

February 23, 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* joined the session in-person. Also joining the session by Zoom were local resident, Elena Gagliano, DES Coordinator Jackie Bolster, Mayor of Drummond, Gail Leeper, and Mayor of Philipsburg, Dan Reddish.

ROAD AND BRIDGE SUPERINTENDENT/SOLID WASTE MANAGER WEEKLY REPORT: Paul Alt joined the session by phone. The crew is trying to remove ice on the Gonk road and getting rid of running water as fast as they can as more warm weather is expected. A 4-wheel drive plow truck in the Philipsburg department is in disrepair. Paul Alt would like to take it in for an estimate and decision on whether or not to fix it or trade it in. Paul Alt said they can get by for the rest of the winter. None of the road crew wants to lease the County's rental house with the exception of Nate Brashear. There are still some things that need to be done in the rental. Nate Brashear is interested in doing the items that still need to be done and then having that deducted from the rent. The County Commission would need to pre-approve this plan. Paul Alt will go through the house with Nate Brashear to see what still needs to be done and get an itemized list with amounts to the Board for review and decision on next week's agenda. Paul Alt stated that he reviewed the overtime amounts currently used by road crew employees this fiscal year from written reports and most was used in the summer for spreading millings as approved by the Board; and he also explained about overtime that was used on Fridays during the time the crew was on four ten-hour shifts. Commissioner McLure stated that she appreciated Paul Alt looking in to the road crew overtime, and that her concerns were not about the past overtime usage, but looking to forecast overtime needs for the next fiscal year and properly budget for those needs. Gail Leeper stated that she is starting to get some requests for sand bags and that Drummond has a couple hundred bags. Paul Alt stated that the road crew also has bags and people are welcome to come and get them.

GEORGETOWN LAKE LEVEL OUTFLOW: The lake level was reported at 6,428.66 feet according to the USGHS lake level gage and the dam tender's report. The lake is approximately 10.08 inches below full pool. Over the past several weeks, the outflow has been set at 25 CFS 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.

RESOLUTION 2021-5: The Board held the second reading of Resolution 2021-5: “A Granite County Resolution Amending The County’s Public Health Budget To Account For Certain Unanticipated Grant Funds, Authorizing Expenditures, And Return Of Certain Grant Funding.” Commissioner McLure moved to accept Resolution 2021-5. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion passed unanimously.

DRUMMOND MAYOR GAIL LEEPER - RESUMING JOINT SESSIONS WITH TOWNS: Drummond Mayor Gail Leeper and Philipsburg Mayor Dan Reddish met with the Board. They would like to schedule a joint session meeting for March 10, 2021 at town hall in Philipsburg. Dan and Gail will provide an agenda and whoever is hosting will take minutes and handle logistics. Commissioner Adler moved to resume quarterly sessions with the towns of Drummond and Philipsburg, with the next one being on the evening of March 10, 2021. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion passed unanimously.

BIG SKY PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY: Elena Gagliano, newly appointed representative to the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority Board stated that she was not properly informed of being on the agenda and had nothing to report. The matter was tabled until the following week.

LETTER OPPOSING SECRETARY of U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR APPOINTMENT: Commissioner McLure stated that she is taking an unbiased opinion on political matters and is opposed to this letter and will not sign it. Commissioner Adler asked that this be tabled until next week. The matter was tabled for the following week. There was no public comment.

GEORGETOWN LAKE FIRE SERVICE AREA PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE INCREASES: Dick Verstraete, Chair of Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area, joined the session by Zoom, and Kurt Unger and Fred Bjorklund, with the Georgetown Lake Volunteer Fire Department, joined in-person to explain the proposed fee increase and reasoning for the request. The Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area is partly in Granite county and partly in Anaconda Deer Lodge County. Dick Verstraete explained the history of the matter, the proposed fee increase, and the reasoning for it. Fred Bjorklund stated that the Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area was established in 1998 by resolution of the Granite County Commission with a flat fee of \$60 per structure (with similar process in Anaconda Deer Lodge County). This newly proposed increase would be from \$60 to \$95 annually for each defined structure per property with a taxable value up \$1,000 (base) and \$17 per every \$1,000 in taxable value above the base, to be imposed to pay for actual expenses of the Georgetown Lake Fire Service Area. Such will allow for reserve funds that are required by law. Mr. Bjorklund further reported that the fire service area used to be at a Class 10 for insurance purposes, which is no fire protection at all. Now the area is Class 7 and they would like to get it to a Class 6 (fire insurance rating). Scott Sylvester asked Mr. Bjorklund and Mr. Unger if they had any figures on what the potential savings on insurance premiums if the service dropped from a Class 7 to a Class 6? Mr. Unger stated that it was approximately a 15% savings when it went to a Class 7 rating and would be approximately another 10% at a Class

6 rating. Commissioner Adler moved to accept the GTLFSA proposal and to hold a public hearing on the fee increase. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COUNTY AIRPORT BOARD: County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw reviewed the new FAA grant application packet for the Master Plan and AGIS Aeronautical Survey for Riddick Field Airport with various items in the application packet for County Commission's approval. The grant application documents (with full packet) were completed by KLJ Engineering. Commissioner Hinkle stated that as usual with any federal grant there are strings attached and that the county would be responsible for many things down the road after completion of this project; and he has concerns with FAA oversight and federal strings attached to the grant. The County would have to agree to draft and adopt a DBE Policy (basically an affirmative action plan) that is similar to policy that the Montana DOT is required to have to receive federal highway dollars. There was discussion on the ins and outs of the grant, including the strings (assurances) required of the County. If the airport runway is not repaired then the Riddick Field Airport would need to be shut down and used for other purposes potentially, and this current grant application being considered (for funding for Master Plan and Survey) by the County Commission would be a pre-requisite in the process of obtaining further grant funding for the actual runway improvement (repaving). FAA requires a Master Plan for improvement projects and Granite County needs funding for both the Master Plan and runway improvements. Elena Gagliano, appearing by Zoom questioned applying for the grant as she used an example of the McCarran Airport in Nevada as that project unreasonably exceeded its original modest scope. Scott Sylvester stated that it is not feasible to expand the airport and that Riddick field is not going to turn in to an international airport. Commissioner Adler felt that there is still some confusion about this grant being for expansion of the airport. County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw reiterated it is for obtaining the required Master Plan (required by FAA for additional grants to improve runway) and ultimately improving the current runway only, not any expansion. Commissioner Adler moved to accept the grant packet, including the FAA grant application, DBE Program Policy, and other required agreements included in the packet. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. There was no further public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Adler did not attend the afternoon session.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Lisa Gray with HDR Engineering joined the session by phone. Her firm was retained by the Montana Department of Transportation to conduct a feasibility study on an I-90 Bear Gulch interchange. The study is being done to come up with a solution for alternate access when there is a landslide on the frontage road. She gave the Board her contact information, and she will contact Granite County Planning Director, Linda Bouck. Lisa Gray would get on the Board's agenda in the future to provide informational updates.

CORRESPONDENCE: The Board reviewed an email from Kirk Miller with USGS on 2021 costs for continued USGS operation and maintenance on two water monitoring sites in Granite County. This will be placed on next week's agenda.

BOARD MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 16, 2021: Commissioner McLure moved to approve the February 16, 2021 minutes. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion passes unanimously.

PAM WALLING-MACO MARKETING DIRECTOR, COUNTY HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN/RENEWAL: Pam Walling joined the session in-person to review changes in the MACo Healthcare Trust. The trust did not have a rate increase but Granite County's loss ratio is over a 100% which will result in a 5% premium increase if renewing on July 1, 2021. Enhanced benefits offerings in the 2021 plan include Telehealth services, Chiropractic/Acupuncture visits and Massage Therapy. Pam Walling explained the differences between the plan style Granite County has compared to what most counties have and strongly encouraged the Board to offer at least four different plans for employees including a high deductible plan. The county health plan options, or plans, will be on the agenda again for next week for decision, including a decision on how much the County will contribute to each County employee annually as far as health insurance premiums go.

ADJOURNMENT: The session adjourned at 3:15 p.m.