

October 29, 2013

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a special session on October 29, 2013, in the Lincoln County Courthouse. Present are Commissioner Tony Berget, Commissioner Ron Downey, Commissioner Mike Cole, Executive Assistant Bill Bischoff and Clerk and Recorder Tammy Lauer.

11:00 AM: The commissioners have met with Justice of the Peace Jay Sheffield, Justice of the Peace Stormy Langston and the Eureka staff. Today they are meeting with the **staff of the Libby Justice of the Peace**. Jennifer Nelson, Peggy Craver and Robin Schiflerl are here to give their thoughts on the county cutting from one and one-half justice to one full time justice. The Eureka staff suggested that Libby could be cut to one and one-half staff and one half-time Judge. The Libby staff does not agree. Robin explained that there are 7 counties in Montana that have 2 judges and one with one and a half (Lincoln). However, Lincoln County is the only county that has a judge in a location other than the county seat. Libby has site pay and Eureka does not. Site pay is where you can pay with a credit card. The Libby staff had a few ideas to save money in their department regardless of how the judge decision goes. Juries from the area of the trial only, so Libby people don't get chosen for Eureka trials and Eureka people aren't chosen for Libby trials. This would save mileage paid. Jennifer suggested that many forms and functions could be put on the website to save waiting on the counter. Commissioner Cole asked what the Libby staff felt would be the result of the county going to one JP. Commissioner Berget clarified that the question is more do the Libby staff think it could work with one JP and keep the office at least part time. The Libby staff voiced a few concerns they would have and some thoughts on how it would work. They asked if the savings would really be substantial enough to be worth the cut. They stated that the cut of a Justice would perhaps save less when the costs of extra work for the one justice was figured out. The group ended the meeting with an acknowledgement of the hard decision.

1:15 PM: **Flathead Irrigators:** A group of five people are here to talk about the Water Compact. Dan Solomon and Susan Lake are representatives of the Flathead District Irrigators on the Flathead Indian Irrigation Project and have farms on the reservation. They do not feel that the compact will do anything to the irrigation water. They feel they will have as much if not more. Arnie Wick, Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission program Manager, Ethan Mace, State Surface Hydrologist, Melissa Hornbein, Attorney for DNRC Water Rights Commission are also working on the compact with Dan and Sue. Melissa made several statements about the legal ramifications of the compact and why she believes it is a good plan. Ethan is from the DNRC and is helping the Flathead Irrigators and the Water Compact people present the facts and help extinguish the misinformation. Arnie is keeping records of all the meetings and recording all comments and concerns to help the Irrigators. The Irrigators said that they are aware of the things that the commissioners heard in a previous meeting with another organization and they are very glad to have the opportunity to express their side of the issues. The commissioners thanked them for coming and said that the information was very interesting.

3:00 PM: The **meeting was adjourned**.

**LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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Anthony Berget, Chairman

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Tammy D. Lauer, Clerk of the Board