steve McNeece, Nursing Home Administrator, participated in this portion of the meeting via phone/Webex. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, and Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Authorization to Fill Human Resource Position for County Nursing Homes:** Tammy reviewed an Authorization to Fill form for a new position of Human Resources Generalist at the nursing homes, noting that several details were yet to be determined. Bonnie pointed out that the contract with CAH specifies hiring an HR Professional, not a Generalist so the existing job description may need to be modified, and discussion ensued about making the position permanent or temporary, the amount of nursing home staffing and associated HR work, and advertising. Tammy pointed out there is no HR Professional listed on the County wage scale. Steve reiterated that the contract specifies an HR Professional, he sees the position as a Department Head level and permanent, and stated he was hired to put permanent fixes in place at the nursing homes, not temporary ones. Based on recent discussion and the recommendations of the Administrator and the CAO, Jim Hart moved to approve the Authorization to Fill for a full-time, permanent, non-exempt HR Professional position for the nursing homes, to advertise in-house and nationwide, to develop an appropriate job description for the position, and to base the salary on the department head scale. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

DES: Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, met with the Board to discuss the following Department of Emergency Services (DES) topics. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, were present for this portion of the meeting. Joe reviewed forms to be submitted requesting Federal assistance with expenses from the impacts of COVID-19, such as wages (including straight time, temporary help, and overtime pay), travel and materials, and equipment and supplies such as personal protective equipment (PPE). He pointed out the 75/25 grant match terms, and reviewed who would be designated as points of contact.

- **Public Assistance Program Participation:** Ron Nye moved to apply for the Public Assistance Program Participation Grant. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Joe said he will fill out the forms and do the tracking, with Vicki's assistance.
- **Request for Public Assistance:** Ron Nye moved to approve having Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, apply for the Request for Public Assistance. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Designation of Applicant Agent:** Jim Hart moved to approve the State of Montana Disaster and Emergency Services Designation of Applicant Agent & Applicant Assurances. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Covid-19 Emergency Staffing: Steve McNeece, Nursing Home Administrator, met with the Board via phone/Webex to discuss COVID-19 staffing at the nursing homes. Phil Fortner, Sheriff, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Chris Christensen, County Attorney, were present for this portion of the meeting. Steve requested that, during the COVID-19 lockdown ordered by the Governor of Montana, the Board approve a \$5/hour wage increase for County employees at the nursing homes. He explained that this would incentivize employees to take shifts instead of using travelers, that there is a belief across the country that traveling staff is mostly responsible for bringing the virus into nursing homes so it is better to use them less, compared the costs of paying travelers in different positions, and said this is a staggering time and we are asking nursing home employees to put aside their own considerations and come to work to cover 24 hours every day, so he is asking for a staggering consideration. Discussion ensued about the duration of the special increase, what other counties are doing, setting precedent, limited local workforce, limiting virus risk for residents and local staff as a matter of life and death, funding source and emergency levies, and support for the idea at a lower rate than requested. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to assist the County nursing home staff with an additional \$2.50 hourly wage during the COVID-19 scenario as recognized by the Governor of Montana, effective April 1, 2020. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Dan noted that our nursing home staff consists of dedicated employees that are required to be there, and asked Steve to thank the staff for what they are doing.

Public Health: Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Phil Fortner, Sheriff, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, Chris Christensen, County Attorney, and Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the Board of Commissioners, were present for all or portions of this topic.

- **COVID-19 – Emergency Preparedness/Update:** Melissa presented and reviewed a Madison County COVID-19 Update, starting with a summary of global, U.S., Montana and Madison County cases and deaths, with County test results and disease rates. She reviewed the objectives and tasks of the groups and volunteers dealing directly with the impact of COVID-19, noting that Tommy Luksha is heading up volunteer management/coordination and responding to needs in the community, Lynda Holt is the Logistics Section Chief, Erin Montgomery is the Logistics Deputy and keeping track of supplies, Bonnie O'Neill is the Public Information Officer, Bob Bates is in charge of Safety Section Updates, including hand sanitizer donations by Willie's Distillery to many organizations within the County, and Dave Reintsma and Steve McNeece are the nursing home liaisons. Melissa presented a flyer created by Erin about small businesses resources, as an example of the work being done behind the scenes to create usable sources of information. Meeting times were discussed, as well as funds previously built in Public Health for emergency response, and the challenges and expenses of acquiring personal protective equipment. After discussion, Jim Hart moved to approve the Public Health use of emergency funds, generated over the years, for this COVID crisis. Ron Nye 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: Phil Fortner, Sheriff, expressed concern about groups gathering at a local hotspot north of Waterloo in opposition to the Governor's orders, and discussion ensued about how to close off the area, private land, making the absent owner aware of the problem, posting signs, fines, and other solutions. Melissa re-emphasized the importance of people staying home when sick.

Special Closed Meeting to Discuss Grievance Investigation: At 3:05 p.m., the Board closed the meeting to discuss a grievance investigation.

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