

December 31, 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 Hinkle attending. Commissioner Adler was excused from this meeting. Also attending was Commissioners Assistant Maranda Williams and Granite County Attorney, Blaine Bradshaw, who attended a portion of the agenda items in-person. The session was livestreamed through the Zoom internet-based program available for the public to view the session and provide public 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 Elected County Commissioner Paul Kulaski and members of the general public Elena Gagliano.

BOARD MINUTES; Commissioner Hinkle moved to accept the board minutes for December 24th, 2024. Changes under dam section; typo to fix. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. There were no public comments received. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE;

Electronic mail was received from U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration about funding resources and opportunities for tribes.

Electronic mail was received from Chemnet Consortium for Reasonable Cause Training Live Event in Billings or Butte.

Mail was received from Justice Court monthly disbursement amounts.

Mail was received from the National Association of Counties with a final report from NACo's Artificial Intelligence Exploratory Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were received.

ROAD & BRIDGE WEEKLY REPORT; & SOLID WASTE UPDATE WITH ROAD & BRIDGE SUPERINTENDENT PAUL ALT; Granite County Road & Bridge Superintendent Paul Alt was excused from this meeting. Time card and road activity reports were brought in by the clerk and mentioned to possibly change the form and talk to Paul Alt about them being more descriptive on what they did for that day. Commissioner McLure said we need confirmation of where and when they plowed/sanded. Commissioner-elect Kulaski said then there would be documentation of what roads take longer and proof of where they were at. Commissioner Hinkle stated the last couple weeks would have been a good time to be training on new/different equipment as there was no snow.

GEORGETOWN LAKE OUTFLOW; DAM TENDER'S REPORT; The lake level was reported at 6428.40 feet; 13.2" inches below full pool, according to the USGS lake level gage and the dam tender's report for the week. Commissioner Hinkle moved to continue releasing

6 CFS which matches the estimated inflows; in alignment with the current consent agreement in place. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment was received from Elena Gagliano that she couldn't hear the meeting very well and that she had her hand up during Road and Bridge Report. Mentioned there's no introductions from who's talking. She then suggested Paul Kulaski sit in Scott's seat since he's commissioner-elect. She stated that if Paul Alt is not there and Scott Adler is not there to give an update that there should be a written weekly report so if this comes up again at least you know what's going on in writing and same thing with solid waste. She thinks it could be handled a little bit better and wishes Commissioner-elect Kulaski and Commissioner Hinkle good luck.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2024-19; A GRANITE COUNTY RESOLUTION TO AFFIRMATIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE MT COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT PLAN BY IDENTIFYING AND APPROVING A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ORGANIZATION (CRO); Commissioner McLure moved to adopt Resolution 2024-19. Motion not seconded; motion failed.

Kelly Sullivan with Headwaters RC & D joined the commissioners and encouraged the commission to pass this. Leaving \$200,000 on the table for down payment assistance and that it's almost like free money. She says they're making a mistake by not adopting this resolution. She stated she doesn't know of any of the county that hasn't chose to adopt. Commissioner Hinkle asked Kelly how Flathead County is doing with this program, and she responded that she doesn't know how they are doing. She said 6 of the 7 counties in her region have adopted the resolution and a CRO.

Public Comment was received from Elena Gagliano thanking Commissioner Hinkle for not seconding the motion. Elena Gagliano has issues with the statute creating this program and so do others, including a Flathead County Commissioner.

Commissioner Hinkle said he believes coal tax money should be spent for public infrastructure like bridges and things that need to be fixed and not for individual people to buy houses on a national problem that we aren't going to fix.

Commissioner McLure asked if the Commission should contact our state house representative, Mr. John Fitzpatrick, for ideas on possible bridge repair funds. Commissioner Hinkle suggested the Commission contact their legislature to request funding grants for local bridges. There's a match County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw stated for state grants. Commissioner Hinkle said for the Middle Fork Bridge and Gold Coin Bridge need looked at and now may be the time to install a forever bridge.

PROPOSED LETTER TO REQUEST SPEED STUDY-REQUEST TO THE MT DOT RE: I-90 FROM MM143 TO MM148; Commissioner Hinkle moved to send the letter. Commissioner McLure seconded. There was no public comment received and the motion passed unanimously.

The commission went into a recess.

INITIAL DISCUSSION OF COUNTY JAIL PER DAY RATE; PER DIEM FOR EMPLOYEES, AND MEETING DATE/TIMES FOR 2025; This is to help direct the County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw to draft the resolutions for 2025. Commissioner McLure said to keep the per diem Federal rates for the mileage. Food Rates while traveling for County employees are currently: Breakfast is \$8.25, Lunch is \$12, Evening meal is \$18. Breakfast is \$8.25, Lunch is \$9.25, and Evening meal is \$16 as set by the current state rates. Commissioners decided to keep the food reimbursement rates for County employees while traveling the same as last year.

Hotels they did always state rates but actual rates if required for training or for elected officials. Commissioner McLure said keep that the same as last year as well.

The amount \$82.80 per day is the jail per day rate set by the State of Montana per Sheriff Dunkerson.

Courthouse times; Commissioner McLure stated to stay the same and keep the courthouse open during lunch so the public can come in on their lunch. She also wants to keep the courthouse closure in place during the County Christmas holiday party luncheon, date TBD, from noon – 1 pm with public notice in the local newspaper. Three resolutions will be on next week's agenda for employee travel/lodging, commission meeting schedules, and jail rate for 2025.

UPDATED ELECTRONICS FOR COMMISSIONERS;

Commissioner-elect Kulaski prefers a laptop for Commission business. Commissioner Adler needs an updated phone or a tablet to view emails and documents prior to meeting. Commissioner Hinkle says there should be an extra laptop. Blaine Bradshaw suggested a fax machine for Commission Adler to receive documents, if needed; may be cumbersome with big documents though. Commissioners assistant to see if there is a spare lap top in the Courthouse; and if not, order one for Commissioner-elect Kulaski.

Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano raised several concerns regarding the functionality of the Commission's meetings, particularly with virtual participation and equipment. She pointed out that it's difficult to hear the discussions and inquired about the "electronics for commissioners" agenda item, asking if it was related to personal equipment for the commissioners. She emphasized the need for proper equipment, such as cameras that provide a full view of the room, and suggested using tutorials for handling Zoom meetings effectively. Elena Gagliano also raised concerns about the AI companion feature, noting that it was not working properly for asking questions during meetings. She suggested that screen sharing should be available for all participants, and criticized the disabling of chat during meetings. Lastly, Elena commented on the local County website, expressing dissatisfaction with it as not being user friendly and suggested alternative, Civic Plus Web Hosting. It was generally agreed by everyone present that the AI companion for Zoom is not infallible, but will be looked into more by the Commission's assistant, Maranda Williams.

The Session Adjourned at 10:20 a.m.