

**BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**May 12, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

On Tuesday, May 12, 2020, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 9:30 a.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, IT Support, was present to administer the public connection to the meeting via Webex.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Joe Brummell, Melissa Brummell, Bonnie O'Neill, Karen Miller, Vicki Tilstra, Kathy Barnes, Britani Allhands, Shelly Burke, Kindra Todd, Jani Flinn, Rob Wallingford, Andy Willet, Alex Hogle, and Bob Bates.

**Approval of Minutes:** Jim Hart moved to approve the April 3, 2020, Board of Commissioners' Special Meeting minutes with corrections. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Ron Nye moved to approve the April 14, 2020, Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes as presented. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Ron Nye moved to approve the March 16, 2020, Board of Commissioners' Emergency Meeting minutes as presented. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the April 17, 2020, Board of Commissioners' Special Meeting minutes as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the April 21, 2020, Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes with corrections. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Claims:** The Board approved claims.

**Public Health Office:** Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse, and Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Karen Miller, Clerk of Court, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **COVID-19 Update:** Joe and Melissa presented and discussed an update on the COVID-19 situation, including local, state and nationwide statistics, upcoming Phase 1 guidelines, County nursing home testing, new FEMA response and standards, obtaining PPE's and reliable vendors, scheduling mid-pandemic reviews, and increased activity in local towns and businesses.

**Journal Vouchers:** Jim Hart moved to approve Journal Vouchers for the 4/20 accounting period. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Fair Board Resignation:** The Board reviewed Tom Leo's letter of resignation from the Fair Board. After review, Ron Nye moved to accept Tom Leo's resignation from the Fair Board, thank him for his years of service, and advertise the vacancy. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Health Insurance Benefit Package Decision:** The Board discussed the health insurance benefit package decision. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Manager, Karen Miller, Clerk of Court, Kathy Barnes, Sheriff's Office, Kindra Todd, County Attorney's Office, Britani Allhands, Finance Clerk, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Shelly Burke, Treasurer, were present for this portion of the meeting. Vicki responded to the Health Insurance Committee's inquiry from a previous meeting about how the \$14,653,602 in additional property tax collections for 2015-2019 have been accounted for by presenting an explanation that included funding categories and how they work, financial details about assets, liabilities, fund balances, net positions, restricted and unrestricted recorded amounts. She also detailed the disbursement of tax collections to a long list of entities that include departments, accounts, special districts, emergency services, cemeteries, hospitals, County improvement projects, law enforcement and court systems. She discussed permissive levies for health insurance increases. Kathy appreciated the information, but questioned the number of county obligations that could possibly use that total amount. Vicki noted how much goes to payroll, said additional insurance would have to come out of the General Fund, and thanked the committee for all the

work they've done. Discussion ensued about tax base, future unknowns with the COVID crisis, funding disparities within the County, how many employees would use family coverage, reviews of Plan A and Plan B, and preventing employee turnover using attractive compensation packages. Dan suggested contributing a lower amount than proposed, such as \$132 or \$150, with the possibility of increasing the amount next year, rather than choosing a higher amount and having to decrease it next year, particularly given the effect COVID might have on the economy. Jim expressed appreciation for everyone's input, noting that a decision needs to be made today and whatever the amount, it will be revisited in a year, expressed support for the idea of a lower amount or a flat amount for all, and asked whether the County or any employer is responsible for helping families with insurance. Kathy responded by saying that a benefit of working for the County is having a compensation package that attracts and keeps employees, as well as causing employees to feel taken care of and secure. Ron stated that the proposed amount of up to \$331.57 per employee is reasonable, that any less may not do enough to help families, and pointed out that other counties with lower taxable values contribute more than Madison County does. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to assist in family insurance to the point of \$200. Ron Nye seconded the motion. Dan Allhands and Jim Hart voted aye, Ron Nye voted nay, and the motion carried on a majority vote.

**Reopening County Offices to the Public:** The Board discussed Reopening County Offices to the Public. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Manager, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Karen Miller, Clerk of Court, Kathy Barnes, Sheriff's Office, Kindra Todd, County Attorney's Office, Britani Allhands, Finance Clerk, Shelly Burke, Treasurer, and Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, were present for all or portions of this topic. The Board and other attendees considered several options, such as opening for business only, blocking off doors or sections of the buildings, requiring sanitizer use and distancing, using partitions, and conducting most business transactions by phone and internet. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to open the County offices to the public for official business only, effective immediately, with discretion for each office to operate its offices as they deem appropriate, protocol to be developed during the next regular Commission meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2020, and the topic to be revisited on or around June 16, 2020. Ron Nye seconded the motion. Additional discussion included timing, local signs and notices, Public Health input, methods of handling courtroom, emergency and handicap access, and whether to hold events such as fairs, rodeos, Little League games, and camping. Following discussion, all voted aye and the motion carried.

**Airports:** Jani Flinn, Airport Board Secretary, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. A call was made to Lance Bowser, Robert Peccia & Associates, to include him in the discussion. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Airport Insurance Renewals – Twin Bridges and Ennis:** Jani explained that the annual airport insurance renewal applications authorize Airport Insurance Managers to prepare renewal documents, which are due by the end of June, 2020. Following review, Ron Nye moved to approve renewal applications for Aviation Insurance Managers, for the Twin Bridges and Ennis Big Sky airports. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **CARES Act Grant Applications – Twin Bridges and Ennis:** Jani explained that the CARES Act grants are for 100% reimbursement of eligible operating expenses, with no matching. Following review, Jim Hart moved to approve the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act grant applications for funding of \$30,000 for Ennis Big Sky Airport, and \$20,000 for Twin Bridges Airport. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **AWOS Maintenance Agreements – Twin Bridges and Ennis:** Jani related that AWOS information was received on the Twin Bridges airport, which is recently completed and operational, and the airports received notifications for maintenance contracts: three years for Twin Bridges, and five years for Ennis. She said at some point the FAA will hopefully take over the AWOS equipment, but this hasn't happened yet. Lance suggested contacting the sender to see they will agree to a yearly contract instead of multi-year, and to ask about yearly pricing. This topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.
- **Construction Permit – Miller, Ennis Airport:** Lance reviewed background information on the construction permit for the Miller property adjoining the Ennis airport. Based on the engineer's recommendation from Robert Peccia & Associates, Jim Hart moved to approve the Construction Permit / Land Use License between Thomas and Colleen Miller and Madison County, for the construction of a residential, through-the-fence approach. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

- **Conservation Easement – Longhorn and Madison County:** Lance briefly updated the Board regarding the conservation easement with Longhorn, said Montana Land Reliance wants a statement from the County regarding extinguishment of the easement, explained details about moving the fence line, and said he is waiting to hear back from the Deputy County Attorney. He discussed timing, costs reimbursable through the grant, pointed out that this was a known expense, and the topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.
- **Madison County Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE):** This topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.
- **Final Inspection on the SRE Building, Ennis Airport (not on Agenda):** Lance updated the Board on construction at the Ennis Airport, and said the SRE building is moving along well. The contractor will not meet the deadline, however, due to Coronavirus shipping delays in obtaining electrical equipment, but they are diligently working toward completion.

**Grants:** Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Big Sky Economic Development Grant – Canty Boots:** Jani presented and reviewed a contract with the Department of Commerce regarding grant funds for Canty Boots, LLC. She said everything else regarding the economic development grant is final, and the company is advertising to hire. Following review, Ron Nye moved to approve the Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Program Contract # MT-BSTG-1-20-27, with Montana Department of Commerce, for Canty Boots, LLC. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Great West Engineering:** Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering, met with the Board via phone/Webex to discuss the following topic. Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Madison Valley Manor Procurement:** Craig asked the Board's permission to put together a bid package and expedite procurement of the boilers for Madison Valley Manor (MVM), the cost of which will be reimbursed by the CDBG grant, so installation can happen in late summer/early fall, rather than late fall or next spring. Expediting the replacement of the problematic walk-in freezer was also discussed, which would greatly increase MVM's storage capacity and is in the budget. After discussion, Jim Hart moved to authorize Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering, to work with SMA Architects to expedite the bidding process for the purchase of replacement boilers for Madison Valley Manor, and for the purchase of a walk-in freezer. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Gravelly Landscape Collaborative:** Darcie Warden, Gravelly Landscape Collaborative, met with the Board via phone/Webex to discuss the following topic. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Rob Wallingford, Deputy Director of Emergency Services, and Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Request for Funding for Gravelly Landscape Collaborative Project:** Darcie reviewed Gravelly Landscape Collaborative's various projects, and discussed their targeted outreach campaign to inform and raise support for management projects addressing conifer encroachment, which will be implemented over the next five years. She listed several organizations that have contributed to the \$10,000 total cost, including a matching contribution, and asked for the County's support. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to approve a \$500 donation to the Gravelly Landscape Collaborative, for education and outreach related to the communications campaign project. 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 topics. Rob Wallingford, Deputy Director of Emergency Services, Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Andy Willet, McLean, Younkin & Willett, LLC, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Manager, were present for all or portions of these topics.

- **SAT Trailer Renewal:** Joe presented an invoice for annual renewal of bandwidth service for the SAT trailer. He explained that 10 days of unlimited data are included per month, and overages are tracked for reimbursement. After review, Jim Hart moved to approve the annual bandwidth service

renewal for the SAT trailer, as recommended by the Director of Emergency Management. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

- **Wildland Fire Season:** Joe discussed the upcoming wildland fire season, including predictions from regional fire and forest agencies, briefings with local fire districts, COVID-19 prevention protocols and response limitations, Forest Service resources, weather predictions, and briefly reviewed the last two seasons.

**Finance Office:** Vicki Tilstra, Finance Manager, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, Rob Wallingford, Deputy Director of Emergency Services, and Andy Willet, McLean, Younkin & Willett, LLC, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Resolution for Use of Emergency Levy:** Jim read Resolution 15-2020. Vicki wondered whether the emergency levy currently in place will be continued next year, since we don't know how long the COVID emergency will last, and said she had both MACo and the Deputy County Attorney review the Resolution. Bonnie noted that the nursing homes are paying about \$40,000 per month in additional hazard pay to the staff. After discussion, Jim Hart moved to approve Resolution 15-2020, a Resolution Authorizing Hazard Pay to Nursing Home Employees due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Further discussion included hiring someone to track reimbursable hours and expenses.

**Human Resources:** Tammy Mahlstedt, Human Resource Generalist (via Webex), and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Manager, Alex Hogle, Planning Director, and Andy Willet, McLean, Younkin & Willett, LLC, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Authorization to Fill Senior Shuttle Bus Driver Part-time 30 hours per week:** Bonnie said she and Vicki have been having conversations with Paula at Liberty Place, dba Whitehall Public Transportation (WPT) who is interested in taking over Madison County's shuttle bus routes for senior citizens in Cardwell, Pony, Harrison, Norris, and possibly the rest of the County. Bonnie discussed the budget, mill levy funding, grants, vehicles, and the cost of having employees. Further discussion included contractual details to be worked out if WPT takes over the service, and the long hours of shift time required to accommodate the needs of senior patrons on trips to Bozeman, Butte and Dillon. The Board requested more information, asked that the concept be reviewed by MACo and the Deputy County Attorney, and advertising for the bus driver position will be postponed until a bid and additional details are received from WPT.
- **Recommendation to Change Public Health Director/RN Employment Status to Full-time:** Tammy read the Board of Health's recommendation to change the employment status of the Public Health Nurse from part-time to full-time. Based on the recommendation of the Board of Health, Jim Hart moved to approve changing Melissa Brummell's employment status to full time, 40 hours per week, in the Public Health Department as the Director/Registered Nurse. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Recommendation to Hire Planner 1:** Tammy read the hiring committee's recommendation for the Planner I position. Based on the recommendation of the hiring committee, Ron Nye moved to approve hiring Jacob Gabbert for the permanent, full-time, Planner I position at \$18.61 per hour, or 80% of the top wage for the position. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Authorization to Fill – Road and Bridge Technician – Full-time Position:** Tammy reviewed the Authorization to Fill for the position of Road and Bridge Technician, which will be advertised for five days internally prior to any external advertising. After review, Ron Nye moved to approve the Authorization to Fill for the full-time, permanent Road and Bridge Technician position with the Twin Bridges Road Department. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Planning Office:** Alex Hogle, Planning Director, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Andy Willet, McLean, Younkin & Willett, LLC, and Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, were present for all or portions of these topics.

- **Lost Lakes ODP Extension Request:** Alex and Andy reviewed the history of the Lost Lakes Overall Development Plan (ODP), including a prior extension request that expires on May 28, 2020.

Andy explained that there are no changes to the ODP in his request for an additional extension, only to the data behind it, including information updated to reflect current circumstances in areas such as local traffic. Discussion ensued about the property's location near the south fork of Jack Creek, consisting of 162 dwelling units dispersed in seven planning areas, accessed through Moonlight Basin. Alex discussed the ODP process, noting that the local governing body sets how long it can be extended, and discussion ensued about the subdivision process, the timing and status of this ODP, and next steps. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the Lost Lakes ODP extension request for two years, expiring on May 28, 2022. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

- **Planning Board/Planning Office Update:** Alex updated the Board regarding Planning Board activities and Planning Office status. He discussed the challenges involved in trying to plan a public hearing during the COVID-19 shutdown, virtual meeting practice session results, ideas for making large documents available for public view and comment, legal notice deadlines, and the next phase of the shutdown. Discussion ensued about alternate locations for public documents, and Alex said he will continue to seek solutions and keep the Board informed.

**Safety Coordinator:** Bob Bates, Safety Coordinator, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **April 2020 Monthly Safety Report:** Bob presented and reviewed his monthly safety report for April, 2020, and went into more detail about worker's compensation status, the Courthouse moisture issue, COVID-related time tracking for the incident management team, and PPE acquisitions.
- **MACo 2020 Property Appraisal:** Bob update the Board on the progress of the MACo property appraisals. He went out with Pete Novich and visited County properties he hasn't visited before, said he is laying out a schedule for the actual appraisals to start next week, and discussed repeater sites, some of which are still not accessible due to snow and poor road conditions.

**Cardwell Container Site Agreement:** There was no discussion on this topic.

**Palisades County Dump Site Customer Agreement – NW Energy:** The Board discussed the Palisades County Dump Site Customer Agreement with NW Energy. Steve Primm, Independent Wildlife Conservationist, participated in this topic via Webex. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Discussion included the cost to run power and install a meter base, the similarity to the dump site in Nevada City except for using an industrial charger instead of solar power, and the money raised in the Palisades neighborhood to support the installation. Jim Hart moved to approve the customer agreement between NorthWestern Energy and Madison County related to the Palisades dump site located south of Cameron, Montana. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Steve said he will keep the Board informed about the site.

**Ruby Valley Conservation District Request for Financial Assistance:** The Board discussed the Ruby Valley Conservation District Request for Financial Assistance. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Prior contributions were discussed. Margie Edsall, Weed Coordinator, was contacted by phone for her input, but since she hadn't seen the request yet, the topic was continued to Wednesday, May 13, 2020, when Margie will be meeting with the Board regarding preliminary budgets.

**DPHHS Intergovernmental Transfer Agreement for Nursing Homes:** The Board discussed the Department of Public Health and Human Services' (DPHHS) Intergovernmental Transfer Agreement for Nursing Homes. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. It was noted that this is an annual agreement, and the dates need to be corrected. Following review, Jim Hart moved to approve the State of Montana Intergovernmental Transfer Agreement for the Transfer of Monies to the State for State Fiscal Year 2020, with date corrections. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Addictive and Mental Disorders Division (AMDD) County and Tribal Matching Grant approval:** The Board discussed the Addictive and Mental Disorders Division (AMDD) County and Tribal Matching Grant. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. A call was made to

Melissa Brummell, Public Health Nurse and listed as the liaison for the Contractor, and she explained that this is the contract for the previously-discussed grant addressing the mental health side of the COVID-19 response. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to approve Task Order Number 20-331-74152-0 to the Master Agreement 07Madison2019-2016, between the State of Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, and Madison County, in the amount of \$40,000, for the term from May 1, 2020 through June 20, 2021. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Designation of Earmarked Alcohol Tax Money:** The Board discussed the Designation of Earmarked Alcohol Tax Money. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. After review, Ron Nye moved to approve Southwest Chemical Dependency Program as the designated recipient for 100% of Earmarked Alcohol Tax Monies during State Fiscal Year 2021, from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Weed Coordinator Resignation:** The Board discussed the Weed Coordinator's resignation. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, was present for this portion of the meeting. Following review, Ron Nye moved to accept the formal resignation of Margie Edsall, Madison County Weed Coordinator, effective September 30, 2020; to send her a letter of appreciation for her 20 years of service; and to advertise for a replacement. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Bridge Construction Information Request:** The Board discussed the Montana Department of Transportation's Bridge Construction Information Request. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, were present for this portion of the meeting. Bridge projects were briefly discussed. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve and fill out the Bridge Construction Information Request from the Montana Department of Transportation. Jim Hart seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Resurfacing Madison Street in Sheridan:** The Board discussed resurfacing Madison Street in Sheridan. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, were present for this portion of the meeting. Discussion included funding, materials, Great West Engineering's survey, and whether to move ahead with the sidewalk project at TRMCC. It was noted that Madison Street is a County road.

**COVID Relief Grants for Long-term Care – County Nursing Homes:** The Board discussed the COVID Relief Grants for long-term care at County nursing homes. Bonnie O'Neill, Chief Administrative Officer, and Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, were present for this portion of the meeting. Jani informed the Board about opportunities through the Department of Commerce for three long-term care grants for nursing homes, as well as several smaller grants that may be pursued online to benefit nursing homes.

**Calendars:** The Board reviewed calendars.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

**Next meeting:** The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2020, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

---

Dan W. Allhands, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: June 23, 2020

Minutes prepared by:

---

Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk

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