

**October 27, 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 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 did not meet with the Board today. Paul Alt had verbally reported to Commission Adler, and Commissioner Adler reported to the Board that snow plowing is in progress. The Board discussed having the Road Department go to five days a week because winter is here and school buses are running. Commissioner Slaughter moved to have the Road Department go to five days a week immediately. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**John Hunter sent a written comment regarding the Mulkey Gulch Road. The Board contacted John Hunter by telephone to explain that Mulkey Gulch Road is an unmaintained road. John Hunter noted that many people have bought parcels of land in that area and the road is getting a great deal more use. He requested that it be graded once, which he feels would last several years. Commissioner Adler noted that the road was unmaintained when the people moved up there and residents are hiring people to repair the roads in remote areas. He also commented that if the county improves one road in an area, the other people in the area want the same treatment. John Hunter commented that he is the only one who does any maintenance at all on the road and he is prepared to live there because he has the proper equipment to maintain the road. John Hunter said that it is the county's responsibility to keep the road passable or it is the county's liability if someone is injured while driving the road. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw stated that he does not agree with that statement. John Hunter said he is requesting minimum effort on the road at this time. The Board agreed to have Road Superintendent Paul Alt take a look at the road when the weather improves.**

**Georgetown Lake level was reported at 6,428.90 feet according to the USGS lake level gage. The lake is approximately 7.20 inches below full pool. The outflow is estimated at approximately 30.5 cfs according to the USGS outflow gage and the dam tender's report. Commissioner Adler moved to increase the outflow to 35 cfs and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. The Board contacted Paul Tallon with Flint Creek Hydro LLC to make the change.**

**In an administrative action, Commissioner Adler moved not to hold a regular session on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 as it is Election Day and a federal holiday. Commissioner Hinkle**

seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The next regular session was scheduled for Tuesday, November 10, 2020.

In an administrative action, Commissioner Slaughter moved to not hold the afternoon session today because members of the Board had very important personal reasons to be elsewhere. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. All people scheduled to attend the afternoon session were notified and were agreeable to being rescheduled.

County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw reported that some parties with Flint Creek Hydro LLC are not able to attend the planned mediation scheduled for Wednesday, October 28, 2020 and the mediation has been rescheduled for Monday, November 16, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at the Granite County Courthouse.

At 10:00 a.m., the Board held the public hearing on the Joint Resolution creating the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority for the purpose of providing for the preservation and improvement of abandoned rail service in southern Montana. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw explained that if the Board agrees to participate that it will not cost any money just to be a part of the Railway Authority and it will also give the county a seat at the table. There was no verbal public comment. One written public comment in favor of the Joint Resolution was received from Doug Fleming. Scott Sylvester with the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper attended. The public hearing concluded at 10:30 a.m.

The Board held the reading of Resolution 2020-19 “Joint Resolution Creating The Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority For The Purpose Of Providing For The Preservation And Improvement Of Abandoned Rail Service In Southern Montana.” Commissioner Hinkle moved to approve Resolution 2020-19, in order to keep up with what’s happening with this. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Slaughter commented that it’s important to be involved to know what is going on that affects or could affect Granite County. He informed the Board that he would be interested in serving as Granite County’s representative on the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority Board, but that decision would be made at a later date.

Clerk and Recorder Sarah Graham met with the Board regarding the purchase of equipment for the “Continuation of Operations Plan” (COOP) for the courthouse. County DES and Safety Coordinator Jackie Bolster participated through Zoom. Sarah Graham explained that the plan is designed to continue the operations of county government if something happened to the courthouse building which rendered it unusable or if, for medical or other reasons, everyone in the building had to work from home. She estimated that the cost for a unit of equipment (laptop, printer, etc.) for each person to continue operation from home is approximately \$3,200.00, which could be purchased with CARES ACT funds. She reviewed the list of units of equipment required at 13 to 15 units. The Board discussed how many units of equipment would be required and which offices are an absolute priority. Also, the life of the equipment (computers, printers, etc.) was discussed. Commissioner Adler moved to table the matter for two weeks so that it can be determined which offices are essential and will need this equipment in an emergency. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion.

**Seconded the motion. Public comment from Zoom was that state offices and the legislature are working remotely, but can still use their office equipment. The Board's response was that this equipment purchase would be made in case of fire or other disaster in which the County Courthouse could not be accessed. The motion carried unanimously.**

**The Board reviewed the claim of Tim and Janelle Policy versus Granite County and others relating to the demolition derby accident which occurred on August 18, 2019 during the annual Tri-County Fair. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw explained that the demolition derby was not a fair sponsored event, but was only allowed as an event on Fair property by the Tri-County Fair Board. County Attorney does not believe Granite County is negligent in anyway here. He recommended that the Policy's claim be denied by the Board and the Policy's can then proceed with their court claim if they so decide. Commissioner Hinkle moved to deny the claim and Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**David Kesler III met with the Board by telephone regarding the external roof over the boiler room door of the courthouse which has been damaged by falling ice and wind. David Kesler III verbally bid \$2,550.00 for the project, which he said would be constructed with much heavier duty materials than the existing roof. The project would not be completed for two weeks as materials need to be ordered. Commissioner Adler moved to accept the bid of \$2,550.00 for the roof and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**The Board held the second reading of Resolution 2020-16 "A Granite County Resolution Requesting Distribution Of Bridge And Road Safety And Accountability (BaRSAA) Program Funds." The Resolution provides for the distribution of the county's BaRSAA allocation, a total of \$63,597.90 (\$836.58 left from 2019 allocation and the 2020 allocation of \$62,761.32), for the placement of asphalt millings on multiple Granite County Roads in 2020. The BaRSAA funds required match of 5% will come from the county Road Fund. Commissioner Adler moved to adopt Resolution 2020-16 and Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Vince Reece and Ernie Fulk, members of the Granite County Airport Board, met with the Board and reported on progress on the Airport Master Plan for Riddick Field Airport in Philipsburg. They presented invoices from KLJ Engineering of Great Falls, all of which are eligible for reimbursement up to 90% of the total project cost through a future FAA Airport Improvements Program grant. Invoices #10144179 for \$4,800.00 and #10144180 for \$26,000.00, totaling \$30,800.00 were reviewed by the Board and will be included in the monthly claims to be paid. The Aeronautical Survey has been completed and KLJ is writing the Airport Master Plan. The FAA would like an Advisory (Steering) Committee to be formed to provide input into specific sections of the Airport Layout Plan. The committee would be comprised of members of Airport Board, local law enforcement, emergency responders/hospital, Granite County, Town of Philipsburg, Forest Service and others. The Advisory Committee is intended to be comprised of people with an investment in the community so that all ideas are brought forward. Ernie Fulk gave a list of potential members. The county commission agreed with the formation of the Advisory Committee,**

but the actual appointments would be handled by the Airport Board. KLJ will assist in the organization of the committee, which will be an Airport Board project. Ernie Fulk noted that Montana Aeronautics grants (through the Montana Department of Transportation) are due on November 15, 2020 and the Airport Board recommends applications for \$12,000 for Riddick Field for planning and Aeronautical Survey local match and \$18,000 for Drummond Airport for fencing, cattle guard and signage. Commissioner Adler moved that the Airport Board have permission to apply for both grants. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. Ernie Fulk noted that work on the Airport Master Plan will continue through the winter since the Aeronautical Survey was done prior to winter, which will advance the timeline for the Riddick Field project. Ernie Fulk also said information on the Advisory Committee and grants would be posted on the county's website. Vince Reece noted that the Advisory Committee will assist in getting the project open to the community.

Commissioner Slaughter announced that there will not be an afternoon session today and the approved minutes for the regular session and the special session held on October 20, 2020 will be posted to the county website this afternoon.

The session adjourned at noon.