

December 24, 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, and Commissioner Adler attending. 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, Treasurer Ashely Todd, Business Unit Manager with GreatWest Engineering Jeremiah Theys, and members of the general public Elena Gagliano.

BOARD MINUTES; Commissioner Hinkle moved to accept the board minutes with a change regarding the Lake Outflow that he motioned to continue releasing at 6, not Commissioner Adler for the December 17th, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There were no public comments received. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioners Assistant will adjust the minutes from December 17th, 2024.

CORRESPONDENCE;

Electronic mail was received from Bob Vosen; District Administrator for the Montana Department of Transportation replying to the Commissioners letter that was sent on December 10th, 2024 regarding the speed limit on I-90 near the Bearmouth area. Bob Vosen replied that they respond to winter storms as they occur and follow Just-in-Time De-icing guidelines to avoid unnecessary applications. To change the speed limit itself they would need to conduct a speed study which can take 12-18 months and needs to be reviewed by the county Commissioners, then brought to the Montana Transportation Commission. Commissioner Hinkle wants to see a letter drafted to do the speed study. Will be on next week's agenda.

Electronic mail was received from FERC acknowledging the County's letter transmitting the Emergency Action Plan status report. Also, a reminder to conduct an annual seminar for the EAP and notice that the Regional Engineer's Cell phone number has changed.

Electronic mail was received from Penny Murray with a save-the-date flyer for the next Granite County Museum Building Fundraiser and that they are looking for a few more sponsors. Event will take place on March 15th, 2025 at 6pm.

Electronic Mail was received from The Montana Association of Counties with the 2025 Legislative Conference dates and agenda. The Conference will take place on February 24th-26th 2025 in Helena, MT.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Public Comment was received from Elena Gagliano and asked Commissioner McLure how the meeting was last night (Study Commission Meeting) Commissioner McLure replied it went well and next meeting will be January 16, 2025 at 5:00

pm in the Courthouse's second floor Courtroom. Elena Gagliano brought up recording the meeting to make sure the minutes are good. Elena said the county has to record it and put it online; the town of Drummond does not. She then asked how many people attended. Commissioner McLure said just the board, Elena said that is because it is not noticed properly again. Commissioner McLure said it has nothing to do with the town of Drummond because the Mayor is on the Board. Elena Gagliano asked where the agenda is online. It is now under the Newsletter portion of the Granite County Website until the Study Commission gets its own link spot.

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. Commissioner Adler reported on his behalf and said they are laying down sand, patching holes, bringing sand down to Rock Creek and doing some odds-and-end projects. Solid Waste seems alright, but waiting for a little moisture to be able to burn. Waiting on some parts (wing) to put on the Grader. Commissioner Adler said Paul is available to call if anything is needed.

Commissioners took a recess until 10:40 a.m.

GEORGETOWN LAKE OUTFLOW; DAM TENDER'S REPORT; The lake level was reported at 6428.33 feet; 14.04 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 temporary modification consent agreement in place. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There were no public comments and the motion passed unanimously.

County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw gave his legal opinion that only County Commissioners and Board of Health are the only ones that have to record meetings. Study commission is not required to do audio, record, or zoom, but can if they choose to do so.

The Commissioner's then went into a closed session to discuss a personnel matter. The matter was an agenda item.

LETTER TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FUNDS FOR BRIDGE REPAIRS; Commissioner Hinkle moved to send the proposed letter to the MT Department of Transportation to see if there are funds available from the State for bridge repairs in the County. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. No public comments were received. The motion passed and carried unanimously.

LETTER TO GRANITE DISPOSAL REGARDING THE COUNTY FEE; County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw summarized the letter to Granite Disposal, the private garbage hauling business locally. It is a Co-Op, if there are overages; that's on them to work out those costs with their customers and that it shouldn't be considered a county fee on their invoice. Commissioner McLure says he has all their customers' units that he can pool and use and how there are overages is surprising. Granite Disposal customer's pay \$25 a month to Granite Disposal, a private company, for garbage removal services, but in recent bills it shows \$25 and \$10 "county Fee" which is likely the overage. County Attorney Blaine

Bradshaw's understanding he should go to public service commission to find a solution. There seems to be a problem with Granite Disposal and their customers that must be worked out. Granite Disposal lost a few customers but he still has a large customer base. One way to solve it would be scales on the truck. Letter is stating that the county fee should be removed from their invoices to customers as it's not a surcharge from the County. Commissioner Adler moved to send letter to Granite Disposal. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion.

Ashley Todd had commented that letter should be well-received by Granite Disposal. Understands \$10 fee is what we think it is for people that they believe are going over. There are a lot of people going over; thinks it may be a good idea for a working group meeting with them to iron out details with them in the new year with solid waste policy. Needs to iron out number of units assessed for commercial businesses. Some of this may stem from commercial businesses, restaurants, bars, that use solid waste a lot but don't have an adequate amount applied to them.

Blaine Bradshaw agrees with commercial unit issue and that needs to get nailed down. They need charged for more units possibly, said Commissioner McLure. Ashley Todd said it would be good to have a working session. Should be something in writing that those businesses have set number of units and they request or pay overage fees.

Blaine Bradshaw said there is commercial units set for each type of local business; but this has been changed some by Granite Disposal as they see customers using more (and this is acceptable) but County should have each such customer sign a written agreement acknowledging and consenting to any additional units being assessed.

Commissioner McLure said she didn't know these businesses were assessed more units than established by solid waste policy. Blaine Bradshaw stated that he hopes that business owners are not being left out of the loop, and we better to have an agreement between all parties.

Motion carried and passed unanimously.

DRUMMOND BRIDGE REPAIR WITH GREAT WEST ENGINEERING; Great West's

Business Unit Manager and engineer, Jeremiah Theys joined the Commissioners to move along with the bridge repair in Drummond that was hit by a car in November. Dan McCaley, PE with Great West, swung by on his way through recently to inspect the damages to the South Main Street Bridge over the Clark Fork near Drummond as a vehicle was negligently driven into the railing. The driver has liability insurance in place. Jeremiah Theys explained there 2 options to repair the bridge. Commission discussed and agreed it should be fixed properly with concerns with the structural integrity with the damaged railing post. It is tilted out slightly and exposed reinforcing in there. Connects curb to deck to post. Bent and pulled out slightly in concrete. Could pull post back and patch it but if it were to get hit again confers with structural integrity. Commissioner Adler said we better fix it correctly. The post is a weak spot. Recommendation from Great West would be to have a contractor do a hydro demo on the post itself and the small section of curb and look at reinforcing the deck. Repour the post curb section. Other than the damaged one, the railing posts connecting each vertical post are in good shape. Do a small section of the curb where it's exposed then do the one post

itself with the hydro demo. Blaine asked about bids, price over \$25,000 but under \$80,000 per Jeremiah Theys who said they would put together bid packets to send out to specialty contractors which was acceptable to the Commission. Commissioner Adler said have GreatWest to set up the bids and go from there.

Commissioner Adler motioned to have Great West do bid packets to obtain quotes from the specialty contractors. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion.

No public comment was received. The motion carried and passed unanimously.

FLINT CREEK DAM ITEMS FOR 2025; Business Unit Manager and engineer for Great West, Jeremiah Theys joined the commissioners to update them on Flint Creek Dam items looking into 2025. Jeremiah Theys said there are a few things coming up on the dam this year. Meeting with FERC on January 7th. Comprehensive assessment to be completed in 2027. Jeremiah Theys explains it as a Part 12D inspection on steroids. Do it once every 4 times, 19 years down the road will have to do another one but the regulations have changed. Kareem with FERC will go through the specifics and FERC has all their requirements. A firm will have to be hired to do The Comprehensive Assessment. Question on who to find to do the Comprehensive Assessment. Blaine Bradshaw asked about potentially someone who does these for Northwestern Energy. The price is going to be costly reiterated Jeremiah Theys; Commission can plan for \$75k -\$100k for the comprehensive assessment. Jeremiah Theys will draft up requests for proposals for engineering firms that are eligible and go through that competitive, public process. When do we want to start, asked Jeremiah Theys? Commissioner Adler said sooner the better. Commissioner Adler asked if the state grant would help with this? Jeremiah said it's up to \$15k RRG Grant through the MT DNRC; and we maybe could look into that. Haven't pursued any grant money in the past for these in the past. County can apply for the RRG Grant and see if they qualify. As part of the last Part 12D inspection, recommendations were made regarding the piping through the dam to be inspected by contracted divers and installation of traps for sediment. Control Gauge for the hydro outlet leaks and there is some seepage degrading the concrete needing corrected along with interior pipe being inspected. Need to take care of drainage and repour new deck on outlet and put in a new sediment trap, dam tender could then monitor sediment on there. FERC wanted to check the thickness of the conduit (piping) going through the dam when replaced the valves years ago they did thickness test on it but nothing been inspected through the dam itself. Have divers go in with cameras to see. DNRC Grant will be awarded in the coming year. If they fund it; we'd have 125k for the current projects at the dam. Divers do inspections and submit that reporting to FERC. Commissioner Hinkle asked how much and Jeremiah said the 125k should be sufficient. Biggest cost will be \$5k a day to have divers on site to do those inspections.

Annual DSSMR report required by April 1st, 2025. Great West complete this every year. Dam safety plan, EAP comments from FERC to address. On GreatWest side those are the items they are seeing right now. The work he described on the dam, have to get under contract with DNRC and doesn't know if that work would take place until 2026. Get ready fall of 2025; plan on the grant and budget it there, Blaine Bradshaw stated. Comprehensive

assessment would take place spring, summer, fall. They are going to dig deeper than they have on the last Part 12's. Says what else are they going to find; says it's functioning well and that the county has done a great job doing repairs as needed. They are making money on these things. Commissioner McLure says we pay this horrendous amount of maintenance; and have no water to put out we aren't making any money at all. Jeremiah says county will own it 30 years right when it needs replaced. Unwritten agreement early on was to work with us.

Blaine Bradshaw asked about the signage ordered for the dam. Granite County Public Health Assist/PHEP Jackie Bolster joined the commissioners to respond. Jackie Bolster spoke with Leslie Conn (Heritage Photo) in November 2024 for update as she had ordered signs in July. Would have liked to put them up before winter and she is following back up with Heritage photo. Commissioner Adler says we can go somewhere else if they can't be done in time. Jeremiah Theys reminded about the blue line on the front face of the dam to be repainted to keep the warranty on that. Jackie had discussed with Jarrod to do that in the spring and get vegetation out of there and paint at the same time but kind of what they had talked about with him. Jackie Bolster would talk to the dam tender, Jarrod, about doing this. Jeremiah Theys says probably not a big deal to do it on the ice if it's safe and warm enough to do. Jackie Bolster asked Jeremiah Bolster with the addition of the LEPC minutes to have Commission sign.

Commissioner Adler moved to approve the letter to FERC. Commissioner Hinkle seconded the motion.

No public comment was received. The motion carried and passed unanimously.

MONTANA RAIL LINK ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION IN GRANITE COUNTY MT;

Commissioners Assistant to reach out to Joe Gentri and Jack Owens to set up a future meeting between Commission and MRL representatives via Zoom. To be on a future agenda.

The Session Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.