

## **March 31, 2025 Regular Session of the Beaverhead County Commissioners**

The Board of Commissioners, in and for Beaverhead County, Montana, met in session on March 31, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Room of the Beaverhead County Courthouse. Present: Commissioner John Jackson, Commissioner Michael 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.

### **Updates on County Projects**

Road Supervisor Bob Ferris was present and reported that he is getting ready to do the bridge next week on Nissen Ln. He has been blading a little in the county but mostly ready for bridge.

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

March 23rd to March 29th, 2025  
Dillon, Lima and Wisdom Areas

#### **DILLON AREA**

- Plow Snow on ByWay, Hwy 324
- Install Cattle Guard on Schoolhouse Rd
- Equipment Repairs and Maintenance
  - Check local roads

#### **WISDOM AREA**

- Road Check
- Plow Upper North Fork, Skinner Meadows, Miner Lake, Little Lake and Big Swamp
  - Burn Willows on Rock Ck
  - Put Salt in Culverts
  - Shop Clean

#### **LIMA AREA**

- Plow Snow on South Valley Road Rd
  - Blade Big Sheep Creek
- Equipment Setup, Move, Repair, Weld
  - Shop Maintenance
  - Road and Lane Check

Clerk and Recorder Stacey Reynolds, Planner Rob Macioroski, Weeds Supervisor Amber Burch, MSU Extension Agent Jack Bazemore, Sheriff David Wendt, Public Health Director Lilia Guillen Sanchez, Fairground Manager Justin Kellabrew, Food Sanitarian Joyce Pollastro, County Attorney Sky Jones, GIS Coordinator Tracy Sawyer, and Land Use Sanitarian Tom Wagenknecht, joined the meeting.

Jack mentioned it looks to be a quiet week. He had a great workshop with Sagebrush Partnership last week. He took sixteen 4-H kids to White Sulphur Springs on a field trip last weekend.

Tom commented the fire warden is watching the weather and turning open burning on and off accordingly. He has been answering questions and subdivision issues with land sanitation. For DES, he has three homeland security grants will be submitting. He asked for letters of support from some staff members and needs them. DES has kept a satellite phone for safety reasons, but it has never really been used. He is getting rid of it and getting a mobile Starlink system and it can be mobile with different vehicles.

Mike McGinley briefly discussed issues with University of Utah building in the Centennial and the refuge regarding public safety concerns.

Justin commented that the Youth Challenge cadets were in last week cleaning stalls. City of Dillon will be in getting water hooked up and sprinklers and the electric work is happening.

Amber mentioned it's been quiet. She has applications coming in for summer work.

Rob commented there is no planning board next month. He received an inquiry from PACES looking at solar development. He has 4 surveys to review and 1 is a family transfer.

Stacey added there was a district meeting last week. She will be moving into new office expansion and gearing up for May election.

Lilia added her deliverables are due beginning of April. She will be attending a Public Health conference in Helena next week. There is also a National WIC conference end of month and Emergency preparedness summit end of month she will be attending. She is waiting to hear if she is getting a mental health grant.

Joyce mentioned she is heading to Wise River today for inspections. There has been an uptick in Cottage Law licenses recently. She is following up on a few complaints.

Tracy added he spent time under the courthouse last week. He has been looking into Forest service site leases in the Bitterroot.

David added it was a busy weekend and there are 19 downstairs. Saturday there was a foot of snow in Lima. Tracy got a new live scan set up in the office for fingerprinting.

Sky commented Margot and Coty helped a lot in his absence. He is now playing catchup.

Tom W added he and Nick went to a training last week on Lithium Ion batteries. There was a lot of good info for landfill and fire department regarding electric fires caused by them.

### **Discussion- Deputy Cross Presentation Regarding Union**

Present: Sheriff David Wendt, Jail Commander Ian Ternes, Deputy Cross, Deputy Dairy, Deputy Fields, dispatch, Payroll Stacy Setzer

Deputy Cross presented memorandum to the Commissioners and asked the Commissioners to look over and sign an Amendment Letter adding the dispatchers to the Union.

McGinley asked what will this cost the county? Cross responded nothing at this time, this is just recognizing them as part of the Union. In order for them to begin putting a contract together, they need to have this letter signed adding them to the union.

McGinley asked why don't they have their own union- cross responded they looked at that also but this makes more sense with them joining the Deputy Union.

At this time, detention is not being added. Detention is recognized as corrections and not law enforcement.

There will be another meeting to update the contract at a later date.

Deputy Cross presented a PowerPoint regarding Beaverhead County statics about law enforcement needs.

Ian added from the jail point of view- they average 20 per day. State law recommends 1 officer per 12 inmates. They usually only have one officer on duty because of the staff shortage.

Added from dispatch POV- radios with clear communication is priority for them so they get all the details needed to send the right support.

With population and growth, the department needs to also grow. The overtime, burnout and turnover rates need to be considered so we can stay on top of the growth and not get lost.

### **Action on Previous Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the March 17 and March 24, 2025 meeting were read and the following motion was made:

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

### **Recess**

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

### **Legislative Update**

Commissioner McGinley began the discussion with this is the last week to put new bills in.

Bill discussed:

HB 935 Water wells bill introduced this morning and hearing this afternoon.  
SB117 regarding property taxes.

HB 916 Lodging tax money as property tax relief.

New lottery system (millionaire Montana) money made goes towards property tax relief.

HB903 new property tax class – manufacturing.

HB915 wind generation- move up to 6% to match solar.

SB537 marijuana bill- money going to the law enforcement from the marijuana tax dollars, more LE more dollars.

Public transit bills.

April 14-18 McGinley will be in legislative session.

**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 \$39,964.93 beginning with check #217468 and ending with check #217507. The Invoice Payment Schedule is located in the Financial Administrator's Office.

3/21/25 Void Ck # 217456 Wrong Vendor

3/21/25 Reissue Ck # 217167 NW Energy \$1,274.12

**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