

June 25, 2024

The Board of County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in a regular session in the Commission Office of the Granite County Courthouse with Commissioner McLure, Commissioner Adler and Commissioner Hinkle attending. Also attending were Commissioner's Assistant, Billie Ann Kulaski, and Granite County Attorney, Blaine Bradshaw, who attended a portion of the agenda items. The session was livestreamed through the Zoom internet-based program available for the public to view the session and comment. The public was also allowed to attend in person and provide comment. The session convened with the pledge of allegiance.

Also, in attendance were *Philipsburg Mail* Editor, Amelia Wood; Granite County Road & Bridge Superintendent Paul Alt; Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) Fisheries Biologist Brad Liermann and Adam Strainer; Granite County Compensation Board Members, Anna Bergerson, Jack Owens, and Cathy Smith; Marsh McLennan Agency Insurance Consultant, Rody Holman; T-Mobile Account Manager, Jason Wilson, Jay Weitman, and Casey Muilenburg; Granite County Clerk & Recorder, Sarah Graham; Granite County Treasurer, Ashley Todd; Ranch at Rock Creek General Manager, Chance Gibson; Granite County Public Health Nurse, Deb Robinson; and members of the general public including Elena Gagliano.

BOARD MINUTES;

The Commission did not receive the minutes from the previous session, and reviewed the meeting during breaks of the session. Commissioner Hinkle moved to accept the board minutes for June 18, 2024. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There were no public comments received. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE;

Electronic mail was received from FERC including comments from the 2024 Dam Safety Inspection. This correspondence has also been reviewed by Great West Engineering and they are working on a plan and schedule to address outstanding issues.

Electronic mail was received from the Montana Department of Transportation announcing the estimated FY 2025 annual fuel tax allocations; Granite County is estimated to receive \$139,668.49.

A memo from Public Health to contractor Rachel Johnson was received as the Commission was carbon copied electronically on the correspondence. The memo outlines the ending of billing contract that they do not wish to renew.

A letter was received from Headwaters RCD requesting the County pay their dues for the agency providing services to the area. The letter outlines the types of services provided to County residents and businesses including First-Time Homebuyer's Education and Social Media Marketing Classes, as well as support for agriculture producers. The County dues amount to \$1,720.68. The matter will be placed on an upcoming agenda.

An email was received from Granite County Sheriff, Scott Dunkerson providing comments on an upcoming agenda item (MOU with Anna Bergerson), voicing his support.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano raising concern over the difficulties hearing with background noise in the Commissioners Office. She asked why the Commission wouldn't table the approval of minutes from the June 18, 2024 meeting and approve them next week. Elena Gagliano also noted that the correspondence from Headwaters had an invoice attached and should be an upcoming agenda item. The Commission responded that this is an annual agreement, but that the renewal would be a future agenda item.

Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano concerning the specific times notated on the agenda, stating that if the Commissioners are not going to follow the times outlined on the agenda that they should just list that they are meeting at 9:00 a.m. Attorney Bradshaw commented that he likes the times being listed, as it helps the public determine when an agenda item is going to be discussed, noting that there is a disclaimer on the bottom of the agenda stating agenda times are approximate. Elena Gagliano raised concerns over the background noise from the Commission Office be heard on Zoom, making it difficult to hear while attending via Zoom, stating she has provided resources to the County to alleviate this matter (i.e. "How to Conduct Zoom Meetings Properly).

ROAD & BRIDGE WEEKLY REPORT; & SOLID WASTE UPDATE WITH ROAD & BRIDGE SUPERINTENDENT PAUL ALT; Granite County Road & Bridge Superintendent Paul Alt joined the session to provide an update of projects across the County including blading on Lower Rock Creek Road and then they will start working on the Bus Run (Upper Rock Creek Road). They will then begin working on the frontage road south of the Interstate and Henderson Creek Road. A few more days of dura patching on Rock Creek then they will move to Georgetown Lake. Paul Alt explained that the posts have been pounded for the electrical speed signs up at Georgetown Lake, and pedestrian signs have come in for the area. The group discussed areas around Maxville where Blackfoot is laying fiber that will need repairs including the potential of laying asphalt. Blackfoot's contractors have been good to work with and have said they will complete any road repairs due to the project. Commissioner Adler noted that Cave Gulch on the way to Garnett Ghost Town is being bladed by Andy Weaver for the BLM.

Solid Waste Update: The Commission discussed transitioning the operating hours of the Philipsburg Solid Waste Site to 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. This would make the hours consistent across both Solid Waste Transfer Sites. Commissioner McLure noted that this was originally adjusted because there were not any lights at the Philipsburg Site, but was never adjusted back once lights were implemented. Commissioner Adler moved to change the hours of operation of the Philipsburg Solid Waste Site to 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. from Tuesday through Saturday to align with the Drummond Solid Waste Site. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There were no public comments received and the motion passed unanimously.

GEORGETOWN LAKE OUTFLOW; DAM TENDER'S REPORT; The lake level was reported at 6429.31 feet; 2.28 inches below full pool, according to the USGS lake level gage and the dam tender's report for the week. The Commission was joined by Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) Fisheries Biologist Brad Liermann and Adam Strainer for the session. The group discussed the water level and reviewed the most recent report from DNRC Water Hydrologist, Todd Blythe. Commissioner Hinkle moved to continue releasing 30 CFS in alignment with the current FERC Order in place. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. Commissioner Hinkle noted that they need to watch the weather in case the lake area receives precipitation and the County find themselves in a position to start going over the spillway. Brad Liermann commented that based on the DNRC report the lake is not projected to fill this season. He inquired if the Commission had any information on the USGS gauges that are not showing the correct outflow data. The County has reached out to Flint Creek Hydrodynamics' Operator, Paul Tallon who has spoken to USGS, but the gauges have not been calibrated yet. There were no further comments and the motion passed unanimously.

The Commission discussed the renters at the house in Hall. The renters would like to build a fence around the house, purchasing their own materials and having the County assist to pound the posts. The Commission agreed that this would be okay. The renters would also like to have horses at the location. The Commission did not agree to having horses, but recommended the renters reach out to the Fire Department to use pasture area around the Fire Station in Hall.

MONTHLY CLAIMS; The Commission reviewed monthly claims. Commissioner Adler moved to accept the monthly claims. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There were no public comments received and the motion passed unanimously.

ANNA BERGERSON TO DISCUSS A POTENTIAL CONTRACT OR MOU TO PROVIDE EVALUATION AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR CARE OF PRISONERS; The Commissioners were joined by Licensed Social Worker (LSW), Anna Bergerson, who provided evaluations of inmates at the Sheriff's Office under her employment with Healthy Granite County Network. She now works with Intermountain Health and needs an agreement in place with the County to continue providing mental health evaluation services. The Sheriff wrote an email stating that he would like to have a contract with Anna Bergerson for continued services and is in support of the proposed contractual agreement. The group discussed the fee schedule associated with the agreement. Anna Bergerson stated the dollar amount for each evaluation would be set at \$75.00; she will need to determine what rate to charge for providing testimony for involuntary civil commitment hearings (handled by the County Attorney), but will provide a rate consistent with customary rates. Commissioner Adler motioned to approve the drafted MOU with Anna Bergerson with customary rates. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano inquiring to the completeness of the agreement, and asked that the Commission table the agreement to see the fee schedule before agreeing. Attorney Bradshaw explained that the Commission could approve the agreement subject to customary rates for such testimony at involuntarily civil commitment hearings (to be included on Exhibit A once Anna

Bergerson researches the issue), as there is nothing binding the County to use Anna Bergerson for services. He further explained that he may hire witnesses for such cases without approval from the Commissioner's Office. There were no further public comments received and the motion passed unanimously.

GRANITE COUNTY COMPENSATION BOARD ANNUAL MEETING; RECOMMENDING SALARIES OF ELECTED OFFICIALS INCLUDING COLA; The Commission was joined by Granite County Compensation Board Members, Anna Bergerson and Cathy Smith; as well as Granite County Clerk & Recorder, Sarah Graham, Attorney Bradshaw, and Granite County Treasurer Ashley Todd. The group reviewed their packets including the 4.1% increase in the consumer price index for the 2023 calendar year. Sarah Graham explained that there is \$100K left over in funds set aside by the Commissioners last year from LATCF monies; the County could take 2% out of the LATCF funding of the County and the other 2% from the new fiscal year budget. Commissioner Adler moved to recommend an increase of 4.1% to the salaries of all elected officials. Board Member Smith seconded the motion. There were no public comments and the motion passed unanimously.

GRANITE COUNTY SALARIES OF ELECTED OFFICIALS INCLUDING COLA; AND EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION; FINAL DECISION ON COLA FOR ALL COUNTY EMPLOYEES (OTHER THAN UNION EMPLOYEES); The Commission discussed increases for all Granite County employees. Commissioner McLure noted that the letter from Granite County Clerk & Recorder, Sarah Graham, asked for longevity for the Elected Officials' deputies. She has done some research and the Commission has a prospective matrix for Elected Officials' Deputies that mirrors the Granite County employee pay matrix, enabling deputies to move through steps and get an additional increase after reaching a fourth-year deputy salary ranking. This matter will be on the agenda next week for further discussion. Sarah Graham explained that the proposed matrix is different from what the Elected Officials have requested, and they would like to provide longevity for their Deputies. Commissioner McLure responded that the Commission spoke with McKenzie McCarthy at MACo and it was recommended to keep whatever is implemented consistent among non-elected employees, which spurred the creation of a special matrix. Commissioner Adler noted that there will not be any back-pay for Deputies if this is implemented; however, the proposed matrix will enable Deputies to keep their seniority for placement on the matrix. Sarah Graham and Ashley Todd were both agreeable to the Deputies being able to keep their seniority while moving through the new matrix. This matter will be on the agenda the following week. Commissioner Adler moved to provide a 4.1% salary increase to all Elected Officials and Granite County employees (other than Union Employees). Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano noting the large packet for the Compensation Board, and the amount of motions associated with the process of granting the increase. She asked for clarification of where the Commissioners were at in the process and noted that none of the Board Members introduced themselves. Commissioner McLure noted that the Compensation Board has adjourned after making a recommendation of a 4.1% salary increase for Elected Officials. The Commissioners are now making a motion to approve that increase for both Elected Officials and Granite County

Employees (other than Union Employees). She noted that there was a request from the Clerk & Recorder, Treasurer, and Clerk of Court to provide longevity to their Deputies. The Commissioners proposed a special Deputy Matrix in response to this request; but since this would be a policy change it will be on an upcoming agenda. There were no public comments received and the motion passed unanimously.

RODY HOLMAN & AMY MCNICHOLS WITH COUNTY INSURANCE RENEWAL RATINGS; The Commission was joined by Rody Holman and Amy McNichols to review the insurance renewal (workers' compensation, liability, property, and cyber security insurance) documents, including the market analysis focusing on the casualty insurance and property rates. Rody Holman explained that the pool has lost money over the last five years affecting the renewal rates and the Commission reviewed the claims associated with County over the last five years. The group reviewed the premiums for the county for FY 2025, which as a whole, were slightly down from the previous fiscal year (1.25%); with Property Contribution at \$86,546.00 and Liability Contribution at \$186,353.00 for a total of \$272,899.00. The Commissioners were overall happy with the slight decrease to the overall insurance premiums, and the Commission were all in agreement with the renewal rates.

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL JUVENILE DETENTION GRANT MOU WITH GALLATIN COUNTY; The Commission reviewed the Southwest Regional Juvenile Detention Grant MOU with Gallatin County, which is reviewed on an annual basis. Commissioner Adler moved to accept and sign the Southwest Regional Juvenile Detention Grant MOU with Gallatin County. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion. There were no public comments received and the motion passed unanimously.

JASON WILSON WITH T-MOBILE FOR GOVERNMENT TO UPDATE THE COMMISSION ON NETWORK UPGRADES AND THE BENEFITS THE SERVICE WILL PROVIDE; The Commission was joined by T-Mobile Account Manager, Jason Wilson who presented the benefits of the new service that T-Mobile is providing in the area. Also joining the session were T-Mobile Representatives Jay Weitman and Casey Muilenburg. T-Mobile is new to the Granite County area and Jason Wilson showed a network coverage map where there are four towers covering the area. The towers utilize 600 Megahertz which reaches further than other providers, enabling enhanced services to rural areas. T-Mobile is now larger than Verizon and AT&T in terms of being able to provide service during heavy user traffic times. The group discussed the growth in Montana and the congestion creating failures in Verizon's service as well as the fact that T-Mobile's rates are around 25% cheaper. Jason Wilson will provide pricing information to the County, and stated he is working with both Ravalli and Missoula County. The rate plan for government services with T-Mobile starts at \$35.00 per line for unlimited service. Jason Wilson explained that T-Mobile also has an exclusive agreement with StarLink to cover the US, and in October the first phase of the relationship will go live. This means that anyone with a T-Mobile phone that can see the sky will be able to send text messages. The following year the voice and data plans go live. T-Mobile will allow the County to a 30-day demo to see if the service will work for County operations. The Commissioners will have T-Mobile work with their Assistant to coordinate the demonstration amongst County Departments. T-Mobile boasts the priority of

their service for government communications and how government lines are prioritized during high user times. Jay Whiteman serves as the Public Safety Consultant and provided information around the focus T-Mobile has on first responders and government services. Casey Muilenburg explained he serves as a Solutions Engineer working to meet the communication needs of the County. Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano thanking T-Mobile for such a wonderful presentation. She added that she is interested in services and inquired about Blackfoot telephone services and impacts to landline phones.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.