

**June 2, 2021**

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners met for a regular session on June 2, 2021 in the Lincoln County Courthouse, Libby, Montana. Present were Commissioner Bennett, Commissioner Letcher, Commissioner Peck, County Administrator Patrick McFadden and Clerk & Recorder Robin Benson.

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

10:00 AM **USFS Update:** Canceled

10:20 AM **Marylou Goodpaster / Kootenai Valley Quilt Guild:** Present were George Jamison, Derrick Perkins, Judge Jay Sheffield, and Vanessa Williamson.

Marylou talked about the Kootenai Valley Quilt Guild and its involvement with several community summer projects. The Quilt of Valor Project is for injured service people and is a national project. The Kootenai Valley Quilt Guild is partnering with the local VFW and will be presenting at the VFW on Veterans Day. Marylou explained that the Quilt of Valor Project has expanded to service members and presented a beautiful quilt to Commissioner Mark Peck. Mark expressed his surprise and deep appreciation for the honor of receiving the quilt.

10:30 AM **Administrative Issues:** Present were Judge Jay Sheffield, Vanessa Williamson, Sheriff Darren Short, and Derrick Perkins. Present via phone was Nikki Meyer.

- Robin submitted the minutes for May 26, 2021 regular meeting for approval. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to approve minutes as submitted. Second by Commissioner Bennett, motion carried unanimously.
- Jenn McCully presented an amendment to the Public Health Grant for Covid-19 Vaccination Planning. Amendment is for additional funding of \$48,310. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to approve Amendment Number 2 as submitted. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.
- Judge Sheffield talked about the creation of the Lincoln County Probation Department approximately 2 ½ years ago and submitted a progress report for commissioner review. Currently, the probation officer supervises an average monthly caseload of 55 individuals on pretrial supervision and 35 sentenced probationers. The report is an indepth summary of Officer Williamsons education and her success of the work she conducts. Officer Williamson submitted a \$200,000 grant application to DPHHS to create a Mobile Crisis Response Team in Lincoln County to fund a team of local mental health professionals to respond for any individual suffering a mental health crisis. Judge Sheffield is requesting commissioners to continue the annual funding of this department and to classify the pay scale to a level commensurate with other agencies and reflective of the level of services being provided by this department and this officer.  
Commissioner Bennett suggested putting this on the commissioner agenda, look at the statutes and review the information provided.
- Patrick informed the commission that EMA Director Brent Teske purchased a shed for mobile covid testing. The shed is available now since the county is no longer conducting mobile testing. The shed was purchased last year for \$3500. Patrick will reach out to other departments to see if there is a county use for the shed.
- Commissioner Letcher commented the Tobacco Valley Rodeo Association would like to have wifi capability at their office on the rodeo grounds at the county fairgrounds and is willing to pay all fees involved. Commissioner Letcher explained that the county will have to give an easement for the fiber lines and expressed that it would be good for other county activities at the fairgrounds. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to accept the Interbel Agreement to move forward with extending fiber lines to the rodeo grounds. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried unanimously.
- Commissioner Peck commented that Kootenai Christian Broadcasting generator on Swede Mountain needs upgrading and is wanting to contribute \$3,000 to help with the cost. Commissioner Peck explained he supports and wants to see that program continue. The contribution will be funded out of the Libby Economic Development Fund.
- Commissioner Bennett commented on the road agreement being discussed with WR Grace and explained changes in the first part of the agreement being unnecessary because it's a public road. Commissioner Peck said he will take the agreement to the county attorney's office for review.
- Commissioner Bennett asked where we were on the purchase of a skid steer for the asbestos cell and will follow-up with Kathi Hooper.

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

11:00 AM **Grotjohn Lakeshore Permit:** Present were County Planner, Jake Mertes, Sheriff Darren Short and Derrick Perkins.

Jake said the property owner is proposing the placement of 4300 yards of fill in a low spot on his property in order to provide year-round lake access. A portion of the proposed fill would be located within the lakeshore protection zone. Jake gave an overview of the Findings of Fact based on MCA 75-7-2 and discussed the 5 conditions of approval. The Planning Board recommends approval of the Grotjohn Lakeshore Permit subject to the conditions in the staff report. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to approve the Grotjohn Lakeshore Permit subject to 5 conditions and based on the planning staff recommendation. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.

11:15 AM **Resolution to Appoint Supt of Schools:** Present were Will Langhorne and Nick Enblom.

Commissioner Bennett read Resolution 2021-13 in its entirety. The resolution allows the commissioners to appoint a qualified individual to serve as an interim County Superintendent of Schools until which time the vacancy is filled through the next general election.

Patrick commented this is the last legal step; the next step is the HR/hiring portion of the position. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to pass Resolution 2021-13 as submitted. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.

**All Resolutions can be viewed on the county website: [lincolncountymt.us](http://lincolncountymt.us)**

11:30 AM **Airport Administration:** Present were Nick Enblom representing Morrison Maierle, Bonnie Larson and Will Langhorne.

Nick said two quotes were received for the shoulder grading Eureka Airport Project. No bids were received. Morrison Maierle reached out for quotes per commissioner approval. Quotes were from Noble Excavating and Thompson Contracting. Noble Excavating was low bidder at \$57,830 and all qualifications were met. Morrison Maierle recommends commissioners to award the Eureka Airport Project to Noble Excavating. **Motion** by Commissioner Peck to approve the engineer's recommendation for Noble Excavating to conduct the work for the shoulder grading Eureka Project, cost up to \$57,830. Second by Commissioner Letcher, motion carried unanimously.

Nick submitted the final payment for the Libby Snowplow Truck and explained the final drawdown process for the Libby Snowplow Truck grant. **Motion** by Commissioner Letcher to approve final reimbursement for the Libby Snowplow Truck as submitted. Second by Commissioner Peck, motion carried unanimously.

11:45 AM **Salary Board:** Present were HR Director Dallas Bowe, Finance Director Wendy Drake, Sheriff Darren Short, Bonnie Larson, Robin Swimley, JoAn Cuffe and Will Langhorne.

County Administrator Patrick McFadden gave a PowerPoint presentation for the salary discussion for 2022. The discussion focused on elected officials base salaries in Montana counties, COLA rates, inflation, insurance costs and tax revenues. Patrick recommends a modest yearly COLA predictably tied to inflation and recommended a 1.8% COLA to match last year's inflation. Statistically, 38 of 45 responding counties gave COLA increases last year at an average of 1.91%. Patrick expressed that it is important to maintain incremental COLA instead of having to play catch up as Lincoln County has done historically. Patrick commented that due to the county safety program and employee safety record, worker's comp rate was reduced approximately twenty percent.

Bonnie asked about health insurance and commented that her employees work six days a week, with a lot of overtime to make \$44,000.

Robin Swimley commented that his only concern is 1.8% is not accurate and is low and expressed everything is increasing 4 to 5 percent. Robin Swimley stated that Lincoln County's advantage is a tax revenue increase and worker's comp decrease.

**Motion** by Bonnie Larson to increase elected official base salary by 1.8% COLA.

Robin Swimley applauded the commissioners of the changes and improvements to the county over the past 8 years.

Second by Robin Swimley, motion carried unanimously. The motion, second and vote was by the salary committee public members, Bonnie Larson, Robin Swimley and JoAn Cuffe.

Bonnie commended and shared her appreciation for the added services and improvements to county function.

12:30 PM **Meeting Adjourned**

1:30 PM **Mark Peck's Farewell Party**

## LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Bennett, Chairman

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Robin A. Benson, Clerk & Recorder