

March 30, 2016

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on March 30, 2016, in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Cole and Commissioner Larson and Deputy Clerk Chris Nelson. Commissioner Peck was out of state.

Commissioner Cole opened the meeting with the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

9:00 AM **Bookwalter/Arno/MT DNRC Local Government Liaison:** Present were Ed Levert, Alan Gerstenecker, Matt Arno, and Mo Bookwalter.

Matt said as the local government liaison to the DNRC he wanted to talk with the commissioners to answer any questions they had and any support they can provide in working with the USFS. Commissioner Cole asked if he's seen cooperation with other counties. Matt said some are very engaged, with Lincoln County being one of the most engaged. He also said that he will be attending a conference later this year about trying to get more funding for fighting fires. Mo said that it seems they are getting closer to a permanent fix as far as funding. Commissioner Larson said those are good things but what is needed is a predictable supply of timber to help the economy and that many are wondering what to do about the grizzly since much of getting timber projects off the ground are predicated by that issue; it's frustrating that everything gets hung up on the grizzly issue. Ed Levert said the grizzly issue is probably one they won't be able to help with, but the funding is something they can work on. Commissioner Larson said more funding is important but if it's to decommission roads, he isn't interested. If it helps with further timber management and logging projects he would be very interested. Mo said they have had discussions at higher levels on how DNRC can use state funds the best, which they have seen as trying to work with the USFS to get further funding and working on a local level to see what local government needs are. Commissioner Larson asked whether the county should meet with the USFS or someone on their behalf. Matt said it would probably be more beneficial if the commissioners did.

Ed Levert said an issue that he could use help with is treatment of the Ski Dale area. Ed said he handed a plan to the USFS and five years later he still hasn't heard anything. With all the homes and the school in the area, Ed said it should be a no-brainer to work on reducing fire threats on the 120 acres in that area. Matt said if they could find a way to help them with the NEPA process, it would probably increase the chances of getting the project off the ground. Mo said the USFS Region 1 has a new NEPA team that can go to areas and assist in the NEPA process to help speed it up. Matt said they could possibly meet with the USFS to help elevate the project as part of a larger, cohesive plan.

Commissioner Larson said it seems as if whenever there is an effort for forest management the grizzly issue puts a stop or greatly slows the process. Commissioner Larson also stated that he feels you can have both forest management and work on the grizzly issue. Matt said a good strategy would be to work on projects in areas where you are not dealing with grizzly and other threatened/endangered animals in the beginning. Especially important would be working on decreasing fire risks around the towns in the county. Commissioner Larson said he doesn't feel the public is against the grizzly but rather sick of having the issue affect jobs and the economy. Matt said if the EIS can make it through the litigation process there will be the ability to have a steady supply of logs.

Commissioner Larson said Lincoln County is currently seeking support for a Federal Tract project where the county would receive a certain amount of federal land and manage that area, hopefully creating money that help bring in funds the county government and the schools.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:**

- Commissioner Cole and Commissioner Larson reviewed the minutes from March 17 and March 23, 2016. **Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve the minutes of March 17 and March 23, 2016 as written. Second by Commissioner Cole and so ordered upon unanimous consent of the board.
- **Motion** by Commissioner Larson to approve raising the fees for the Pioneer Park Clubhouse to \$100 with a \$25 refundable cleaning deposit. Second by Commissioner Cole and so ordered upon the consent of the board.

11:00 AM **Public Comment Time:** No member of the public was present.

1:30 PM **Lisa Oedewaldt/Planning Department:** Present were Lisa Oedewaldt, Jay Dinning, and Tim Rooney.

When Starlight Meadows subdivision was originally done it had 5 designated parklands. The owner of the subdivision, Tungsten Holdings, would like the county to consider receiving cash-in-lieu amount for 2 of the parklands, C and D. There is a formula in the subdivision regulations that would make the cash amount 2.5% of the fair market value of the two parklands, which would go to the county. Commissioner Larson said he would like to hear what Commissioner Peck thinks. Commissioner Cole said he would like to see this move forward as Tungsten will have to go through DEQ to start the process. Commissioner Cole said he doesn't see this as being a big deal. Lisa said that this is a great subdivision that has been done correctly. **Motion** by Commissioner Larson to amend the plat of Starlight Meadows to remove parks C and D and make them developable lots through the DEQ process and amended plat with cash-in-lieu. Second by Commissioner Cole and so ordered upon the consent of the board.

2:00 PM **JPT Presentation on Insurance:** Present were Vic White and Brent Schwab.

Brent is here to give a presentation on insurance on behalf of the Joint Powers Trust. Brent would represent the county in the future if hired and visit the different insurance companies on the counties behalf to find the best insurance policy. He would be directly employed by the county to bring all the research on the various insurance policies to Lincoln County to find the most suitable plan. Brent said that he has helped other government entities and school districts analyze the market to find the most suitable plan that would hopefully save the county money and provide a good plan. Commissioner Larson said that unless the county would save money by employing Brent's firm, they would no benefit by employing the Leavitt Group. Brent said that is true and that he is confident they can save Lincoln County money and prove their value to us. Brent presented a packet to the commissioners as an introduction to the Leavitt Group and what they offer. On the employee benefits side, Brent would help develop a benefit package that is tailored to a specific entity, such as a county. Commissioner Cole said he sees how Brent's expertise would be beneficial as the last several years, the county

insurance has gone up with the insurance company giving reasons that didn't make sense. Brent said in that case, he would be able to look at the numbers and see whether the increase in premiums was justified or not. Commissioner Larson asked what kind of services would be provided. Brent would put a Lincoln County need package together, present that to insurance companies who would bid on it. Commissioner Larson said that he would like to see what the county could save before they went into a long-term contract. The county currently pays over \$1,200 for a family of five per month. Commissioner Larson and Commissioner Cole both agreed they would like to take the information under advisement until they speak with Commissioner Peck and both stated they appreciated the presentation and would like more information.

3:00 PM County Support for Port Authority Rail Project: Present were Brett McCully, Kevin Peck, Tina Oliphant, Russ Barnes, Alan Gerstenecker and Larry Dolezal.

Brent and Tina are asking for a letter of support for the US Economic Development Grant and have the county provide in-kind services equivalent to \$200,000 to remove existing rail, clearing and grubbing in preparation for the rail project. Breaking ground would probably not start until next year. Commissioner Larson said the county could probably help during spring break up when the road crews are not busy. Tina said the rail project would immediately benefit the SK Finger-Jointer Mill in the industrial park as they have to truck their material to a distant rail service to get it. Commissioner Larson asked about potential perceived conflict of the County working on the project and not private industry. Brent said that over \$2 million will be put out to bid and felt that would offset any concern. **Motion** by Commissioner Larson to write a letter of support for the US Economic Development Assistance grant. Second by Commissioner Cole and so ordered upon unanimous consent of the board. Commissioner Cole and Commissioner Larson said they would like to take the in-kind service request under advisement until they speak with the Libby and Troy road foremen.

3:30 PM Kathi Hooper/Bryan Alkire/Landfill Updates: Present were Bryan Alkire, Larry Dolezal, Kathi Hooper, and Alan Gerstenecker.

Kathi presented her 2015 year-end summary. There is no fee for garbage that comes into the landfill. Kathi said their goal is to increase voluntary recycling, which has continued to go up every year. To encourage recycling they are relocating where the public dumps their garbage to an area closer to the recycling. They will also be handing out an informational sheet to the public when they enter the landfill.

Commissioner Cole asked about bear proof dumpsters located in the lower West Kootenai. There have been public complaints the boxes are difficult to use. Kathi said that particular site is on forest service property and it's a condition of the special use permit.

4:00 PM Meeting Adjourned

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Mike Cole, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Chris Nelson, Deputy Clerk