

July 7, 2021

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on July 7, 2021 in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Letcher, County Administrator Patrick McFadden and Clerk & Recorder Robin Benson.

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

9:45 AM **Underground storage tank for Libby Schools – discussion:** Present were Ron Goodman, Tina Oliphant, Kenny Rayome Jr., and Will Langhorne. Present via phone was Tony Penfold WR Grace, and Ray Stout. Ron talked about the goal to relieve the school district of a building that has no more use for the school system but expressed the importance to do something positive and meaningful for the community. There are two concerns that need to be acknowledged: removal of hazardous material in the building and the underground storage tank must be investigated. Ron discussed a DNRC grant program that offers up to \$50,000, but to apply DNRC requires a local city or county to sponsor the Libby Public Schools Asa Wood application. Applications are due August 12, 2021 and the final draft would be sent to the county for review and approval. Ron commented that he does not want to see the building still sitting empty 10 years from now.

Tina talked about the DNRC Planning Grant application and process for commissioner consideration.

Motion by Commissioner Letcher to approve and sign agreement/grant application for the Asa Wood Assessment. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.

10:00 AM **USFS Update:** Present were Chad Benson, Virginia Kocieda, Kenny Rayome Jr., and Will Langhorne. Present via phone was Tony Penfold WR Grace, and Ray Stout. Nikki Meyer present via VisionNet.

Chad said the 80mmbf goal this year should be achieved or close to 90%, combination of fuels and harvest programs. Chad updated the commissioners on the Black Ram, Pinkham Meadows, Purple Martin and Ripley-large projects that offer several years of work. Black Ram has 25mmbf wrapped into that project alone.

The Joint chiefs Proposal for fuels and WUI work has been resubmitted, hope to have decisions on that in early September.

Chad talked briefly about potential funding opportunities and awards and will keep the commission informed.

Chad said the Kootenai is the only forest in the region in stage 1 fire restrictions. Chad said the forest service is working to keep resources local.

There was a brief conversation regarding the re-working of the MOA between state, county and local stakeholders for operating collectively on shared stewardship projects around the community. Chad said the idea is strengthening the language on how to move the WUI piece forward faster. Possibly complete the MOA by next week.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were Judge Jay Sheffield, Vanessa Williamson, Virginia Kocieda, Jennifer McCully Kenny Rayome Jr., Brett McCully, and Will Langhorne. Present via phone were Tony Penfold WR Grace, and Ray Stout. Nikki Meyer and Pamela Munroe present via VisionNet.

- Virginia submitted a modification to the MOA between Lincoln County and DEQ to assist the Libby Asbestos Superfund Oversight Committee (LASOC) administratively. Lincoln County provides administrative assistance to LASOC and the modification is to extend the agreement for one calendar year. All other aspects of the agreement remain unchanged. Virginia said that \$25,000 is within the agreement for continued administrative services. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve the MOA Modification and extend the agreement for LASOC as submitted. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.
- Robin submitted the minutes for June 30 regular meeting and July 2, 2021 special session for approval. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve minutes as submitted. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.
- Jennifer submitted an amendment to the contract between Lincoln County and DPHHS Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Grant. The grant will provide funding for 2 years for epidemiological services by employing a Congregate Living Coordinator (CLC) as additional staff to be the liaison for congregate living facilities and settings and jails. Jennifer said she is requesting approval of the amendment now, but the funding only will be received if the hiring is approved. Jennifer said she will come back to the commission for further discussion. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve the contract amendment as submitted. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.
- Vanessa Williamson updated the commission on the Crisis Response Grant. The county was awarded \$116,850 which fully funds a mobile crisis response team. The county match is office space and employees; there is no money out of pocket for the county. Contract should be completed today and will be sent to the county attorney's office for review. The start date for implementation is Sept. 1st. Vanessa said she is putting together a policy and spending time to organize and finalize the process and procedures. Jay talked about coordinating with law enforcement, dispatch, and emergency services in Eureka, Troy and Libby, commenting this is going to be a great service for the county. Vanessa talked about the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT Montana) scheduled for next spring. The training focuses on de-escalation and is available for anyone countywide or agency to participate. Having the training in Lincoln County is a big achievement and will be great for local participation and training.

10:45 AM **Public Comment Time:** There were no public comments.

11:00 AM **Montana Wild Public Hearing:** Present were County Planner Jake Mertes, Brett McCully, Andy Evensen, Kenny Rayome Jr., and Will Langhorne. Present via phone was Ray Stout. Nikki Meyer and Pamela Munroe present via VisionNet.

Jake gave a history of the property and application timeline and explained the project proposal that includes 317.77 acres, located in the Eureka District. Designed for 31 recreational lots located off FDR 228 near Barron Creek. Planning staff visited the site in April of 2021 and could not identify any obvious concerns with the proposed development that are not being addressed through the review process. It appears much of the infrastructure has been put into place. The developers are requesting a variance from the requirements of VI-E(2) which states: 2. No lot may be divided by a public road, alley, right-of-way or easement. The planning board recommendation is to deny variance request, recommend platting as a utility site. Grant preliminary approval to Montana Wild, subject to conditions and based on the findings in the staff report. Jake gave a review of the Findings of Fact and Planning Department recommendations to include 18 conditions of approval.

Commissioner Bennett questioned, if in the future, can dollars be the counties primary option rather than parkland. Brett will follow-up and conduct research in MCA's.

Motion by Commissioner Letcher to approve preliminary plat for Montana Wild Subdivision based on planning staff recommendation and subject to 18 conditions. The motion includes denial of the variance request. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried.

There were no public comments in opposition of preliminary plat approval.

11:30 PM **Adjourned**

LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jerry Bennett, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Robin A. Benson, Clerk of the Board