

**September 8, 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 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). Masks were worn by many people in attendance. The session was livestreamed through the Zoom computer program available to the public to view the session and comment, and the public was also allowed to attend in person and provide comment. Blanche McLure, a candidate for Commissioner, attended the morning session.**

**Road and Bridge Superintendent/Solid Waste Manager Paul Alt met with the Board and gave his report. The report included that the snow fence on Skalkaho Road is nearly complete and the crew is continuing to put millings down on county roads. Blanche McLure inquired how the trucking of millings is handled and the Board responded that it is done through a bidding process. Blanche McLure requested to see the documentation and County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw indicated that the hauling is done through a bidding process and truckers are called in the order of lowest cost first.**

**2020 John Deere Tractor/Mower, Rental/Purchase: The final cash price for a 2020 John Deere 6110M with mower and boom is \$167,000.00 from RDO Equipment in Missoula. Commissioner Hinkle moved to make a cash purchase for the 2020 John Deere Tractor/Mower at \$167,000.00 as budgeted, and with PILT funds also as a budgeted. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**2020 Cat 308 Track Excavator, Lease/Purchase: The price of the 2020 Cat 308 track excavator is \$109,797.00, with the trade of the small excavator (305.5E2) for a final price of \$101,502.00 from Western States Cat in Missoula (all as budgeted). Commissioner Adler moved to enter into a lease/purchase agreement for the 2020 Cat 308 Track Excavator with the trade-in of Cat excavator 305.5E2 and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Foreman Jacob Pierson with Battle Ridge Builders and engineer Jonathan Weaver with Great West Engineering met with the Board and gave an update on the Flint Creek Dam, Dam Face and Spillway Rehabilitation Project. Jonathan Weaver presented a Construction Progress Meeting Agenda dated 9-8-2020. All concrete work is completed. A video will be made of the wooden gate on the by-pass line. The piezometer work will be done this week. Need to strip forms and grout. Plans to be done with project on Friday. One-lane traffic across dam from Thursday 8:00 a.m. to Friday at 5:00 p.m., and notices will be given. Battle Ridge to submit a pay application next week. Jonathan Weaver noted that the final walk-through of the project will be done next Tuesday (September 15, 2020) at the same time that the annual inspection is done. Plans are to meet at the power house at 1:00 p.m.**

**Georgetown Lake level was reported at 6,428.99 feet, according to the USGS lake level gage. The lake is approximately 6.12 inches below full pool. The outflow is estimated at**

approximately 33.2 cfs according to the USGS outflow gauge. Commissioner Hinkle moved to make no change in the outflow. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Dustin Muhly, county PHEP (Public Health Emergency Planning) Coordinator, met with the Board and reported that there are 3 (three) active COVID-19 cases in Granite County, and two should be coming off the active list this afternoon. Hospital staff has all been tested and all were negative. There is an outbreak in Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, with many of the cases being related to each other. The local hospital is in the process of getting a rapid testing machine for COVID-19. There are no known incidents of an animal transmission of COVID-19 to humans.

The Granite County Board of Health met with Dr. Mark Ransford, Commissioners Bill Slaughter, Scott Adler and Charles Hinkle being present. Dr. William Reiter was absent. A quorum of the Board of Health was present. Dr. Ransford reported that there was a staff member at the local hospital who tested positive for COVID-19 and all contacts and all staff members have tested negative. There is one positive case at a school in the county. Scott Sylvester inquired when the student will be able to return to school. Dr. Ransford reported that when they are released from quarantine by the local public health department that life immediately goes back to normal. Dustin Muhly reported that the Truck and Train Wreck Protocol is awaiting the availability of a webinar from the state. Scott Sylvester with the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper attended.

Vera Johnson, Board Chair of Philipsburg Senior Citizens, met with the Board to request assistance with dump fees as the group plans to clean up the property in Philipsburg which has been donated for a new Senior Citizens Center and the Rotary Club has volunteered to assist with the cleanup. She noted that three mobile homes remain on the property and much of the remainder is unpainted wood and three trees. The Board cautioned that there may be hazardous material in the mobile homes if they are going to be torn apart. Also, the Board noted that there is no charge for trees and unpainted wood. The Board noted that there are four solid waste units assessed to the trailer court property which can be used. The Board requested that if they run into problems with dump fees that Vera Johnson come back for reconsideration. Public comment: Would Pacific Steel take an entire trailer. Answer: No, mobile homes are very difficult to dispose of.

The Board reviewed the proposed Lease Agreement with Donovan Jones for Hangar Lot #9 to construct a hangar 42 feet by 35 feet at Riddick Field Airport. It was noted that the rent for the county-owned lot is paid in full for the current year. The proposed Lease Agreement would terminate the same time as all of the other hangar leases, June 30, 2022. The Granite County Airport Board recommends that the lease be approved and the lot size was approved by the Airport Board and the airport's consulting engineer Steve Brown with KLJ Engineering. Commissioner Adler moved to approve the Lease Agreement with Donovan Jones with the provision that the hangar is built to code and to Airport Board specifications. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

**Executive Assistant Mike Kahoe opened the single bid received for newspaper publication services at 11:00 a.m. at Chairperson Slaughter's request. Notice of the bid was published in the August 20 and 27, 2020 issues of the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper. The one bid received for legal publishing was as follows:**

***Philipsburg Mail* newspaper: \$10.00/column inch for a one-year contract  
\$9.75/column inch for a five-year contract**

**Commissioner Adler moved to accept the bid of \$9.75 for a five-year non-exclusive contract and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper editor Emily Petrovski explained that the newspaper's deadline is 5:00 p.m. on Friday for publication on Thursday of the following week and that the newspaper goes to print at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, which is earlier than it used to be.**

**The Board held the first reading of Resolution 2020-15 "A Resolution Setting Granite Count's 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget, Including Salaries Of All Granite County's Elected Officials And Deputies, And A Cost Of Living Increase For County Employees." There was discussion about County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw declining the COLA increase for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. MACo's counsel has given a legal opinion that such pay increases given to elected officials, including COLA, may not be declined, and County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw said that he respectfully disagreed with that opinion.**

**The Board held the second reading of Resolution 2020-17 "A Granite County Resolution Amending County Resolution 2019-6 And Authorizing An Extension To The Loan Repayment Schedule For The Philipsburg Volunteer Ambulance Association." Commissioner Adler moved to adopt Resolution 2020-17 and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. Commissioner Adler expressed concern about how the payments will be made in the future, although the association had assured the Board that the funds would be available by making more ambulance runs. However, in reality, they have made fewer runs. Commissioner Slaughter noted that the Philipsburg Ambulance Association does not have the same anchor people to rely on like the Drummond Ambulance Association has. Discussion was held on ways to support the ambulance. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw reported on the current litigation regarding the Bear Gulch Road and Mr. Richard Komberec. He noted that the first discovery responses have been answered and submitted by Granite County, and he is advising that the County retain a land surveyor to act as an expert witness, in addition to using Planning Director Linda Bouck. The County Attorney will continue looking at various land surveyors and come back to the County Commissioners for approval on retaining such an expert surveyor. There has not yet been a scheduling conference, so the trial is likely more than a year out.**

**The Board discussed the potential of raising solid waste fees in order to make the solid waste budget balance. It was noted that \$30,000.00 in PILT funds were needed to balance the 2020-2021 fiscal year budget, largely due to increased trucking and tipping fees, over which the**

**Solid Waste Department has no control. Discussion was held on raising the fee from \$125.00 per unit to \$135.00 per unit to cover the deficit. The Board agreed to do the research to see if \$135.00 is sufficient for future budgets. There is a possibility of Powell County negotiating to contract for trucking the waste and taking it at their site, which will be clear after the November election, according to Commissioner Slaughter. It was noted that the Board has no control over the costs of the contract for hauling the waste and tipping fees at the Missoula landfill. Discussion was held on holding a public hearing prior to making any fee increase. Commissioner Hinkle moved to schedule another public meeting on December 1, 2020, and to hold a noticed public hearing at a later date. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no further public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**The Board considered the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Ravalli/Granite Counties Mutual Aid/Shared Radio Repeater. Sheriff Scott Dunkerson had expressed his support and indicated that the placement of the repeater has been tested and it provides radio service for the Skalkaho Road area in both Granite and Ravalli Counties. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that he had reviewed the document and found it to be satisfactory. Commissioner Adler moved to approve the MOU and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. The Board discussed that the funds were coming from 9-1-1 funds which can be used for this purpose. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Steve Brown with KLJ Engineering, the airport's consulting engineer, met with the Board regarding the Record of Negotiations, which must be submitted to the FAA in Helena. He reviewed the documents with the Board and he reiterated that the documents are required to meet FAA regulations. The Record of Negotiations outlines that Bollig Inc. was hired to prepare an Independent Fee Estimate for consultant services required to complete the Planning and Aeronautical Survey Services for Riddick Field Airport. These services are being completed following FAA guidance and oversight with the intent of requesting reimbursement through the Airport Improvement Program grant application process in FY2021. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that he had reviewed the documents and found them to be satisfactory. Steve Brown indicated that the grant application will be submitted to the FAA in November and the FAA will likely decide on grant funding in early 2021. Public Comment: Will any of the Airport Master Plan from 2004 be used. Steve Brown responded that the historical information in that document will be used. Commissioner Hinkle moved to approve the Record of Negotiations and submit it to the FAA. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. The Board considered Task Order No. 1 for KLJ Engineering for the Riddick Field Airport Planning and Aeronautical Survey. The Task Order included a detailed scope of services, a fee schedule and federal contract provisions. Commissioner Hinkle moved to approve Task Order No. 1 and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Public Comment: They think that it's too much money and will end up like the Flint Creek Project.**

**Deborah Frandsen, U.S. Senator Jon Tester's Field Representative, met with the Board for general discussion. Commissioner Hinkle discussed the need for funds for the Flint Creek Project. Commissioner Slaughter noted that Federal Emergency Regulatory Commission regulations are becoming more prolific and increasingly strict, including expensive and**

frequent studies. The fact that the county gets 10% of the revenue was discussed, which was negotiated several years ago by a previous County Commission. The Cinnabar Fire was discussed and Commissioner Hinkle noted that it is a full-suppression fire which is still 100% uncontained, even with many personnel assigned to the fire. Deborah Frandsen suggested that it would be a good question for the fire's Incident Commander. Public Comment: What is Senator Tester's position on President Trump's lawsuit against Montana regarding the mail ballot election. Deborah Frandsen gave her email address so that she can answer the question and not guess about it. On another subject, she noted that the Hero's Act has been introduced into the House of Representatives and if passed, it contains funds for cities and counties related to COVID-19. Commissioner Slaughter discussed the need to continue funding of law enforcement. Public Comment by Elena Gagliano: Mail-in ballot is unconstitutional and violates the Montana Code, also Senator Daines is compromising with Senator Tester on matters such as CSKT Water Compact, which does not speak well for Senator Daines. Emily Petrovski, editor of the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper, attended.

Public Comment: None.

Correspondence: None.

Commissioner Hinkle moved to approve the September 1 and 2, 2020 minutes as presented and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board held interviews for the permanent part-time Flint Creek Project Dam Tender position. The position was advertised in the August 13 and 20, 2020 issues of the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper, and in the *Anaconda Leader* newspaper and on the county's website. The Board made up the interview committee. Interviewed for the position were applicants Brandon Parret, James Conn and Edward Ryan. Following discussion, Commissioner Adler moved to make an offer of employment to Brandon Parret, contingent on him passing the background check. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment.

The session adjourned at 3:40 p.m.