

February 9, 2021

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 Charles Hinkle, Commissioner Blanche McLure and Commissioner Scott Adler attending. Also attending were County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw and Clerk Sue Antonioli. 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 internet-based program available for the public to view the session and comment, and the public was also allowed to attend in person and provide comment. The session convened with the pledge of allegiance.

Scott Sylvester, reporter with the *Philipsburg Mail* newspaper joined the session in-person. Also joining the session by Zoom were Elena Gagliano, Jackie Bolster (assistant in Granite County Public Health Department), and Gayle Leeper, Mayor of the Town of Drummond.

Road and Bridge Superintendent/Solid Waste Paul Alt joined the session by phone. Plowing issues were discussed. Some complaints have been coming in from Georgetown Lake residents. Paul Alt stated that school routes are the first priority for the snow plows. The crew is preparing for the upcoming cold weather by winging the snow of the shoulders of county roads in case of a wind event. It was noted that the road crew helped two local ranchers under the Good Neighbor Policy during recent weather events.

Georgetown Lake level was reported at 6,428.65 feet according to the USGS lake level gage and the dam tender's report. The lake is approximately 10.2 inches below full pool. The lake outflow has been set at 25 CFS over the past weeks and it appears to still be at 25 CFS for outflow. Commissioner Adler moved to keep outflow at the current level for this week. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. There was no Public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Local Philipsburg resident, Cindy Ray met with the Board requesting a Letter of Support for a marketing and advertising grant she is applying for her new business. She and several family members plan to open an authentic Mexican restaurant soon in downtown Philipsburg. Commissioner Adler moved to grant Cindy Ray a Letter of Support and Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. The public was very supportive of this action. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Adler reported to the Board that the county health nurse had to leave the county due to a family situation. Since then, Lari Walter, who is an RN and at the request of the Public Health Department, stepped up to the plate and has been helping with COVID-19 vaccines, as needed. Commissioner Adler recommended that the county compensate Lari Walter for her time. After discussion on different aspects of compensating with a contract versus being put on the payroll, Commissioner Adler moved to pay Lari Walter \$100 per day as needed, on a contract basis, until further notice, and the county pay for Ms. Walter's worker's compensation coverage pertaining to this work. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. During Public Comment Elena Gagliano stated that this issue should be on the

agenda for next week during the County Board of Health update. She also asked where the money would come from. Board said from grant funds received. There being no further comment the motion carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed an email request from Georgetown Gauntlet, LLC to use county roads near Georgetown Lake for a fun run event this summer. After discussion on security, adequate ambulance personnel, liability insurance, toilets, and parking concerns, Commissioner McLure moved to preliminarily approve permission to use county roads for the event contingent upon the organization handling all of the above-mentioned duties and submitting a final plan prior to the event and being granted final approval. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. During Public Comment Scott Sylvester addressed COVID-19 issues and how many spectators would be allowed at the event. Elena Gagliano felt that the Commissioners shouldn't move on this as it is a preliminary discussion. There being no further comment the motion passed unanimously.

Michele Puigarri joined the meeting by Zoom to review the Human Resources Consultant Contract Agreement. She has been working with the county for some time in a very limited capacity as an independent contractor mostly doing reference checks on job applicants, but could also provide services to the county as needed for Human Resources. She has similar contracts with other counties. She stated that when issues come up immediate action is needed. It's important for counties that don't have a designated HR person to have a resource they can call. She is available to give webinar training (same contract rate whether one participate or 50) and would encourage the Commissioners, department heads and the county HR contact to have training. Commissioner Adler moved to accept the HR Consultant contract. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion passes unanimously.

County Planner Linda Bouck and Land Surveyor Ken Jenkins joined the session. Jo Durgin and her attorney Julie Sirrs joined by Zoom.

The Board held another discussion on the county shop encroachment issue on the school hill in Philipsburg. Jo Durgin's attorney, Julie Sirrs, had sent the County an amended proposal this past week in which they were requesting the County pay \$5,000 for actual surveying costs; and in turn, Joe Durgin would convey to the County the 0.39 acres of land in fee simple as described on the map exhibit accompanying the proposal. The proposal also included the County receiving a permanent easement across certain land (marked L1 on map exhibit); and the proposal includes the County agreeing not to object to the Quiet Title Action that will be brought by Jo Durgin. Furthermore, in the said proposal, Jo Durgin was also asking that an easement be granted for access to her property off the School Hill Road as the County currently owns an easement there.

Commissioner McLure stated this project should move forward, but she is not in agreement of the county paying the full amount for the survey, but rather split the cost. Granite County Planning Director, Linda Bouck stated that she has reviewed the county shop encroachment issue and feels it generally would be good to have the land the shop is partially encroaching

upon, be deeded to the county after Jo Durgin's quiet title action, but Linda Bouck did express some concerns. From her research, Linda Bouck does believe the county shop is encroaching on property that is not currently owned by anyone—no man's land. Linda Bouck believes the county has an equal legal right to the property with Jo Durgin, but she does believe some type of compromise agreement could and should be reached. She does have concerns with the county's easement going to the shop as she believes it is not a general public easement currently, that only the county has legal access. As part of an overall agreement to resolve the issues, Jo Durgin has requested the County grant her an easement there. Linda Bouck's question is would this be a private easement over a county road to Jo Durgin only or would it be to the public if she were to subdivide the property and would the county need to put restrictions on her use of the road? Ken Jenkins noted that the county acquired the easement along with the land in 1978 and stated that he believes it to be public road and county road. He stated that it is not Jo Durgin's intention to subdivide but rather adjust the boundaries to accommodate four buildable tracts. Julie Sirrs stated that property values have increased significantly over the past year and that Jo Durgin is not charging the county for encroachment land, only surveying fees. Jo Durgin stated that unduly restricting her use of the access easement, as discussed earlier, would be a deal killer for her proposal. Linda Bouck further clarified that Jo Durgin owns multiple lots on the hill by the county shop as it is not just a single parcel. A county shop next to many houses is not a good mix or good planning. Linda Bouck currently believes the County should only grant the access easement to Jo Durgin for the limited scope of accessing the single piece of land created by the quiet title action and not general access to all lots owned by Jo Durgin. The Commissioners decided to table a decision on this matter until next week until the access easement issue could be researched by the County Attorney as to whether County's access easement of the county shop is a public road or not.

Sheriff Scott Dunkerson, Town of Philipsburg Mayor Dan Reddish, Kristi Mainwaring, Frank Prince, President of the Drummond Ambulance joined the session in-person except for Kristi Mainwaring, who joined by Zoom. Heidi Hinkle also joined by phone.

Heidi Hinkle, a local resident, started out the County Ambulance Coordinator Proposition session by stating that there is an informal citizens' group that have gathered to brainstorm and try to come up with ideas to address the difficulty in getting ambulance volunteers in the upper valley. Kristi Mainwaring stated that the hospital board, the citizens group, and the ambulances presidents need to pull together information about what's going to work and bring it back to the Commission. Commissioner McLure reviewed a compiled report from Clerk and Recorder Sarah Graham on ambulance runs which showed the Philipsburg Ambulance Association is not making hardly any runs compared to the Drummond Ambulance Association. President of the Drummond Ambulance Association, Frank Prince stated that the Drummond Ambulance service is structured differently than the Philipsburg service and he is against the coordinator idea. He does not have any trouble scheduling volunteers and he does have functioning crew of volunteers. Funding is an issue. He stated that there are bylaws in place on requirements for runs, meetings and training. If volunteers don't fulfill these they should be removed from service. Heidi Hinkle thinks a coordinator

is good idea and it should be a paid position. A question arose as whether coordinator would be over both services? There was not consensus on the Board about the answer. Commissioner Hinkle believes the coordinator would be more for scheduling and getting paperwork done, and that he would like to see the hospital work with the County regarding a coordinator. Sheriff Scott Dunkerson commented that Drummond Ambulance Association does well. He is not for a coordinator position but agrees their needs to be a solution; and one hand would wash the other if they could get the hospital to cooperate. People are suffering because of what's going on with the Philipsburg Ambulance Association. Mayor Reddish agreed with Kristi Mainwaring. A small workable committee needs to meet as soon as possible to examine the Philipsburg Ambulance's current Bylaws, and their charter, and find out what's being done and not done. Need to get all the active players involved. General Consensus in a nutshell is the Philipsburg Ambulance is in trouble and could be an organizational problem.

Commissioner Scott Adler was unable to attend the afternoon session, but gave his proxy to Chairperson Chuck Hinkle.

County Airport Board Member Ernie Fulk joined the session in-person. Board member Vince Reece and Aviation Engineer Steve Brown joined later by Zoom.

Commissioner Blanche McLure moved to accept Manager Vince Reece's Resignation from the County Airport Board, as stated in the letter of resignation. Chairperson Charles Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion carried unanimously. The Board reviewed Dave Sanson's application for appointment to the Airport Board and Vince Reece's recommendation for Manager for Riddick Field Airport. By motion, second, and unanimous County Commission vote, Ernie Fulk was appointed Riddick Field Airport Manager, a volunteer position, and David Sanson was appointed as a member of the Granite County Airport Board. Elena Gagliano expressed her concern that such appointments should only be made after the upcoming Airport Board meeting. Commissioner Hinkle disagreed with Elena Gagliano's opinion. Ernie Fulk and Vince Reece explained to the Board what grants have been applied for and what has been received as there has been a little confusion about these. Two grants had recently been denied by the State of Montana that the County had applied for regarding the current airport project, but there was another grant already received that is sufficient for the current needs on this airport project so the County is not looking to come up with any out of pocket funding at this time. Scott Sylvester asked Ernie Fulk and Vince Reece to reiterate that the County is not on the hook because of any grants being denied, and they did.

Public Comment: Steve Immenschuh joined the session and gave a history of the Philipsburg Ambulance. He stated that there has always been an ebb and tide in ambulance response. He explained that people just don't volunteer as much these days. Back in the mining and logging days before tourism bosses would advocate for their crews to be volunteers and several men on the crews had wives who were nurses, so there were plenty of volunteers. He doesn't think paying a coordinator is the answer and believes the ambulance personnel should be paid to make it worth their while.

Correspondence: None

Commissioner Blanche McLure moved to accept the February 2, 2021 minutes. Chairperson Charles Hinkle seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The session adjourned at 11:20 a.m.