

February 25, 2025

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 Adler and Commissioner Kulaski. Commissioner McLure was excused from the meeting to attend the MACo Conference. Also attending were Commissioners Assistant Maranda Williams and Granite County Attorney Blaine Bradshaw, who attended a portion of the agenda items in person. The session was live-streamed 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 Luke Ulatowski of the Silver State Post and members of the general public, Elena Gagliano.

BOARD MINUTES: Commissioner Kulaski moved to accept the board minutes for February 18, 2025. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE;

Mail was received from Linda Smith submitting the Minutes for the Valley Cemetery District Board from the January 2025 meeting.

Electronic Mail was received from Senator Becky Beard responding to our letter last week regarding HB 369. She states she is aware and is concerned about the mechanics of the bill and asked if anyone will be at the MACo Luncheon on Wednesday. Commissioner McLure plans to attend.

Electronic mail was received from Jackie Bolster with information on Disaster Recovery Preparedness for our files.

Electronic Mail was received from Ryan Clark of RDO Equipment stating they are hosting dinners on Monday and Tuesday at MACo and would enjoy it if someone joined or could stop by a booth.

Electronic mail was received from Commissioner James Brown of Montana Commissioner of Securities and Insurance regarding flood preparations.

Electronic mail was received from FERC regarding the probable maximum Flood Report.

Electronic mail was received from Irina A. Faskianos of the Council on Foreign Relations for a webinar about Public Health Policy in Transition.

Mail was received from Butch Freide regarding Pisces, a cyber security and infrastructure security agency.

Mail was received from the Montana Department of Transportation in regard to the Yearly Fuel Tax Certification of Roadway Mileage -SFY 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano regarding the correspondence for the Council on Foreign Relations Webinar for Thursday the 27th, and she asked if anyone is going to zoom in. Commissioner Adler said yes, he's going to try to get on zoom and will get on with Jackie Bolster for the Public Health side, or Commissioner Assistant can help as well.

ROAD & BRIDGE WEEKLY REPORT & SOLID WASTE UPDATE WITH ROAD & BRIDGE SUPERINTENDENT PAUL ALT; Granite County Road & Bridge Superintendent Paul Alt updated the Commissioners on the roads during this portion of the meeting. Sanding, fixing holes in berms, and there is a little water on the roads, so navigating that and blading everything they can. No big issues, no flooding yet. Discussion was had about gravel and getting bids soon for what they need and what they would be looking at for options. Commissioner Kulaski brought up high-vis PPE and hard hats and that they should be wearing them when they get out of the rigs every time. Mag chloride was brought up; it doesn't sit well in the trucks in the winter, so they will need to order more in the spring. Commissioner Kulaski stated it does really help the roads when that gets laid down.

SOLID WASTE UPDATE; Solid waste transfer sites are quiet and doing well.

FLOOD PREPARATION; Gail Leeper joined the Commissioners for this portion of the meeting and said they have sandbags ready to go, and they are good to go. Gail Leeper said she usually just calls Paul Alt if she needs anything. Everyone agrees the melting snow seems to be soaking into the ground more than running off.

GEORGETOWN LAKE OUTFLOW; DAM TENDER'S REPORT; The lake level was reported at 6428.74 feet; 9.12" inches below full pool, according to the USGS lake level gage and the dam tender's report for the week. Commissioner Kulaski moved to get a hold of the agencies and stay at 15 CFS but potentially bump it up next week, subject to approval, which matches the estimated inflows in alignment with the current FERC Order and temporary modification consent agreement in place. Commissioner Adler seconded the motion. There were no public comments received, and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Adler brought in Ryon Covington on TCS and they discussed some to-do's and future projects, the ambulance and public health building in Drummond, platform removal from former Justice Court Office, and multiple office painting jobs in the Courthouse. Walk through with elevator guy is to happen later this week.

PUBLIC HEARING ON C-PACE PROGRAM: Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano, said she would like someone to explain the C-Pace Program as she doesn't understand it. Carolyn Jones, program manager with C-Pace (part of Montana Department of Commerce) explained the C-Pace financing program, which allows property owners to fund energy-efficient improvements like HVAC, elevators, and water systems through a special property tax assessment. Instead of a traditional commercial loan, the financing is based on the property itself, and improvements can be spread over 20 years. The program requires an energy audit to ensure cost-effectiveness and savings, and a third-party review to prevent contractors from overcharging or providing ineffective solutions. If a property

has an existing mortgage, approval is needed to add a lien. C-Pace does not involve federal or state funds but can be combined with other programs like block grants. The program is available for commercial, industrial, and agricultural properties, but not for government or single-family residences. Examples include three hotels recently financed for solar panel installations, each with an estimated 250k in improvements and expected savings of 80-120k. Lenders will assess debt/income ratios before approving financing. If a property owner defaults, the property tax process will be used to recover the funds, with senior lenders sometimes protecting their collateral. Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano with concerns about the potential impact on taxes, to which Blaine Bradshaw assured that it would not affect businesses not participating in the program. He emphasized that by opting into C-Pace, commercial businesses gain access to an additional financing option. The Stephens Hotel is considering using C-Pace, waiting for the county's adoption of the program. C-Pace offers property owners a way to fund energy-efficient improvements through a property tax assessment, helping them save on energy costs while not burdening taxpayers who do not participate.

Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano; she asked if anyone was present from the public as she said she had talked to local business owners who were interested in knowing about the program. She also asked if the County is going to be involved and taxes are going to be affected and the treasurer will be involved. Blaine Bradshaw said Ashley Todd (County Treasurer) has looked over this thoroughly and that it's not that much more work and the Treasurer's Office said they can handle it and the County can even implement charges for the administrative services, if needed down the line. Elena Gagliano questioned whether taxes would go up or not to local businesses, etc. Answer from Carolyn Jones was that any businesses owner who doesn't want to be a part of the program won't be affected. Anyone that uses it they are the ones paying for it, Blaine Bradshaw stated such as Stephen Hotel in town has interest, and local ranchers might be for pivots, etc. This is just an added funding option tool for local businesses for certain projects. Blaine Bradshaw said this is solely a state-based program, no federal dollars are used. If the county didn't go along with this program, they are just losing an option that commercial businesses could use. Stephens Hotel is potentially looking at C-Pace as part of the financing stack. They are just waiting to hear if the county adopts this program. Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano if there are any documents for C-Pace, and there should be documents on there from the past meetings Carolyn said. The Commissioner's Assistant quickly found the documents on the County's website and will email them to Elena Gagliano.

Commissioner Adler made note that Commissioner Kulaski has Commissioner McLure's proxy in writing. Commissioner Kulaski moved to approve and adopt the C-Pace program in Granite County. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion by proxy via Commissioner Kulaski. No public comment was received. The motion passed 2 to 1 with Commissioner Adler dissenting.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-5: A GRANITE COUNTY RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COUNTY C-PACE PROGRAM; Blaine Bradshaw said the only potential change the draft Resolution would be to add administrative fees for the program in the Treasurer's office, if

the Commission wanted to do that. The Commission would after seeing how the program operates after a year or so after the program is approved (if so).

Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano about the Resolution establishing C-Pace. First reading and discussion and asked if it will be on the agenda next week for a second reading. Asked if Commissioner McLure is by written proxy. Elena Gagliano would like to see it on the website; and further, she said things get lost, and the last meeting for this was in January and she would like to see everything together.

FERC QUARTERLY CALL; Jeremiah Theys joined the meeting with commissioners along with Jackie Bolster, Scott Dunkerson, and Kareem Bynoe. Kareem Bynoe mentioned they're preparing for inspection season, with inspections scheduled for August, and proposed dates will be shared. The discussion also included recent letters sent out and addressing any questions. The main topic was the Comprehensive Assessment initial call, where Jeremiah inquired about hiring a consultant for the work and whether FERC could aid. Kareem Bynoe clarified that while FERC doesn't usually do that, they can offer informal conversations. Once the county selects a consultant, FERC will review their qualifications. Jeremiah emphasized the need for an informal conversation with Doug. Jackie asked about the Public Safety Plan (PSP), and Kareem noted that FERC provides guidance on safety signage, and the PSP must be updated every 10 years. Jackie Bolster expressed concerns about the April 1, 2025, submittal deadline. No public comments were received.

SOUTHWEST MONTANA DRUG TASK FORCE INTER-AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ("MOU"); Sheriff Scott Dunkerson joined the Commissioners to discuss the SWMT Drug Task Force MOU. He explained that Granite County has always participated in this multijurisdictional agency, which costs the county \$4,000 annually. Although the direct results of this participation aren't always visible, Sheriff Dunkerson highlighted the value of being involved, referencing a recent drug bust in Butte as an example of a way in which drugs were stopped from coming into this County. Commissioner Kulaski moved to approve and sign the memorandum, and Commissioner Adler seconded. There were no public comments, and the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO 2025-7: A GRANITE COUNTY RESOLUTION ADOPTING A NEW HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN WITH ADDENDUM; Jackie Bolster said LEPC meets quarterly and emailing Crystal to see if any changes need to be made on that. Will be on next week for second reading and signing as today was just a discussion.

Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano asked if the Commission was talking about Drug Task Force. Commissioner Adler said yes, they signed the MOU as Sheriff Dunkerson was sitting there at the time and to be able to let him go. Then she asked about the Resolution 2025-7 and noted she saw some errors in the draft but didn't get time to read it thoroughly as she received it late.

The Session Adjourned at 11:28 a.m.