

January 6, 2025 Regular Session of the Beaverhead County Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners, in and for Beaverhead County, Montana, met in session on January 6, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Room of the Beaverhead County Courthouse. Present: Commissioner Chairman John Jackson, Commissioner Michael J McGinley, Commissioner Tom Rice and Commissioner Support Specialist Dana Basile.

Pledge of Allegiance

At this time, those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance aloud to begin the day.

Reorganization of Board

At this time the Commissioners discussed reorganized:

MOTION: Commissioner McGinley moved and Commissioner Rice seconded that Commissioner Jackson hold the position of Chairman for 2025. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: Commissioner McGinley moved and Commissioner Jackson seconded that Commissioner Rice hold the position of Vice-Chairman for 2025. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jackson gladly accepted the Chairmanship for another year.

Updates on County Projects

Road Supervisor Bob Ferris was not present.

The following Road Department Report was submitted and scanned into the minutes:

BEAVERHEAD COUNTY ROAD WORK
December 29th to January 4th, 2025
Dillon, Lima and Wisdom Areas

DILLON AREA

- Plow snow on Byway, Bannack Bench, Local Roads, Horse Prairie
 - Equipment Setup
 - Repairs and maintenance
 - Road Check

WISDOM AREA

- Plow Upper and Lower North Fork, Rock Ck, Twin Lakes, and Moose Ck
 - Plow Gibbonsville, Steel Ck, and Wisdom
 - Road Check
 - Plow Skinner Meadows and Miner Lake
- Plow Little Lake, Big Swamp, Big Lake, and School

LIMA AREA

- Plow Snow on South Valley Rd
 - Bladed on Sage Creel Rd
- Equipment Repair and Setup
 - Weld Fabricate
 - Road Check

Clerk and Recorder Stacey Reynolds, Justice of the Peace Randi Braddock, County District Court Clerk Carly Anderson, GIS Coordinator Tracy Sawyer, Museum Director Candi Whitworth, HR Paul Craft, Planner Rob Macioroski, Finance Office Stacy Setzer, School Superintendent Mike Miller, Extension Agent Jack Bazemore, Landfill Supervisor Nick Hoem, Food Sanitarian Joyce Pollastro, Finance Assistant Becky Hankinson, Weeds Supervisor Amber Burch, Sheriff David Wendt, Public Health Lilia Guillen-Sanchez, Facilities Manager Shonna Graham, Treasurer Cathy Hucke, and Land Use Sanitarian Tom Wagenknecht, joined the meeting.

Paul started the discussion of a new hire checklist. This list is not taking authority away from the department heads, it is addressing the bases being covered. He passed out the checklist to all attending and asked for any questions or clarifications needed.

Carly asked about the 5-person hiring committee. She only has 3 people in her office so finding 2 more might pose an issue. Paul added it is not necessary but recommended for consistency as we need the same hiring practices for all.

Shonna asked if a Commissioner needs to be on the hiring board. Paul said it is a good idea to keep them in the loop as they need final approval and they can look into budgets about hiring costs for new hires but if they're not available, it is not required.

Randi asked if we could collectively agree to reduce the number needed on the committee. Paul replied if all are in agreeance, the checklist can be updated to state that either 3 or 5 members are needed.

Commissioner McGinley mentioned there is an overtime issue with pulling people from their regular position to work over 40 hours and we need to watch that as a budget issue.

Paul mentioned he did get the approval from MACo for this checklist.

Amber asked for clarification regarding the Weed Departments seasonal workers which need immediate interviews and approval for hire.

Paul replied that seasonal employees can be a slightly different "rushed" process.

Joyce added that seasonal employees are a different category.

Stacey asked for clarification on new hires being an agenda item or can department heads submit a letter of recommendation to the commissioners for approval.

Commissioner McGinley clarified that it needs to be discussed at the Regular Commissioners meeting but does not need to be an official agenda item. He said the Commissioners are the only ones allowed to fire an employee so they need to be the ones to hire as well. McGinley clarified it needs to be in the minutes as who hired the person. It needs to be on the official record of who is hired or fired.

Carly asked for clarification on the 9:00am county updates versus the Department Head Meetings. She is not able to attend all meetings but would like to be present for the Department Head Meetings. McGinley clarified that Monday's at 9:00am is always county updates, official Department Head Meetings are quarterly. Anyone can attend and update at the regular Commissioners Meeting.

Cathy asked if the department heads can bring a letter to the Commissioners prior to the meeting to ask for approval and they just "decide" at the commissioners meeting. Paul said yes, it can be recommended during the county updates not needing an agenda item.

Amber added the offer letter can have a stipulation of once approved by the board of commissioners at the regular commissioners meeting.

Paul said there will be a drive on the server that has all this information.

McGinley wanted to clarify immediate family bereavement leave- it is not listed in the handbook as separate. Paul said he needs to research if it would come under FMLA, sick or vacation days. He said he will have an answer next Monday.

Candi asked if there is a cap on how many vacation days you can have saved up. Paul said state law says you can only have 2 years of vacation time saved up before you have to use it or donate it.

Nick mentioned there is not much new to report for the landfill. He is working with the scale again trying to get that up and running.

Joyce presented her year-end report to the Commissioners which will be available in the Sanitarians office.

Stacey commented that her new Deputy Clerk and Recorder started today.

Jack mentioned it is board meeting week so he is busy.

Carly commented they recently hired a new clerk recorder, Ruby.

Shonna added they got the Extension office moved. Weeds office will be moved this week/next week. Elections office will be moving in there after some updates.

Amber added the Weed grants are due today so she is finalizing them.

Candi Whitworth said she is looking for anyone to remove snow from the boardwalk at the museum regularly.

Lilia added she is finishing her deliverables. So far in the county there were 6 flu last week.

Randi added her numbers are mostly up. They saw a 42% increase in criminal cases, 34% increase in civil cases, a 250% increase in small claims, 89% increase in search warrants and a 0.7% decrease in tickets. There were a total of 1595 cases in 2024.

Cathy added she is glad taxes are done.

Sheriff Wendt commented that last week there were lots of crashes. There was a plane that went down, landed, but can't get back up. He is needing a helicopter to help get the snow down to get it out. There are 14 downstairs. He is looking into remodeling the deputy office to add kennels so the K-9 vehicle doesn't have to be left running.

Mike M added he has visits to schools this week. The teacher in Wise River is working with the substitute on Thursdays thru Jan 20th and then he will take over the classroom. OPI asked about his accreditation and it needs to be added to the website. ESSER grants have all been spent. He and Stacy spent time last week with OPI clerks to close those all out and be finished.

Rob added he issued the flood plain permit on Laknar. The homeowner is building right in the floodway. He has a few surveys to review this week and the planning board meets Thursday.

Tracy commented he got the phones and computers working at the other building for Extension. He is still working on the fax line for the Treasurer.

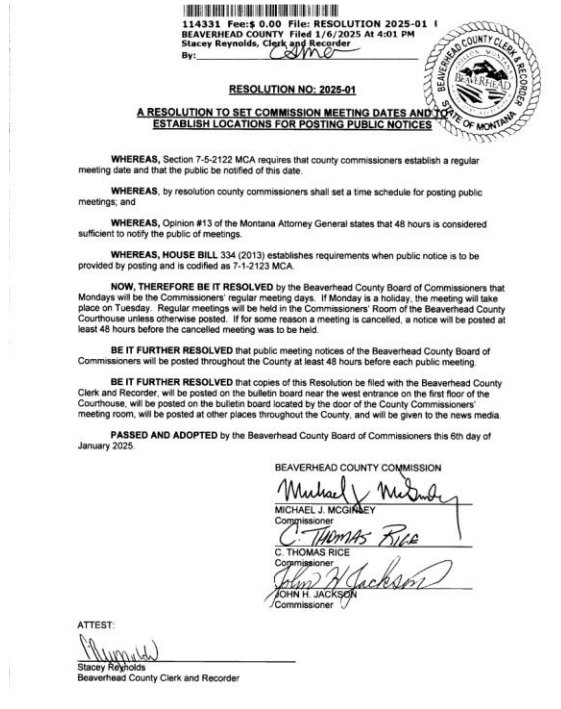
Tom W added he has been working on the community wildfire protection plan. LEPC meeting this afternoon and they will discuss homeland security grants.

Discussion & Action ~ Resolution 2025-01 – Set Commission Meeting Dates

After brief discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION: Commissioner Rice moved and Commissioner McGinley seconded that Resolution 2025-01 – Setting Commission Meeting Dates be adopted. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the Resolution can be viewed below:

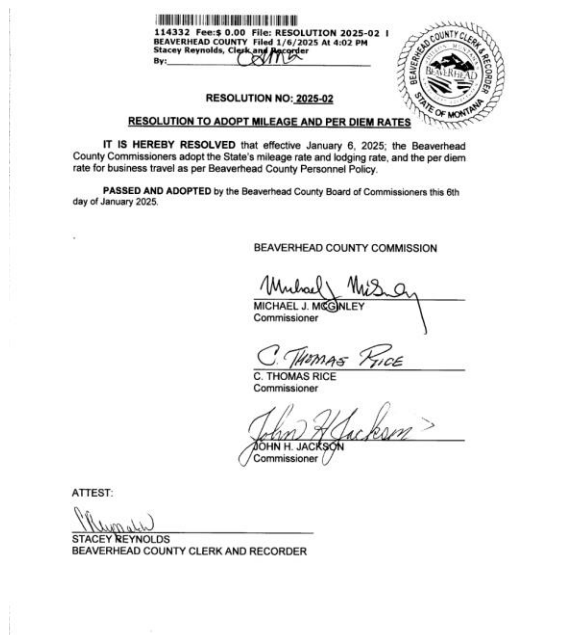


Discussion & Action ~ Resolution 2025-02 – Adopt Mileage and Per Diem Rates

After brief discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION: Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Rice seconded that Resolution 2025-02 – Adopt Mileage and Per Diem Rates be adopted. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the Resolution can be viewed below:



Discussion & Action ~ Resolution 2025-03 – Establish Fire Season

After brief discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION: Commissioner McGinley moved and Commissioner Rice seconded that Resolution 2025-03 – Establish Fire Season be adopted. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the Resolution can be viewed below:



Discussion and Action – Kay Family Transfer

County Planner Rob M began the discussion with presenting the survey which reflects the proposed split of the parcel for a family transfer into two 10 acre lots. Clifford Kay joined and was sworn in.

Jackson asked if the property was purchased with the intent to transfer- Mr. Kay replied no, he has occupied the land for 20 years. He wants to split it for his daughters as he is aging and wants to leave enough for both. There is one house on the property with one well and one septic. If it is split then there will need to be a new added well and septic if intentions are to build.

After brief discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION: Commissioner Rice moved and Commissioner McGinley seconded that the Kay Family Transfer be approved. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion and Action- Selection of Members for Resource Use Plan Update Committee

The Commissioners were presented with the letters of interest and resumes. There were 18 submissions. Kerry White joined via Teams. JS Turner joined in person.

Discussion ensued regarding what qualifications each member has and what area they represent in the county.

McGinley asked Kerry if he would be willing to be the chair for the process. He introduced himself and his qualifications and wants to help. He accepted the opportunity to chair the committee. He does not feel this will be a hard process as there is already a plan in place, it just needs adjustments. He is a neutral representation of the county. There can be a sub-committee of stakeholders or diverse members of the county.

Rice asked if Kerry was not able to commit to every meeting would he be willing to accept a vice-chair from the committee to sit in his absence.

Kerry said he has been doing a lot of research into other resource use plans and what we need. He should be able to be there for all the meetings.

Kerry asked what the target date of completion is.

McGinley replied he would like a rough draft by the end of June and FY25.

Kerry said he would like to have set dates of meetings such as twice monthly going the duration.

McGinley is recommending there be sub-committees in charge of different areas of the Resource Plan such as agriculture, energy, water, etc.

JS commented that we are not re-writing this plan. We need to update it and get a new vote to keep it current on items such as wind and solar farms. We need to look at water issues.

McGinley asked if everyone is comfortable with appointing this list of 18 and coming together with them all to have an organizational meeting to get everything established. He said some might not be able to commit as much as others so it is better to have a larger group working towards the same goal.

Kerry is available 10a-4p any day depending on roads and evenings he would have to get out of Dillon by 8pm.

The first organizational meeting will be January 15th at 4pm in the Commissioners Room at the Courthouse to set commitments and a meeting schedule. All 18 that expressed interest will be invited to attend and create subcommittees amongst themselves.

Action on Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the December 30th, 2024 meeting were read and the following motion was made:

MOTION: Commissioner McGinley moved and Commissioner Rice seconded that the minutes of the meeting be approved. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Recess

At 12:00 noon, Chairman Jackson recessed the meeting. At 1:30 p.m., Chairman Jackson and Commissioner Rice reconvened the meeting with Commissioner McGinley and their Assistant Dana Basile present.

LEPC Meeting

The minutes from the LEPC Meeting will be available in the Planners office.

Public Comments on Subjects Under County Jurisdiction Not on Agenda

Unfinished Business/Other Topics of Discussion

Routine matters occupied the attention of the Board for the remainder of the day.

Payment of Invoices

The Commissioners reviewed and approved invoices for a total of \$27,189.96 beginning with check #216951 and ending with check #216985. The Invoice Payment Schedule is located in the Financial Administrator's Office.

1/5/25 Void Check 216959 should have been 2 separate checks.

1/5/25 Re-Issue Checks #216986/#216987 Madison County Justice Court
\$1,685.00/\$1,000.00

Public Comments on Subjects Under County Jurisdiction

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Attest: _____ Approved: _____
Clerk of the Board Chairman of the Board