

**BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**August 24, 2021, Meeting Minutes**

On Tuesday, August 24, 2021, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 9:36 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Dan Allhands and Ron Nye present. Commissioner Jim Hart was absent for the first portion of the meeting to attend a pre-construction meeting at Jack Creek Road. Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Joe Brummell, Emilie Saylor, Britani Allhands, Kila Shepherd, Dale Grose, Shelly Burke, Jani Flinn, Allison Veland, Laurie Buyan, and Tony Forsythe. Ryan Wolter, IT Support Specialist, administered the Webex connection. Those who attended via Webex or by phone included Craig Erickson, Jolene Palmer, Gail Nelson, JM, Janie Alt, Laurie Buyan, Chad, Jani Flinn, and Michelle Schriock.

**Approval of Minutes:** The Board approved Commission meeting minutes from July 20, 2021, with corrections; and from August 17, 2021, as presented.

**DES – Fire Update:** Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Emilie Saylor, Public Health Director, Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, and Kila Shepherd, Human Resources, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Fire Update:** Joe said the active fires across the State are looking better with cooler temperatures and a new fire that started over the weekend is completely contained, but the total number of 826,516 acres burned in the State is very high and he showed a map of statewide fire locations and new startups. The Goose Fire is unchanged, the Forest Service is rehabilitating roads and savable logs, and Joe reviewed the status of other fires in the County, severe drought conditions, improved air quality, and upcoming weather conditions. Joe discussed Federal areas of land that are reverting back from Stage 2 to Stage 1 fire restrictions.

**Public Health Office:** Emilie Saylor, Public Health Director, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Joe Brummell, Director of Emergency Management, Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, and Kila Shepherd, Human Resources, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **COVID Update including Nursing Homes Status:** Emilie reviewed COVID status. In Madison County there are 19 active cases, the numbers are expected to increase over the next few days and weeks with schools opening. Testing supplies have been increased to support the schools and she reviewed school safety plans regarding testing and masking. State COVID cases have increased with active cases up 1,042 from last week, 24 additional fatalities, and 29 more active hospitalizations, and Emilie reviewed a chart showing the trend of new cases in the State on a daily tracking basis, and current active and cumulative cases in Montana by county. She discussed vaccination progress including recent DPHHS data showing 47% of the County is fully vaccinated, and reviewed vaccine information by age group. Regarding this week's FDA approval of the Pfizer vaccine, she explained the reasons why it is not available in Madison County but said residents seeking this vaccine will find it readily available outside of the County. She also said options regarding booster doses are being explored. Emilie reviewed the status of the County's nursing homes. Madison Valley Manor, with 15 residents, is currently in COVID outbreak status after one staff member tested positive, but Emilie described the measures being taken to keep residents safe and reported that after two rounds of testing there have been no further positive results. The staff vaccination rate is 60% and all are being tested at the start of their work shifts. 93% of residents are fully vaccinated and the rate will reach 100% by the end of the month, but visitation is limited while on outbreak status. Tobacco Root Mountain Care Center has 26 residents, no COVID cases, and two hospitalizations not related to COVID. Unvaccinated staff members are being tested twice weekly, vaccinated staff once weekly, and visitation is allowed. Emilie reviewed both facilities voluntary involvement with a DPHHS infection control assessment and stated it is a proactive use of resources for improving resident care. She also noted that both Administrators

requested that any facility-specific questions should be directed to them, especially regarding vaccination mandates through CMS for long-term care staff.

- **Request to Designate Additional Funds in FY21 Budget:** Emilie reported that Public Health and the Finance Department have identified additional budget funds from public mills of \$30,000. She requested approval for the funds to be used for additional staff if a surge occurs in the upcoming weeks and months, which is likely to happen, but if that is not needed she wants to work with HR on developing a Public Health nurse position that would be designated for public school support, and have those additional funds approved for salary use as well. She described a new law that limits Public Health authority regarding vaccination compliance in schools so that the responsibility falls on school staff, and Emilie is exploring ideas for supporting and assisting them in areas such as record auditing, vision screening, dental screening, and education. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the Public Health Director's request to designate funds in the 2021 budget for extra help as presented. Dan Allhands 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. Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Preliminary Budget Adjustment:** Dale requested Weed Department budget increases of \$10,000 for Contingency, \$5,000 for Contract Services, and \$2,500 for Fuel. He said a highway contract didn't get paid until July that should have been paid in the previous fiscal year, he misjudged fuel costs and needed to increase them, and with the improved weather this summer he also thinks they will be able to do some aerial work this fall. After review, Ron Nye moved to approve Weed Department budget increases of \$10,000 to Contingency, \$2,500 to Fuel, and \$5,000 to Contracted Services. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Claims:** The Board approved claims.

**Accept Changes in Taxable Values:** The Board reviewed Vicki's recommendation to recertify several tax districts following the change in taxable values. Following review, Ron Nye moved to accept the changes in taxable values for Sheridan Cemetery District, Ruby Valley Soil District, Ruby Valley Hospital, Sheridan Fire District, Sheridan Elementary School District, and Sheridan High School District. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Disposal of County Tax Deed Property:** Shelly Burke, Treasurer, met with the Board to discuss the disposal of a County Tax Deed property. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to proceed with the disposal process of County tax deed land for Lot 2 in Block 99 of the Town site of Virginia City, approve the tax deed, and sell the land at public auction. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Great West Engineering / SMA Architects:** Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering, met with the Board via Webex to discuss the following topics. Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, Allison Veland, MVM Administrator, and Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Great West Engineering Task Order #5 - SLFRF Funding Administration:** Craig discussed Task Order #5 and the assistance to be provided by Great West for ARPA fund administration, including working with County employees to administer various aspects of tracking and record-keeping, making sure reports are submitted accurately and on time, and developing sub-recipient MOU's. There was discussion about the anticipated total cost, the number of hours it was based on through the end of the year, and about working with the new Grant Writer/Administrator position when it is filled. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve Great West Engineering Task Order #5, Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Great West Engineering Task Order #6 – TRMCC CDBG Application:** Craig reviewed the Town of Sheridan's discussions about sponsoring a CDBG grant to fund TRMCC improvements on behalf of the County. He said there were many questions at the first public hearing on the issue last night and they have not committed so far, he's not sure they will, and he discussed the difficulty of meeting the application deadline at this point although he anticipates the Department of Revenue will change the deadline date from September to October. Discussion ensued about wanting Sheridan to be very sure before making a commitment, other town projects, possibly withdrawing the request, and

alternative funding options for TRMCC. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to withdraw the request for the Town of Sheridan to sponsor the CDBG grant application for TRMCC. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

- **TRMCC Project Update:** Craig said some additional developments have come up at TRMCC, in particular regarding the laundry room, that need to be reflected on the preliminary architectural report.
- **Madison Valley Manor Project Update:** Craig said the preconstruction conference last week at MVM went well, and TW Enterprises started work onsite yesterday. The boilers are being removed and will be replaced mid-September, there will soon be regular progress reports, and draws on CDBG grant funds will occur monthly. Discussion ensued about the new boilers and whether upgrading the older internal controls would be within the framework of the grant or a change order is needed.

**Great West Task Order #4 - Stormwater Violation on McKee Pit:** The Board discussed Task Order #4 regarding a stormwater violation on the McKee Pit. Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, and Kila Shepherd, Human Resources, were present for this portion of the meeting. After review, Ron Nye moved to approve Great West Engineering Task Order No. 4 - McKee Gravel Pit – MPDES Violation Response, in the amount of \$4,000 in accordance with the agreement as presented. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Human Resources:** Kila Shepherd, Human Resources, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant, and Tony Forsythe, Maintenance Manager, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Request to Hire – Grant Writer/Administrator:** Kila made a recommendation for filling the Grant Writer/Administrator position at the rate that was posted, \$24.63. Following review, Ron Nye moved to approve hiring Hannah Brook for the Grant Writer/Administrator position at \$24.63 per hour, with a start date of September 13, 2021. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Request to Hire – Senior Shuttle Driver:** Kila made a recommendation for hiring a Senior Shuttle Driver at the rate posted. After review, Ron Nye moved to approve hiring David Blank as Senior Shuttle Driver at \$16.67 per hour, starting on August 30, 2021. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. There was a brief discussion about shuttle scheduling and training with the former driver.
- **Vehicles Discussion:** The Board reviewed a list of County vehicles and discussed their status, including those assigned to specific departments, pool vehicles for general use, those that need to be repaired, some that should be let go, and location of keys. Kila discussed the implementation of log sheets for each vehicle to provide information about usage and allow better tracking of necessary maintenance. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve advertising for bids and selling the last three vehicles on the list: the 2009 Dodge Durango LL, 2013 Ford Interceptor, and 2005 Subaru Outback. Discussion included the option of having them checked and developing a statement for each of what needs to be done since all have mechanical issues, or selling as is, and the Board agreed to sell them as is. Dan Allhands seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Discussion about need for Floating Position(s) within Madison County:** Kila stated she has heard from a number of employees about the benefits of having a floating position. There was discussion about why the position was discontinued, budget, job description, hours needed, compensation, benefit issues and reporting structure. Kila will research the position and check with MACo on their views.
- **Closed Session:** Kila met with the Board in a closed session. An audio recording of this session was sealed and delivered to the County Attorney's office.

Commissioner Jim Hart joined the meeting at this point and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

**Open District 3 Gravel Crushing Bids:** The Board received and opened one bid from A.M. Welles for District 3 gravel crushing. Britani Allhands, Finance Administrative Assistant, was present for this portion of the meeting. Later in the meeting, Jim Hart moved to accept the bid from AM Welles for crushing at the landfill in Ennis. 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:** There was some discussion about an email received about the improvement project on Jack Creek Road. Jim noted there is a public meeting scheduled for September 9, 2021, at the Fire Hall in Ennis at 7:00 p.m.

**Consideration of Remaining ARPA Requests:** The Board considered the remaining ARPA fund requests. Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant, was present for this portion of the meeting. Discussion included use of funds and timelines, reimbursement process, reporting, approving projects so sub-recipients can include in their budgets, matching funds, and approving projects for Sheridan and Twin Bridges. After discussion, the topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.

**Calendars:** The Board discussed calendars.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

**Next meeting:** The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 31, 2021, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

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Dan W. Allhands, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: September 7, 2021

Minutes prepared by:

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Jane Bacon, Commissioners’ Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Paula McKenzie, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County