

March 22, 2021 Regular Session of the Beaverhead County Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners, in and for Beaverhead County, Montana, met in session on March 22, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Room of the Beaverhead County Courthouse. Present: Chairman John H. Jackson, Commissioner Mike McGinley, Commissioner C. Thomas Rice and their Assistant Cindy Decker.

Updates on County Projects

Road Supervisor Bob Ferris and Public Works Secretary Jamie Flynn joined the meeting. Bob stated that Carrigan Lane is finally looking better after the crew worked on it. They will be working on some culverts this week. The crew will be hauling gravel at Little Sheep.

Facilities Manager Chris Booth joined the meeting. He advised that Dayspring will be here this Friday to get the door installed in the County Attorney's office. Chris also has spoken with Longie Builders about the concrete patio that is planned to be installed where the old Spruce trees used to be on the South side of the Courthouse.

Mike commented that we need to figure out what projects could be done with the Covid funds coming our way. There were several suggestions such as an elevator, gravel, roofing etc

Sheriff Paul Craft and County Attorney Jed Fitch joined the meeting. Jed stated that there hasn't been any progress on hiring for the open Deputy County Attorney position. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Paul advised that they are in the final stages of the Wise River Repeater Project. He is excited to drive over the top of the Byway to test it out. He mentioned that in the 911 Budget, \$20,000 was set aside for this project, and it is all but done for \$13,000. Paul advised that there will be a Distributor here next Tuesday to tell him what will be needed for the upgrade in the jail. Paul will soon be advertising for interested parties to do the new plumbing in the jail.

John asked about the St Pats event last week in the Frontier Event Center. Paul replied that it wasn't bad at all; there were only a few DUI's. The turn out was very low, only about 250 folks.

Paul also mentioned that the subject of *acquiring* the acre of land on the Wise River Site needs to be discussed at some point in the near future.

Treasurer Cathy Hucke joined the meeting and presented the Cash Report for February.

Mike asked Cathy about the old returned checks and what her plan is. She has flagged those names and will not renew their registrations until those bad checks are paid. The machine that is used for running checks through to see if they are good are really too expensive and not feasible for the county.

Cathy also presented a letter of credit from Wells Fargo Bank stating that they will cover the county's collateralized accounts at 100% now and Bank of Commerce has stated the same.

Casey Elliott from the Tribune joined the meeting.

The following Road Department Report was submitted and scanned into the minutes:

BEAVERHEAD COUNTY ROAD WORK
 March 14th to March 20th, 2021
 Dillon, Lima and Wisdom Areas

DILLON AREA

- Bladed on the following roads: Ten Mile, Rebich, Old Stage, Eliason, Carrigan, Carter Creek and Sweetwater.
- Worked on Carrigan Lane, Project #2008-02.
- Road checked Dillon area roads.
- Equipment service and repair.

LIMA AREA

- Plowed snow on the South Valley Road.
- Bladed and hauled gravel on Little Sheep Creek Road.
- Road checked Lima and Dell area roads
- Equipment service and repair.

WISDOM AREA

- Plowed snow on the following roads: Skinner Meadows, Miner Lake, Upper North Fork, Rock Creek, Twin Lakes, Moose Creek, Big Lake Creek, Big Swamp Creek, Little Lake Creek, Jackson yard, Wisdom and Wisdom yard.
- Cattle guard report on Rock Creek Road.
- Road checked Jackson and Wisdom area roads.
- Equipment service and repair.

Action on Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the March 12 and 15, 2021 meeting were read and the following motion was made:

MOTION: Commissioner McGinley moved and Commissioner Rice seconded that the minutes of the March 12 and 15, 2021 meeting be approved. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments on Subjects Under County Jurisdiction Not on Agenda**Discussion ~ Policy of "Shop Dillon First" / Covid Money**

Mike began the discussion. He would like to have a Department Head meeting soon to revitalize this policy. One thing that cannot be done with the Covid money is to reduce taxes. Beaverhead County has always tried to buy vehicles locally as much as possible. Even though Amazon is extremely convenient and, in some cases, cheaper, it should be made crystal clear that anything that is bought locally, helps to pay our wages as public employees. Even down to the smallest purchases such as office supplies, we need to make more of a *concerted effort* to buy locally. Even though it is more convenient to order from Amazon, the county really should order from local vendors.

Cindy will send out an email to Department Heads reminding them of the same and that a Department Head meeting will be held soon.

Jed agreed and stated that his office always tries to buy local.

Discussion ~ Financing for Fox Run District Project

Mike Richardson joined the meeting. Commissioner McGinley began the discussion. Fred Chounard and Clint Rouse are both trustees of the board and they are getting ready to go out for bids and are wondering how the newspaper bills for advertising etc. will be paid. The County has set up an account for them so if they go to bid, these bills can be paid in a timely manner. They want to have their financing laid out on paper. With Betty's help, and Clint's banking knowledge, we came up with two options that are still up in the air until the Board approves or disapproves.

Since they are a Government, we can help them through the InterCap loan process. They can borrow right now at 1.6 but it is variable every year; and it complicates the taxes too.

The other option is that Beaverhead County could carry the loan of \$200,000 at 3.9%; the auditor says must be reasonable and fair which it would be. The Auditor strongly suggested that an admin fee should be added. Clint said that typically, the admin fee (in the banking world) is a quarter percent. So, a quarter percent on 3.65 is 3.9. To do a 20 year note it should be between 3.4% and 3.875% so the 3.9% is right in there.

Clint stated that they are definitely leaning toward the fixed rate so it goes on the taxes nice and clean. There are 47 lots up there that can be taxed and Betty put an

amortization schedule together. It would be \$310.35 per lot per year for 20 years. This will automatically be on their taxes every year.

This is public money and the process has been very public including their options. Commissioner McGinley has found out that many other counties that do this a lot but it's Beaverhead County's first time. Basically, the county would be the bank for this project. Fox Run has their own board and will be voting on these two options.

Mike Richardson thanked the commissioners and left the meeting. He will let the commissioners know when a decision has been made.

Recess

At 12:00 noon, Chairman Jackson recessed the meeting. At 1:30 p.m., Chairman Jackson reconvened the meeting with Commissioner McGinley, Commissioner Rice and their Assistant Cindy Decker present.

Legislative Update

At this time Commissioner McGinley gave an update on what the Legislature has been doing this session.

Unfinished Business/Other Topics of Discussion

Routine matters occupied the attention of the Board for the remainder of the day.

Payment of Invoices

The Commissioners reviewed and approved invoices for a total of \$152,450.36, beginning with check #206825 and ending with check #206868. The Invoice Payment Schedule is located in the Financial Administrator's Office.

Public Comments on Subjects Under County Jurisdiction

There were no public comments.

Recess

The meeting was recessed until Wednesday, March 24, 2021

RECONVENE

The meeting was reconvened at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Discussion ~ Sheriff / Union (Multipurpose Room)

This meeting was postponed as Deputy Wyrick (Union Steward) was ill.

Discussion ~ Health Insurance Renewal ~ Insurance Committee

Present: Cindy Decker, Kari Towery, Betty Tinsley, Mike Marsh and Shannon McWilliams.

Others Present: Mike McGinley, John Jackson, Pam Walling (MACo HCT) and Joanne Romasko (MACo HCT Administrator)

Pam began by reviewing the renewal rates and health care plans. There will be no rate increase this year and there have been some improvements to the plan as well.

The typical health plan has had about a 7% rate increase. The reason that Beaverhead County isn't having a rate increase is because we had an awesome year with MACo. Our claims have been nominal. There was also no increase on the Dental or Vision rates or Life Insurance for us. There was, however, a 3% rate reduction on the HD plan.

Pam handed out pamphlets with the details of this years' rates and plans. She stated that since Covid, the medical world has changed and most likely won't ever be the same. Medical care will be delivered differently, going forward, in all likelihood. MACo has been looking at telemedicine companies for a few years, and they ultimately picked the telemedicine vendor **Well-via** program last April. Basically, it gives the employees virtually instant access to doctors. The online doctor can then prescribe antibiotics if needed. It is *very inexpensive* compared to an actual physical appointment. So far, it has not been utilized very much because it's still so new. Pam has heard only positives remarks regarding this program. Anything telemedicine, including mental health, will be covered by this plan.

Pam went on to say that acupuncture and chiropractor services will be covered with reimbursement of \$50. Massage therapy will be covered at \$50.00 as well if it is a licensed therapist. Employees can have a combination of acupuncture, chiropractor and massages of 25 in a year.

The easiest way to submit a claim is to just take a picture of the receipt and text it in to Pam Walling at 406-366-6893.

There is now a hearing aid benefit of \$2,000 every 5 years. They want to offer the best benefits as possible but also want to be realistic. She stated that they are always open to ideas from health insurance committees.

Pam spoke next about the different plans and how many employees are on each. Currently, there are 52 people on the RM1000; 7 on the RM2000; 7 on the Basic; and none on the HD (high deductible) plan.

She wanted to talk specifically about the HD4000. The only thing that HD plans can pay out, legally according to IRS rules & regulations, is preventive care. So, anything you do on a preventive basis will be covered at 100% under the HD plan, while anything that is *not* preventive will go towards your deductible.

There was much discussion about how the rates are compiled and the differences between them all. Pam elaborated on the HD plans and why they could be a good thing for the county employees. HSA (health savings account) keeps building and goes with the employee when they leave employment whether it's retirement or whatever; only HD plans can have HSA's.

Commissioner McGinley commented that Beaverhead County's policy is that we pay 100% of each employee's insurance, no matter which plan they choose. This might be something that should be looked at; whether or not we should make up the difference to the folks that choose a lesser expensive plan. In other words, maybe the committee should consider recommending to the commissioners that the County contribute \$1034 to EVERY insured employee (as insurance) regardless of which plan they choose. Pam asked for any questions or feedback regarding insurance, the blood draw or the Healthy Is Wellness Program. Mike Marsh commented that he feels very fortunate that this county offers very family friendly insurance. The committee members agreed. Kari stated that she loves Healthy Is.

Pam asked if our DOT physicals are being paid by the county. Betty replied that the **county** does reimburse for those. Since this is a preventive service, **MACo** will begin covering DOT physicals now as a free benefit. Pam will be sending out the form shortly via email.

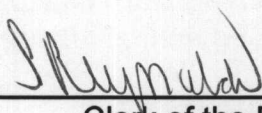
MOTION: Mike moved and Kari seconded that the Health Insurance Committee recommend to the Commissioners that the county switch the HD3000 replacing the HD4000. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: Shannon moved and Mike seconded that the Insurance Committee make the recommendation to the commissioners that the county contribute \$1,034 to each employee on MACo insurance regardless of which plan they choose, so the employee can use the difference to purchase dental/vision or deposit into their HSA account. A verbal vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Pam advised that the Health Care Trust is doing very well and expects that the rates will remain flat at least two more years.

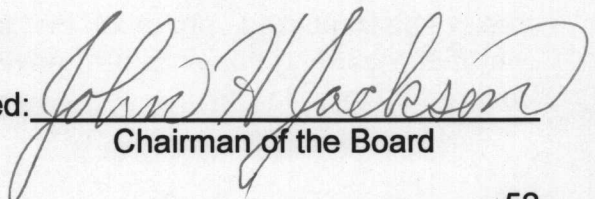
There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.

Attest:



Clerk of the Board

Approved:



Chairman of the Board