

October 13, 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 attending in-persons. Commissioner Charles Hinkle attended in person at the start of the session but then he left immediately for personal reasons and attended through Zoom later in the meeting. Also attending were 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.

Road and Bridge Superintendent/Solid Waste Manager Paul Alt met with the Board by telephone. Commissioner Hinkle reported that he has had a call that there is a broken cattle guard on Middle Fork Road at Sage Brush Flats. Mrs. Richard Willett had expressed her concern to Commissioner Adler that new asphalt millings are too thick and people can run off the road due to the abrupt edge. Commissioner Adler said that reflectors would be put up and that should help. Commissioner Adler reported that mowing on the edges of county roads continues today.

The Board reviewed the lease to purchase documents from BMO Harris Equipment Finance for a new 2020 International Snow Plow Truck (VIN: 3HAESTZTXLL864684) to be purchased through Woodpecker Truck of Pendleton, Oregon. The total cost of the truck is \$173,293.01, through the Sourcewell group purchasing agreement which does not require any additional public bidding as Sourcewell pricing is already publicly bid, and it will be financed for 5 (five) years at 3.44% interest. Commissioner Adler moved that the terms be accepted and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Georgetown Lake level was reported at 6,428.85 feet, according to the USGS lake level gauge. The lake is approximately 7.80 inches below full pool. The outflow is estimated at approximately 31.0 cfs according to the USGS outflow gauge and the dam tender's report. Commissioner Adler moved to make no change in the outflow. Commissioner Slaughter seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed documents for the DNRC-RRGL Grant Agreement No. RRG-20-1726 closeout for the Flint Creek Dam - Dam Face and Spillway Improvements. The final Vendor Invoice for \$12,500, of the total \$125,000 total grant, was approved on the motion of Commissioner Adler and second by Commissioner Slaughter. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. The Board reviewed the Certificate of Compliance for the project. It was approved on the motion of Commissioner Slaughter and second by Commissioner Adler. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Both executed documents and the final report will be submitted to the DNRC.

Commissioner Hinkle joined the meeting through Zoom.

County claims for September 2020 were reviewed by the Board. Commissioner Adler recused himself from voting on the claim for Adler Towing for the county Junk Vehicle Program. The claims were ordered paid on the motion of Commissioner Adler and second by Commissioner Slaughter. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed the applications for county boards. Commissioner Adler moved to reappoint Jason Vietor to the Flint Creek Fire Service Area Board for a three-year term ending on October 2, 2023. Commissioner Slaughter seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. The Board considered the application of William Hoehne for the Philipsburg Cemetery Board. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw encouraged the Board to consider the current issues regarding that board and invite the Philipsburg Cemetery Board clerk to a Commission meeting to be held soon. The Board agreed to hold the application of William Hoehne until after that meeting.

Joe Willauer, Executive Director of Headwaters RC&D, and associate Kelly Sullivan, met with the Board to give an update on the organization's activities. Granite County is a member of Headwaters RC&D. They reported that Economic Development Administration funds have been received to do an addendum to the main economic development document for the organization and he encouraged the Board to participate in the development of the addendum. Joe Willauer gave a report that included the responses to the COVID-19 pandemic for economic assistance, which were recovery efforts that turned into response efforts. He noted that there was an option to help very small businesses, even with only one employee and that additional loan funds are available. Commissioner Adler inquired how loans that are not paid are handled. Joe Willauer responded that a set procedure is followed to dispose of assets, when that becomes necessary. He noted that loans through the program usually do not meet bank standards, but the purpose is employment and economic development. Commissioner Slaughter indicated that it is important that education should be a large part of a loan or to tell applicants that it is not an appropriate loan for them, following a poor experience with a loan in Granite County. Commissioner Slaughter recalled the SCORE program, which allied experienced people with people getting the loans. Commissioner Slaughter noted that the Drummond grocery store closed and now the Cenex store is closing and those closings are affecting the town very adversely. Joe Willauer noted that there is a large degree of confidentiality when lending people money so he could not give any details related to particular loans. However, he noted that in the entire loan portfolio has had very few foreclosures. Joe Willauer noted that the economic development addendum will include future projects, potentially including the Flint Creek Dam Project, and grants are available for updating growth policies. Commissioner Slaughter explained the poor position of the Flint Creek Project Fund and invited Joe Willauer to participate in the public meeting scheduled for October 20, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. and will be available through Zoom. Also discussed was potential assistance for a new Senior Citizens Center in Philipsburg and updating town websites. Scott Sylvester with the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper inquired if the local food co-op has contacted the RC&D and Joe Willauer indicated that he will find out.

The Board reviewed draft Granite County Ordinance No. 2020-1 regarding nuisance dogs out in the county. This was a working meeting to discuss and finalize the language of the ordinance. Commissioner Adler inquired if this is more regulation and more work for the sheriff's department. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw indicated that it makes a bright line rule that can be reasonably enforced as a deterrent, including a stepped-up fine for chronic problems. Commissioner Hinkle expressed an exception for the "15 minutes of barking" clause and suggested that it be replaced with "if it disturbs a person's quality of life." Commissioner Slaughter suggested a sunset clause, where the ordinance would be reviewed in one year with the parties involved to see if it is working as planned or does it need to be revised or allowed to sunset. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw noted that there is no language in the draft ordinance which requires a deputy sheriff to take possession of a nuisance dog. The Board will further consider the proposed ordinance with some revised language when Sheriff Scott Dunkerson is available. Scott Sylvester with the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper noted that the sheriff brought the matter to the Commission's attention to be a useful tool. A Zoom comment was that there is no animal control officer. Discussion was held about taking an officer out of the county to take a dog to an out of county dog pound, which would take the officer from their duties within the county. It was noted that any nuisance dogs within town limits are under that town's jurisdiction, not the county's jurisdiction.

Commissioner Slaughter excused himself from the session at noon and verbally gave his proxy to Commissioner Adler to vote to approve the minutes for October 6, 2020 as presented.

Commissioner Adler was selected as temporary chairperson with Commissioner Hinkle appearing by Zoom

Jonathan Chapman, a local resident, met with the Board regarding the Philipsburg Ambulance Service. He related events from October 2, 2020, when he called for an ambulance for an emergency at his apartment and he was unable to get an ambulance for a loved one. Commissioner Adler explained that the ambulance service is volunteer and at times qualified personnel are not available. Jonathan Chapman, who agreed that this would be an open session to the public (waiving privacy rights), also indicated that the service at the Granite County Medical Center was unprofessional and unprepared when he arrived with an unconscious person. After three neighbors did CPR on the person, the person was transferred privately to the Granite County Medical Center. He said that he experienced difficulty in getting a wheelchair from the medical center to get the patient into a private vehicle for transfer to the medical center. He said that when they arrived at the medical center it was unprepared for any emergency. Commissioner Adler suggested that Mr. Chapman contact Maria Stoppler at the medical center regarding what occurred there. Mr. Chapman suggested that an ambulance roster be maintained that would assure volunteers are available. Commissioner Adler expressed his condolences to Mr. Chapman on his wife's death and he thanked Mr. Chapman for coming in today. Apparently, there was a problem with Zoom during this session where people on Zoom could not hear the meeting and

Commissioner Adler explained that he was reluctant to speak about it since Mr. Chapman had left the session and that the comments will be in the minutes. No decisions were made by the Board.

The selection of a BaRSAA (Bridge and Road Safety and Accountability) funds project was considered by the Board. Granite County has a current allocation of \$62,761.32 plus \$836.58 from the previous year for a total of \$63,597.90. Granite County must match each \$20 requested for distribution with at least \$1 of local government budgeted matching funds. Discussion was held on using the funds for the FLAP (Federal Lands Acquisition Program) project road at Georgetown Lake or the current asphalt millings project. Commissioner Hinkle moved to use the current BaRSSA funds for the millings project. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. Zoom comment was that a resolution will be needed if this involves money. Commissioner Adler responded that a draft resolution has been prepared by County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw and it will be read the customary next two weeks to meet the BaRSAA deadline of November 1, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Charles Knox, 887 Rock Creek Road, requested that the Lower Rock Creek Road be improved from I-90 up about twelve miles, possibly with the use of asphalt millings from the Interstate.

Correspondence: The Board received a report dated October 13, 2020 from Public Health Emergency Planning Coordinator Dustin Muhly stating that the current number of COVID-19 cases in Granite County is 19. Several positive cases will be off quarantine this week, as well as many contacts under quarantine. There are three active cases at the Philipsburg School. Montana had 435 active cases, 19,125 total cases and 212 deaths. Montana has had a spike in cases this month with a record number of 732 reported in one day on October 6, 2020 and similarly high numbers most of last week and into this week.

The Board reviewed the draft minutes from the October 6, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Hinkle moved to approve the October 6, 2020 meeting minutes as presented and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously, including Commissioner Slaughter's proxy vote.

There being no further business, the session adjourned at 2:10 p.m.