

April 6, 2026 Regular Session of the Beaverhead County Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners, in and for Beaverhead County, Montana, met in session on April 6, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Room of the Beaverhead County Courthouse. Present Commissioner John H. Jackson, Commissioner C. Thomas 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 Last week a few of the road guys were at MACRs. Pete Lowman started today at the Dillon Shop. This week they are working on blading roads.

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

DILLON AREA

- Plow Snow on Byway
- Blade Local Roads
- Repairs and Maintenance
 - Road Check

WISDOM AREA

- Record Keeping
- Clean Sump, Collect Oil, Weld Repair
- Equipment Setup, Equipment Move, Parts Run
 - Check Local Roads

LIMA AREA

- Blade Big Sheep Creek, Sage Creek Road, Gravely Lane
 - Equipment Cleaning and Repair
 - General Fabrication
 - Checked Local Roads

Land Use Sanitarian Tom Wagenknecht, County Attorney Sky Jones, Clerk and Recorder Stacey Reynolds, Sheriff David Wendt, Human Resources Director Theresa Eathorne, MSU Extension Agent Jack Bazemore, Food Sanitarian Joyce Pollastro, Justice of the Peace Randi Braddock, and County Planner Tina Caron, joined the meeting.

Jack added Fair Board meeting is not tonight, next Monday. He is busy with little shooters this weekend.

Tom mentioned all well at the landfill. He mentioned the prescribed burn at Melrose this weekend went well. Dealing with violations for sanitation.

Stacey commented that they are working on special district election and primary election.

Joyce added she is finishing up the first quarter paperwork. She has been writing enforcement letters for Land use sanitation violations. They received a grant from FDA this year to be used for training.

Tina mentioned they are very busy upstairs with violations. There is a minor subdivision coming through and Flood plain issues. Etc.

Randi commented that there is a jury trial coming on May 1st. There were a few fish and game violations from the weekend.

Theresa reminded all that Rocky Mountain Biometrx will be here Wednesday and it is also Open Enrollment with MACo. She has been working on getting everyone online paychecks.

David added busy weekend. 18 downstairs.

Sky mentioned his office has been staying busy getting ready for upcoming trials.

Discussion and Action- Appointment to Compensation Board

The Compensation Board needs a third community member to serve a 3-year term. The Commissioners have chosen Tracy Sawyer to appoint.

MOTION: Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Rice seconded to appoint Tracy Sawyer to the Compensation Board. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Action on Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were not read or approved.

Public Comments on Subjects Under County Jurisdiction Not on Agenda

On Friday, Tom Wagenknecht received notice that Beaverhead County was designated as a drought affected area. A news release came out of the office of Disaster recovery and resilience. In January, the USDA designated drought counties and Beaverhead was not a part. The announcement is helpful for crop irrigation loss. The Commission is going on record to honor the emergency declaration to help all that need to apply for this disaster assistance in the county due to the drought.

New or 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 \$7,996.36 beginning with check #219975 and ending with check #220063. The Invoice Payment Schedule is located in the Financial Administrator's Office.

The Commissioners reviewed and approved invoices for a total of \$78,581.21 beginning with check #210064 and ending with check #210105. The Invoice Payment Schedule is located in the Financial Administrator's Office.

Public Comments on Subjects Under County Jurisdiction

Discussion- USFS Corey Lewellen

Corey Lewellen from USFS joined the Commissioners to update on the Sustainable Yield Unit Public Hearing held in Helena last week and the project in general.

The public hearing in Helena went well. There were about 60 that showed up. There were comments in support and some environmental groups in support of timber but not the tool they're using. They received comments across the board both for and against. Some concerns were regarding staying up to code and regulations, and that this will deter from keeping up with other landscapes.

He briefly went into detail about the Sustainable Yield Unit project- there have been mills shut down across the area such as in Townsend and Livingston. This project provides stability to support the infrastructure with a sustainable project for the foreseeable future. This is a tri-forest sustainable yield unit (Custer-Gallatin, Helena, and Beaverhead-Deerlodge) and the timber produced must be used by a manufacturer in the unit area such as Sun Mountain. This project is proposing to keep 35 million board feet produced and kept within the SYU area.

He added that if the Commissioners want to provide comment on the project, they are due by April 8th. The plan will be finalized in the late spring or early summer of this year.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board; the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Attest: _____ Approved: C. THOMAS RICE
Clerk of the Board Chairman of the Board