

**February 11, 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 McLure, Commissioner Adler, and Commissioner Kulaski attending. 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 Granite County Treasurer Ashley Todd and members of the general public, Elena Gagliano.**

**BOARD MINUTES: Commissioner McLure suggested not making the minutes verbatim but more summarized. Commissioner McLure moved to accept the board minutes for February 4, 2025. Commissioner Kulaski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**CORRESPONDENCE;**

**Electronic mail was received from Slate Architect for the re-roof building permit.**

**Electronic mail was received from MACo with a reminder to renew rates for healthcare trust.**

**Mail was received from the 2025 Liquid and Gas Pipeline Association Emergency Response Exercise.**

**Electronic mail was received from Kelly Cotton, Tim Sheehy's Outreach Director for Southwest Montana, to see if Commissioners are available to meet in person this week and also gave her contact information.**

**Electronic mail was received Blaine Bradshaw with an email chain from FWP, USFS, USFW consenting to move from 10 CFS to 12 CFS at Flint Creek Dam.**

**Electronic mail was received from Ruby Kikkert thanking the commission for letting her meet with them and their mining town/ski ideas for the future skate park.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comment was received.**

**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. Working on equipment and road patch. Trying to widen roads and frozen culverts is the next problem to deal with. They will salt and steam them, but it's 20 below and hard to do, so they'll keep working at it.**

**SOLID WASTE UPDATE; Dump piles are burned at the dumps and everything is going well. The skid steer warranty was expired but is going to be renewed for 3 years.**

**MONTANA HOUSE BILL 369; Road Maintenance Districts could be created under this Bill that would allow road maintenance district to be created while bypassing County Commissioners where funding could be taken from County road fund. Commissioner Kulaski said it's not great for rural counties or the state. MACo is against it. It takes away your bargaining power with the Forest Service, etc. Commissioner Kulaski moved to oppose the bill and have Blaine Bradshaw testify (on behalf of County Commission) in opposition to HB 369 at the House committee hearing this afternoon. Commissioner McLure seconded. If this bill passed, it would take money from other roads or divert other funds.**

**Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano asking when the next discussion is about House Bill 369. Blaine Bradshaw replied it's today at 3:00 pm in Helena in House Local Government Committee. If someone wants to testify, they could still do it, Elena Gagliano responded. Zoom or in-person are ways you can testify; Zoom, you have to sign up 2 hours prior to hearing.**

**GEORGETOWN LAKE OUTFLOW; DAM TENDER'S REPORT; The lake level was reported at 6428.69 feet; 9.72" inches below full pool, according to the USGS lake level gage and the dam tender's report for the week. Commissioner Kulaski moved to stay at 12 CFS, which matches the estimated inflows, in alignment with the current FERC Order in place as the three respective agencies consented the modification request of 12 CFS releases. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. There were no public comments, and the motion passed unanimously.**

**CLAIMS; The County Commissioners reviewed the January 2025 monthly claims. Commissioner McLure moved to accept claims from January 2025 Commissioner Kulaski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **WORKING SESSION WITH GRANITE DISPOSAL AND GRANITE COUNTY;**

**Richard Robinson (owner of private garbage hauling business, Granite Disposal), County Treasurer Ashley Todd, and Solid Waste Manager Scott Rettig, and Blaine Bradshaw, Granite County Attorney, all met with the county commissioners.**

**Ashley Todd and Blaine Bradshaw discussed an agreement that Blaine Bradshaw to address solid waste assessment for commercial properties, focusing on agreements with individual businesses to assess fees based on actual usage rather than a flat rate set by the current policy. Such modification agreements are allowed by current policy, but the model agreement needs approved by the County Commission. They discussed the process for adjusting assessments and acknowledged that changes must go through the Department of Revenue (DOR).**

**Some businesses are being under-assessed, especially when their waste output exceeds their current assigned units. For example, bars and food establishments need to be reassessed for more units. Blaine Bradshaw emphasized that businesses should only be assessed for what they actually use and Granite Disposal knows best for those businesses in which they haul garbage.**

The current policy (set units for businesses) is too generalized, and Scott Rettig has a list of properties that may need modification through agreement. However, without scales to measure waste, businesses must be asked to estimate their usage. The county faces challenges due to a lag in adding new assessments, as the Treasurer can only update them once per year.

Granite Disposal has about 1,200 units and handles around 1.3 million pounds of waste. They are updating their process, but some businesses are still questioning their assessments. Ashley Todd mentioned that most issues are resolved when businesses come in to review their assessments.

Several policy updates were proposed. Hours of operation should be updated to 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. for both transfer sites. Overage charges' sections needs clarifying language, especially regarding the 20-cent per pound charge for non-account holders. This charge applies to out-of-county customers, while local property owners are charged at 7 cents per pound. The minimum charge for "pay as you go" customers should be \$8, which covers 40 lbs at the standard rate. If customers exceed this, they pay an additional 20 cents per pound. The policy needs tweaks for clearer verbiage, especially regarding the overage charges and payment methods (cash, check, or credit card). The updated policy will be posted on the county website.

The meeting focused on updating solid waste assessment procedures, clarifying fee structures, and ensuring businesses are charged fairly based on actual usage. They also discussed refining the policy and improving communication with customers.

#### **GRANITE COUNTY AND MACO HEALTHCARE RENEWAL MEETING;**

Joanne Romasko and Vera Pederson of MACo joined the meeting with the commissioners, for the annual Healthcare renewal meeting.

Blaine Bradshaw and Scott Adler expressed concerns that Allegiance (claims handler for MACo) is being difficult to work with as denying claims because have employees who aren't understanding insurance coverage, especially with vision claims. MACo is stepping in to help process. Blaine Bradshaw suggested additional training to resolve the issues.

MACo's representatives discussed that there is a 9.8% increase in health insurance premiums, 4.7% increase in dental insurance premiums, and no increased costs associated with vision and life insurance premiums. March 15th is the renewal date, and Commissioner Kulaski moved to approval renewal with MACo Healthcare Trust for another fiscal year (25-26) and approve the Contribution Eligibility Form and Renewal Rates for the County's contribution of \$1,578 per month per employee (working 87 hours or more per month) and also including the customary life insurance provided to employees. Commissioner McLure seconded. No public comment was received. The motion passed unanimously.

There's a plan for another blood draw screening in the fall.

**USGS AGREEMENT SCOPE OF WORK; Commissioner Adler tabled this until next week in order to clarify some proposed contract language.**

**RESOLUTION 2025-6; A GRANITE COUNTY RESOLUTION OPPOSING LEGISLATION LIMITING OR PROHIBITING MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES LOBBYING ON BEHALF OF ITS MEMBERS; First reading Lobbyist on behalf of MACo. Commissioner McLure moved to adopt Resolution 2025-6 as time was of the essence (second reading waived) and constitutional rights are at stake, Opposing Legislation Limiting MACo from lobbying on behalf of its members. Commissioner Kulaski seconded the motion. No public comment was received. The motion passed unanimously.**

**OPIOID ABATEMENT REGION 4 BYLAWS; In litigation, Montana received funds from pharmaceutical companies to be used for certain health projects and the state was divided into opioid abatement regions for each committee to hear health project proposals and decide upon them. Granite County is in Region 4 with Blaine Bradshaw having been appointed as the County's representative in 2023. If people have projects, they submit them through to abatement region. Public Health in Granite County may submit a proposal. Commissioner Kulaski moved to accept the Opioid Abatement Region 4 Bylaws. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion.**

**Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano about the date on the last page of the Bylaws being January 2024. Blaine Bradshaw said the Region 4 Abatement Board hadn't been formally organized as there was some unanticipated delay in getting people together, and that the date was correct.**

**CLOSED SESSION; The Commission went into a closed session for a personnel matter.**

**The Session Adjourned at 1:06 pm**