





Beaverhead County Planning Board Regular Meeting  
Commissioners' Room, County Courthouse  
September 14, 2023 at 1:00 pm

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Larry Y. reported that Sawmill road is really rough.

Vana read her report to the group. A copy of this report can be found in the Planning Department, County Courthouse. She also included the Butte-Silver bow report to compare. She has had some people interested in buying property that they can make a return on. She thinks things are going to slow down over the next few months. The interest rates are supposedly going down to 6% according to the Realtors Association. Vana is anticipating things picking up again around March 2024, as long as the interest rates are lower.

Larry V. gave his report from the City. He stated that the Loves Gas Station is still going in. The University stadium is going in, there needs to be some land adjustment before that can move forward. The City continues to talk about combining City and County Planning Boards.

He stated that people from all over the world have been staying at the bike camp. He gave away 25 bicycles and 15 helmets this year. The pickle ball court is going to be a non-profit, and will be separate from the bike camp.

**Planners Report:**

Rob reported that some of the Planning Board members took a field trip to the Sweetwater II View Minor Subdivision site.

Rob stated that today is the official day that the new floodplain maps have been adopted. The maps can be accessed from the Land Services page on the Beaverhead County website. Rob thanked Tracy for his hard work getting those maps put onto the County website.

A couple of weeks ago the Conservation Easement group came to the Commissioners and gave a presentation. Rob talked about how it would be nice if the Planning Board could give more input about the Conservation Easements. Tracy informed the group that they are trying to make Beaverhead County a Conservation Easement district/area. They asked the Commissioners for a letter of endorsement. They are planning to target this area for the easements.

Rob stated that someone called him the other day about a well being put in near the Quartz Hill and Hecla area. He talked about how the Planning Board doesn't have a say about building in avalanche areas due to no zoning.

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He stated that Mr. Long and Mr. Towery have had some disagreements about the road maintenance agreement in the Dancing Winds Subdivision. He hopes that they come to an agreement soon.

**Public Comments & Questions:**

Vana asked about the millings that the City is needing to get in order to repair the alleys. Per Larry, yes, he has also heard that. BJ stated that he thinks the City is looking to do a temporary easy fix in the alleys.

**Sweetwater II View Minor Subdivision:**

Rob read the findings of fact by the planning board and planning staff of the preliminary plat of the Sweetwater II View Minor Subdivision report. A copy of this report can be found in the Planning Department, County Courthouse.

Rob stated that Condition 6, 8, and 9 have been accomplished/completed already by Montana Quality builders.

Larry V. asked Rob to talk about the "dog leg" easement to access the lots to the North. Rob stated that the easement is extremely steep and doesn't seem to be useful. Those lots back there can be accessed from Trista Drive, in theory. The gentleman that owns the lot next to it, Mr. Brown, has shown interest in purchasing it. He has prescriptive access.

MOTION: *Kelly moved to approve the preliminary plat of Sweetwater II Minor Subdivision with the conditions of approval from the findings of fact report. Kristen Seconded. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.*

**Public Comments & Questions:** None.

**Subdivision Regulation Subcommittee Report:**

Rob stated that we have given the Subdivision Regulations draft to Great West Engineering. We are still working on the Supplements, but will be done with those soon. Rob asked BJ to talk about the Fire protection portion of the subdivision regulations.

BJ stated that he has put together a couple of fire protection examples for the board to review. His preferred one is the Gallatin County one. He stated that the water on wheels program is a good



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program, but \$2,000 a lot does not go very far in order to meet the standards. He would like to do away with the water on wheels program. He would like to see wells put in and maintained by the subdivisions. Kelly asked, who enforces the subdivisions to maintain them? BJ stated that as growth continues, then so does the need for an enforcement person to be hired by the County.

Kelly asked if the water on wheels program was intended for match money for grants. BJ stated that he has never been aware of that, or asked that question. He will look more into it. Vana stated that there are grants available for water infrastructure. The group agreed that the City and County should apply for those grants. Kelly and Vana stated that the County and City should work together in getting those grants, and then hire someone. Larry V. stated that we should bring this to the Commissioners and make them aware of it.

Larry V. stated that there should be a mechanism put into place on how to do that, a structured plan put into place. Justin S. asked if the County can hire an experienced third-party grant writer. Per Rob, yes, Great West Engineering was hired for the grant to update the new growth policy.

Vana asked if the fire protection is different for minor subdivisions. BJ stated that there are some differences as far as pressurized systems, size cisterns, but both proposals have different things. BJ talked about impact fees, in order to get those, there needs to be a lot of studies done. BJ would like to change the water on wheels for the fact that 20 years down the road, the fire department could lack volunteers. He is already experiencing that issue now with volunteers. The water on wheels program requires a lot of people driving tenders. The group talked about the more rural communities experiencing a lack of volunteers in those areas as well.

Kelly reiterated the importance of grant writing, that way there can be paid positions instead of volunteers.

Rob stated that he would like the sub-committee to meet in order to review the fire protection proposals. The group scheduled to meet tentatively on October 2, 2023 at 1:00pm in the Planning Department.

**Public Comments & Questions of Non-Agenda Items:**

Vana asked Rob if he could possibly attend a Grant writing class out of Great Falls. She will email him the information. Rob stated that he receives emails from the Chamber of Commerce about those types of trainings. BJ asked Rob to forward any grant opportunities that he comes across related to fire.



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**ADJOURN:**

With no further business to discuss, Vana moved, and Justin S. seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:21pm.

**Submitted:**

  
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Secretary, Rochelle Hoerning

**Approved By:**

  
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Chairman, Larry Volkening