

May 5, 2020

The Board of County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in regular session in the District Courtroom of the Granite County Courthouse with Chairperson Bill Slaughter and Commissioners Scott Adler and Charles Hinkle attending. Also attending was County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw and Executive Assistant Mike Kahoe. The session convened with the pledge of allegiance. The Board noted that this regular meeting is being held in the District Courtroom to allow for social distancing. The session is being live streamed in order to provide for remote public participation (via telephone or Zoom, and questions and comments can be emailed to the Board), as the Governor's directives regarding COVID-19 do not allow for the gathering of groups of more than 10 people. Also, the Board is practicing the recommended social distancing (keeping people at least 6-feet apart) in order to slow or stop the spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). People meeting with the Board did so by telephone, email or the Zoom computer program.

The Board held the bid opening for the Sale of Surplus Granite County Property. The property has been declared surplus to the operation of the county and has been properly and publicly advertised in the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper on April 16 and 23, 2020. Several sealed bids were received by the deadline of Monday, April 27, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. At Chairperson Bill Slaughter's request, Executive Assistant Mike Kahoe opened the six bids received and read them aloud in the order in which they were received. The surplus property and the high bids were as follow:

SURPLUS PROPERTY	HIGH BID	HIGH BIDDER
1. Sander	No Bid	No Bid
2. Water Tank	\$107.00	Kesler Ranch
3. Dump Box	\$151.00	Hillshire Const.
4. Garage Door	\$251.73	John Alt
5. Water Tank	\$127.00	Hillshire Const.
6. Plow	\$300.00	Forest McClain
7. Plow	\$300.00	Forest McClain
8. Culverts and 2 Axles	\$210.00	Edward Lord
9. Ford Tractor Mower, Model 6610	\$1,353.00	Hillshire Const.
10. Wood Planks and Guard Rail	\$410.00	Edward Lord
11. Scale	No Bid	No Bid
12. Scale	\$105.00	Edward Lord
13. Lead Weights and Water Pump	\$40.00	Kesler Ranch

Commissioner Hinkle moved to accept the high bid on each numbered item and send items with no bids to the scrap yard. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. The high bidders

will be notified of their successful bids. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw and Road and Bridge Superintendent/Solid Waste Manager Paul Alt attended.

Road and Bridge Superintendent/Solid Waste Manager Paul Alt met with the Board and gave his weekly report. The report included that the crew is busy grading roads and completing major improvements on the Henderson Creek Road.

The Board held the weekly COVID-19 update. Dr. Mark Ransford gave the IMT (Incident Management Team) report that restaurants, bars and breweries were allowed to open yesterday, but all are not opening at this time; they must follow social distancing guidelines and use extra sanitary precautions. Bricks Pub in Philipsburg is doing a gradual reopening; the Sweet Palace plans to open May 17th with additional sanitary precautions; and the VFW Bar at Maxville is opening. The next two weeks will tell whether people are following the regulations in place. The state is getting few new cases, so the guidelines have been working, according to Dr. Ransford. The Philipsburg Brewery has outside seating and if there is not a seat available, people are not allowed to stand around drinking beer outside. Dr. Ransford indicated that the businesses are all trying hard. Schools are planning to have graduations; Drummond at the rodeo grounds and Philipsburg at Winninghoff Park; each graduate is allowed only 10 people to attend. Schools remain closed for the rest of the school year. Forest Service campgrounds in this area are opening next week. Dr. Ransford said that with all of this relaxation we must be prepared to follow any positive cases if they occur. Commissioner Adler said that a bar in Drummond cannot open up because it can hold only five people under the current regulations. Dr. Ransford suggested outside serving like some other businesses are doing. Question: May the courthouse open for driver's license renewals on this Monday, May 11, 2020 only; Dr. Ransford indicated that this is acceptable with conditions that would need to be set. It was discussed whether people coming into the courthouse should be required to wear a mask; a bandana or a scarf will work, it does not have to be a surgical-type mask. Dr. Ransford urged for masks to be required in the Courthouse, but if not required, then strongly recommended. The Board agreed that masks would be highly recommended, but not required. PHEP Coordinator Dustin Muhly said he will order some masks for the courthouse. As the Board of Health, Commissioner Adler moved to open the courthouse for driver's license renewals on Monday (May 11, 2020), there will be 4 people allowed in the lobby and 2 people allowed in the Treasurer's Office, and it will be regulated by a person in the Treasurer's Office to assure social distancing, and masks being strongly recommended. Otherwise, the Courthouse will remain locked, but open for business through telephone or e-mail or appointment. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Hinkle inquired about committees meeting in the courtroom. Clerk of District Court Carol Bohrsen said that Judge Dayton is not allowing attorneys to do private meetings, such as depositions, in the courtroom. Dr. Ransford said that he will have more information in a couple of weeks when he sees what the virus does. Commissioner Hinkle said that the FMAC (Forest Management Advisory Committee) group is willing to wait until June. Dustin Muhly gave the PHEP (Public Health Emergency Planning) Report: The numbers for Montana are very good and there are no

confirmed cases in Granite County. Businesses are starting to open up. He will bring some disposable masks to the courthouse today for people who do not have their own. CEO/DON Maria Stoppler, with the Granite County Hospital District, reported that all restrictions are still in place at Granite County Medical Center; nursing staff required to wear surgical masks and office staff required to wear a soft mask. Also, some masks are washable and reusable. Public Question: Are there COVID-19 tests for hospital and nursing home patients. Maria Stoppler responded that she is morally obligated to give that information to the family, but not to the public. There have been no positive tests in the long-term care facility. State said that they will be around to test all nursing home residents. Jackie Bolster noted that she has some masks she can give to the hospital. Commissioner Hinkle asked about septic pumping and disposal. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw said that septic pumping companies in Anaconda area are not willing to take septic to Helena area wastewater treatment facilities, but private septic pumping services may be willing to come to this area and take pumped septic back to Helena. County Attorney Bradshaw will call and find out. The Commission noted that it had been discussed with the Tri-County Sanitarian and he had agreed to look into it. It appears the Sanitarian, Chad Lanes, is working on a location for a land application site in the Anaconda area that could accept and spread septic material for a fee. The Commission agreed to follow up with the Tri-County Sanitarian on this issue. For spreading of septic effluent, Dr. Ransford noted that it must be six feet above the water level and must be plowed into the ground within a specified length of time. The Board requested that PHEP Coordinator Dustin Muhly, Public Health Nurse Debra Robinson and Public Health Clerk/Assistant Jackie Bolster make an appointment to meet with the Board next week.

Georgetown Lake level was reported at 6,428.41 feet, according to the USGS gage and the dam tender's report. The lake is approximately 13.08 inches below full pool. The outflow is estimated at approximately 47.8 cfs, according to the USGS outflow gauge. Commissioner Adler moved reduce the outflow to 35 cfs and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. The Board notified Paul Talon with Flint Creek Hydro to reduce the outflow to 35 cfs. Commissioner Adler noted that the Fish, Wildlife and Parks fisheries should participate on this weekly agenda item.

The Board discussed setting the time for a hearing on the "Petition to Abandon Portion of Princeton Road (Old Access Road to Maxville) from Highway 1 to Maxville Road." County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw reported that the contracted County Surveyor Hans Bohrnsen and Commissioner Bill Slaughter had inspected the road and submitted their report, so a hearing on the petition can now be scheduled. The County Attorney noted that the hearing notice must be advertised in the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper twice, which could be May 14 and 21, 2020. Commissioner Adler moved to set the hearing for Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Larry DeMott attended.

Sheriff Scott Dunkerson met with the Board regarding crisis and mental health evaluations at the jail. Sheriff Dunkerson indicated that Western Montana Mental Health (WMMH) is

not responsive to his needs for mental health services when he has an urgent case. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that the agreement with WMMH is non-exclusive regarding mental health/crisis evaluations, so another agreement can be made with another agency or person. Sheriff Dunkerson recommended a contract with Ashley Westphal FNP, if she is willing, as she is certified to do such evaluations. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted the difference between a civil case and a criminal case for mental evaluations. Also, if the agreement is with an individual or entity, they must have the required liability insurance. Sheriff Dunkerson said that he would like to divert mentally ill people from jail, if possible. Discussion was held about contracting with the Granite County Hospital District. Public health Assistant/Clerk Jackie Bolster indicated that there is a possibility that a \$40,000 grant will be available for mental health services. A decision was postponed by the Board until more information could be obtained.

The Board held the opening of lease proposals for the Granite County Medical Center building in Philipsburg and the Drummond Outpatient Primary Care Clinic building. The public notice calling for lease proposals has been published in the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper on March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 2, 2020. At Chairperson Bill Slaughter's request, Executive Assistant Mike Kahoe opened the one proposal received from the Granite County Hospital District requesting to renew its leases. Discussion was held on the appropriate length of the leases. CEO/DON Maria Stoppler, Granite County Hospital District, indicated that five-year leases are preferable to her. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that the current leases are for five years. Commissioner Hinkle moved to accept the proposal for a five-year term and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. County Attorney Bradshaw noted that the details of the leases will be worked out and that a formal Resolution will need to be considered by the Board to authorize the said leases.

As an administrative matter, the Board discussed the possibility of the county contracting for mental health evaluations with the Granite County Hospital District. District CEO/DON Maria Stoppler noted that Ashley Westphal currently does such evaluations for the Sheriff's Office on occasion, but during set appointments or when she is covering at the ER. Maria Stoppler said that she would be willing to consider and discuss such a modified arrangement, but didn't believe a written agreement was needed as the evaluations would be done at the medical center and billed per usual practice

Maria Stoppler, CEO/DON of Granite County Hospital District, met with the Board and presented the monthly financial update. The report included a financial report dated 5-5-2020 showing projected cash available of \$213,900, projected deposits of \$328,000, accounts payable of \$(150,000), and projected cash reserves of \$178,000 (15.5 days of operation). She discussed that payroll protection federal funds have been received and more funds are anticipated. Also, some stimulus funds are anticipated. She believes that the federal funds will make up for the low utilization, but it will only keep the finances stable, but not allow the facility to get ahead. She noted that patient numbers for nursing home and swing beds are way down. She emphasized that the clinic is open by appointment and any new hospital

and nursing home patients will be screened prior to admission. March revenue was fine, but April revenue was dismal due to people staying home due to the COVID-19 guidelines. Also included were a report on utilization, revenue analysis, balance sheet, accounts receivable aging, and an Administrator's Report dated April 28, 2020. Maria Stoppler highlighted areas of the Administrator's Report. A re-design of the electrical service for the CT scan has been agreed upon and excavation is underway today; she anticipates that the machine will be started on June 1, 2020. The Board complimented Maria Stoppler on the way the nursing home residents have been kept safe and protected from the Coronavirus.

Public Comment: Justice of the Peace Debbie Fratzke noted that people appearing in Justice Courts are encouraged to wear masks and if they don't have one that a mask will be supplied. Also, disinfecting between hearings is required and they are encouraged to do as many hearings as possible by telephone. She noted that these directives come from the Montana Supreme Court. **Public Question:** If a disability is involved, how do people get to the courtroom? **Response:** County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw responded that the Granite County Justice Court is accessible and other courts would make accommodation of an alternate room in the courthouse or potentially use the courthouse in Anaconda, which is accessible.

Correspondence: Letter from the FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) dated 4-21-2020 regarding piezometer work at Flint Creek Dam. Letter from Montana Association of Counties, Property and Casualty Trust, dated 4-22-2020 requesting designation of a primary contact person to coordinate with the county insurance agent and HCA for county property reappraisal for insurance purposes; the Board selected Road and Bridge Superintendent/Solid Waste Manager Paul Alt as the primary contact. Email from Mike Noblin regarding the lack of septic pumping services in Granite County, to which County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw will respond.

Commissioner Hinkle moved to approve the April 28, 2020 minutes as presented and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

The session adjourned at 12:30 p.m.