

May 26, 2020

The Board of County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in regular session in the Commission Office 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 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 in person, by telephone, email or the Zoom computer program.

Road and Bridge Superintendent/Solid Waste Manager Paul Alt met with the Board and gave his report. The report included that a rented large excavator has been moved up to Bear Gulch where a plugged culvert washed out the road, he believes that the culvert was plugged due to Richard Komerec's mining operation. Commissioner Adler moved to put the road back where it was. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Adler noted that he has photographs of the area involved and a deputy sheriff was at the scene. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw advised that Paul Alt keep track of the hours of personnel time and equipment involved. Paul Alt reported that he is placing rip-rap on some roads and he noted that there is no water over any county roads as of today.

Georgetown Lake level was reported at 6,429.00 feet, according to the USGS gage and the dam tender's report. The lake is approximately 6.00 inches below full pool. The outflow is estimated at approximately 35.9 cfs according to the USGS outflow gauge. Commissioner Hinkle moved to make no adjustment in the outflow. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Tri-County Sanitarian Chad Lanes met with the Board in person regarding the difficulty in disposing of septic waste. He reported that the septic pumper had been looking at land for a land application site. He noted that the chief executive of Anaconda-Deer Lodge County is vehemently against any land application. Also, there may be septic pumpers from other counties which will come to Granite County to pump septic tanks. Commissioner Slaughter requested a report from Chad Lanes by next week regarding available septic pumpers and septic disposal in surrounding counties. Chad Lanes noted that a land application site in Anaconda-Deer Lodge County would require planning board authorization. Discussion was held that people can do land application on their own land for septic waste if guidelines are followed. Commissioner Hinkle noted that subdivision covenants may not allow land application. Also, Commissioner Slaughter reported that a two story structure was in progress near Maxville in an area where it may not be allowed and Chad Lanes agreed to check it out.. Also, Chad Lanes reported that bars and restaurants are doing well abiding by the regulations under the COVID-19 response.

**Granite County Board of Health met with Dr. Mark Ransford and Commissioners Slaughter, Adler and Hinkle present, representing a quorum of the Board of Health. Dr. Mark Ransford, Incident Management Team leader and chairman of the Board of Health, presented a written report dated May 26, 2020. Dustin Muhly, PHEP (Public Health Emergency Planning) Coordinator, reported that he is reviewing the protocol for policies and procedures, which should be compatible within all three counties. He noted that he is up-to-date on PHEP deliverables. The state will do testing at all long term care facilities as part of year two protocols. Year three will include first responders and year four will see testing of anyone who wants a test. Dr. Mark Ransford noted that some tests may provide false positives and false negatives. If people have symptoms and have a negative test, they should be tested again. Jackie Bolster noted that hand sanitizer is coming next week. Public Health Nurse Debbie Robinson reported that anyone who comes to the clinic or the hospital can get the test, if it is requested. Dustin Muhly noted that anyone in the jail can be tested if the sheriff requests it. Dr. Mark Ransford reviewed his report and he recommends that anyone in the county should be able to get hand sanitizer if they want it. Five-gallon buckets of hand sanitizer will be delivered next week. Dr. Ransford noted that the pandemic is absolutely not over. Phase 2 is starting June 1, 2020 and the 14-day quarantine signs will be removed and 14 of the signs will be replaced by new signs which state “STOP COVID-19 Coronavirus, IF YOU ARE ILL STAY AT HOME.” He noted that people and businesses have been very cooperative. He is happy with the people of Granite County, the Granite County Commissioners and the Board of Health response. He noted that the Drummond rodeo has been canceled. Possibly the Philipsburg Rotary will have its summer concert. He noted that if there is a flare-up of cases that the former guidelines will return. Some events will occur, like the Farmer’s Market in Drummond, with some changes to avoid person-to-person contact. There are no confirmed COVID-19 cases in Granite County and no one is under quarantine. The Board expressed appreciation to Dr. Mark Ransford for the excellent work he has done on this pandemic as a volunteer.**

**Quarantine Policy: The Board will consider the Quarantine Policy on the next agenda.**

**Grant for PPE for Public Health: COVID-19 response for \$38,000.00, funds can be used for overtime or for PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) from DPHHS. The Board encouraged people to apply for available grants during the current emergency mode.**

**Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPI) Standard Operation Procedures: The Board will consider the NPI on the next agenda.**

**The Board discussed the Granite County v. Rising Sun and Jack McLeod case with County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw. Litigation is on-going and the engineering report received from Jack McLeod is not sufficient. The plan will be to go back to mediation. Commissioner Adler moved to go to mediation and to have Missoula attorney Bill Wagner as mediator. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

The Board reviewed the Declaration of Agricultural Covenant by Clare Bloom for Tract 2-A1 on a Certificate of Survey (50.91 acres), which will be assigned a number when this Declaration is recorded with the Clerk and Recorder. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw explained that the Declaration assures that the land will always be used only for agricultural purposes. Commissioner Adler moved to approve the document, subject to Planning Director Linda Bouck's approval. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Later in the meeting, Planning Director Linda Bouck agreed with the Board's approval.

At the request of Commissioner Slaughter, Executive Assistant Mike Kahoe opened the two proposals in the order received from the advertisement for the Requests for Qualifications (RFQ's) for the county's on-call engineer. The advertisement was published in the April 9 and 16, 2020 issues of the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper. Qualification packets were received from Triple Tree Engineering of Helena and from Great West Engineering of Helena. Both packets submitted contained the required number of six copies. The Board agreed to review the proposals and put a decision on next week's agenda.

The Board considered the Lease Agreement for Hospital, Health Clinic and Nursing Home Building in Philipsburg. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that the agreement is for a five year term and is similar to the lease now in place, with some clarifications on insurance requirements and approval by the Board of major changes in the building. CEO/DON Maria Stoppler commented that because the facility is such a small Critical Access Hospital that its insurance carrier may not be able to raise the limits of its insurance because of the low risk at a small facility. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that he is requiring the statutory limits for insurance. Maria Stoppler indicated that the insurance is now \$1 million/\$3 million which the facility can afford. Commissioner Adler moved to accept the Lease Agreement for the Hospital, Health Clinic and Nursing Home Building and the Lease Agreement for the Drummond Clinic Building with \$1 million/\$3 million insurance. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. On another subject, Maria Stoppler answered a public question and replied that the final install of the CT scan is June 1st, followed by operator training and ready for use on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Board held the public hearing on the Petition to Abandon a Portion of Princeton Road submitted by Rae McKay. The Board reviewed the Road Viewer's Report dated April 27, 2020 and signed by Hans Bohrnsen as contracted County Surveyor. Larry DeMott attended in person. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw explained that this is the public hearing portion of the process and that the Board can make a decision today or postpone it to a future agenda and the Board should consider whether the road will ever be needed by the county in the future. Commissioner Slaughter read the petition aloud for those people participating electronically. Public Question: How many signatures are on the petition? Answer: There are 13 signatures on the petition. Public comment: Larry DeMott stated that there is no sense having the road for public access since it goes through his property. He would like to have the road completely abandoned. He said that the only easement through there right now is Blackfoot Telephone. Also, he said that Mr. Paul Alt, who owns the property above

Larry DeMott's land, said that he has never used the road petitioned to be abandoned. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that Louis Polinsky indicated to him that he uses the road to turn his horse trailer around a few times a year. Commissioner Slaughter read aloud a portion of the Road Viewer's Report dated April 27, 2020: "Recommendation. Since the public has been unable to use this road due to its closure in the past, and for safety reasons with the approach to Montana Highway 1, I feel the public has no benefit to keeping this road open and it should be formally abandoned per the submitted petition." County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw indicated that the Board's options are: grant the petition, deny the petition, or grant the petition with provisions. The Board noted that the road has been closed for many years and if it is opened there would be a liability to the county due to the safety hazard of a blind corner on Montana Highway 1. Planning Director Linda Bouck stated that there is always a concern about abandoning any road, but in this case she feels that the Montana Department of Transportation would not allow an entrance onto Highway 1. Commissioner Hinkle moved to grant the petition and Commissioner Slaughter seconded the motion. Commissioner Adler recused himself from voting as he had signed the petition since he owns property in the area. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw inquired whether there should be any emergency access and the Board indicated that it is not practical as an emergency access. There was no further public comment. The motion carried.

Drummond/Philipsburg ambulances grant funding, \$1,500 each from Northwest Farm Credit Service, was discussed by the Board with Jackie Bolster of the Drummond Ambulance. Jackie Bolster noted that the funds will be used for a decontaminator fog machine for each ambulance, which would be used after the regular cleaning protocol following an ambulance run. The grants are to assist in response to COVID-19. Commissioner Hinkle moved to accept the grants and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. The Board agreed to write a letter of appreciation to Northwest Farm Credit Service.

The Board discussed advertising for "Requests For Proposals" to update the county's website and provide webmaster services. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw indicated that the website could be improved by being more user friendly and allowing for updates by each county office. The Board discussed that volunteer Board agendas and minutes, budgets, links to other locations related to Granite County, and a search capacity would be requested. Commissioner Hinkle moved to go ahead with the advertising for a new webmaster and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comment:** The Board agreed that this will be the last meeting utilizing the Zoom computer program or other electronic devices. People are welcome to come into the Commissioner's Office in the courthouse and attend the meetings beginning June 2, 2020. Social distancing guidelines are to be followed by the public in the courthouse.

**Correspondence:** The Board noted correspondence from Todd Fickler as an applicant for appointment to the Granite County Airport Board and from District Judge Ray Dayton regarding his intent to issue an order requiring masks to be worn in all public areas on the

entire floor of the courthouse which contains the District Courtroom. Commissioner Hinkle moved to accept the correspondence and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hinkle moved to approve the May 19, 2020 minutes as presented and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed applications for volunteer board positions following advertising in the Philipsburg Mail newspaper on May 7 and 14, 2020. One application for the Granite County Airport Board was received from Todd Fickler, a previous member of the Airport Board. Commissioner Adler moved to appoint Todd Fickler to the Granite County Airport Board for a term ending October 2, 2022. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Granite County Airport Board Chairman Vince Reece met with the Board with the Airport Board's recommendation for airport engineers for Aviation Planning Services and for Architectural/Engineering Services. Three responses to the Board's "Request For Qualifications" were received on May 12, 2020 from KLJ Engineering of Great Falls, TD&H Engineering of Helena, and Robert Peccia and Associates of Helena. Vince Reece reported that the Airport Board carefully considered all submittals and recommends KLJ Engineering of Great Falls for both the Aviation Planning Services and Architectural/Engineering Services. He noted that the next step is to agree on a scope of services between the Airport Board and the FAA. Commissioner Adler moved to select KLJ Engineering for the Aviation Planning Services and Architectural Engineering Services and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Vince Reece noted that there are new cones and markers at the Drummond Airport which were donated. Also, the Drummond Airport has been rolled and the weeds have been sprayed.

The Board held a courthouse department head meeting on the west lawn of the courthouse to assure social distancing. In addition to the Board, Clerk of District Court Carol Bohrsen, Treasurer Vicki Harding, Clerk and Recorder Sarah Graham, Justice of the Peace Debbie Fratzke, County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw, Extension Agent Ben Hauptman and Executive Assistant Mike Kahoe attended. Commissioner Slaughter reviewed that the purpose of the meeting is to clarify the protocol for safely reopening the courthouse to the public. He noted that there are sign-in sheets in each office as ordered by the county Board of Health and he explained that they will be useful if a COVID-19 case is confirmed and contacts need to be identified by the Public Health Nurse. Linda Bouck asked if employees need to sign in and that was left to the employee's discretion. Judge Fratzke inquired about what to do with the sign-in sheets and the answer was that they are to be kept in each office until the county Board of Health orders that they be destroyed. Commissioner Slaughter reviewed that the sheets are to be maintained in each office by order of the county Board of Health because the COVID-19 is a pandemic and he noted District Judge Ray Dayton's proposed order concerning the second floor of the courthouse. Judge Fratzke said that she wanted clarification on having customers sign in and it has been clarified. Commissioner Slaughter reiterated that it has been ordered by the county Board of Health as a way for the public

**Health Nurse to track COVID-19 contact tracing if a case occurs. Those present agreed to keep their own sign-in list. Linda Bouck inquired if she must wear a mask in the public area of the second floor of the courthouse even when Judge Dayton is not here. County Attorney Bradshaw said that yes, she must wear a mask at all time in the public area of the second floor, according to Judge Dayton's proposed order. He noted that Judge Dayton's order will be posted when it is received. Commissioner Slaughter reviewed that sign-in sheets are to be required in each office by order of the county Board of Health and destroyed only when ordered by the Board of Health. If you are sick, stay home. The Board is planning to get thermometers for use by the offices on employees and the public, when deemed necessary. Also, if any department needs anything, please let the Board know.**

**The session adjourned at 3:30 p.m.**