

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS
MEAGHER COUNTY, MONTANA

Tuesday

December 9th, 2025

8:35 a.m.- 1:22 p.m.

Commissioner Chambers

Meeting Called to Order:

Chairman Hurwitz called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Commissioners Present:

Chairman Ben Hurwitz. Vice Chairman Errol Galt and Commissioner Rod Brewer were present for the meeting.

ACTION #1

Chairman Hurwitz moved to approve the minutes from December 2nd, 2025. Commissioner Brewer seconded. A vote was taken and passed.

Public Comment:

Clint Freeze entered the chambers at 8:30 a.m.

Freeze came in during public comment to discuss the status of his septic application. Clerk and Recorder Liv West was able to answer questions that he had.

Library Mill Levy Resolution-Rachel Wahlstrom

Library Co-Director Rachel Wahlstrom entered the chambers at 8:40 a.m.

Friends of the Library Betsy Hamann entered the chambers at 8:40 a.m.

Treasurer Dayna Ogle entered the chambers at 8:46 a.m.

Wahlstrom met with the Commissioners to discuss the library's plan to pursue a mill levy in June 2026. A committee will be established to lead community outreach and campaign efforts in support of the levy. The library board is scheduled to meet this evening and will inform the Commissioners of the meeting's outcome, including the finalized date for the mill levy.

County Attorney-Burt Hurwitz

Crime Victim Advocate Laura Taylor entered the chambers at 8:55 a.m.

County Attorney Burt Hurwitz entered the chambers at 9:01 a.m.

Clerk and Recorder Liv West entered the chambers at 9:13 a.m.

Taylor distributed Grant payment requests to the Commissioners for Meagher County DES and Meagher County Victim/Witness Advocate. Taylor will start working on the grant in January, and it is a 2-year grant.

County Attorney Hurwitz stated that in the last month, he has had meetings about fire reorganization discussions and with the Rodeo Club members to get prepared for the future of the rodeo grounds.

County Attorney Hurwitz updated the Commissioners on the ongoing road litigation with Teig and Crazy M. Hurwitz added he currently has five cases for Musselshell County, two embezzlement investigations in the county, and one sexual assault investigation that may involve some travel.

Discussion of CFO Position

Treasurer Dayna Ogle entered the chambers at 9:27 a.m.

County Attorney Burt Hurwitz entered the chambers at 9:01 a.m.

Victim Witness Advocate Laura Taylor entered the chambers at 8:55 a.m.

Clerk and Recorder Liv West entered the chambers at 9:13 a.m.

County Attorney Hurwitz informed the Commissioners that staff members agree the current staffing level—six employees across the three offices—remains necessary. Additionally, it was concluded that the Finance position should be overseen by an elected official.

The six current positions would be Clerk and Recorder and Clerk and Recorder's Deputy, Treasurer and Treasurer's Deputy, CFO and Finance Assistant. Errol Galt encouraged discussion on farming out payroll and HR. West suggested outsourcing AFR, however, things would need to be finalized before outsourcing.

The CFO position is currently vacant and must be advertised internally at a minimum. Hurwitz noted that there will be additional financial considerations, including costs for training and for assistance in the Treasurer's office. The CFO position will also need out-of-town and in house training.

The CFO position is on the Agenda for December 16th, 2025.

ACTION #2

Vice-Chairman Galt made a motion to advertise the CFO position in-house. Commissioner Brewer seconded. A vote was taken and passed.

Health Nurse Report-Eva Kerr

County Health Nurse Eva Kerr, RN entered the chambers at 9:55 a.m.

Kerr distributed to the Commissioners the report from November 2025 for the Meagher County Health Department. Immunizations for the month, regular vaccinations and flu vaccines continue to be given. Kerr traveled to Fort Benton for meetings and education training in November 2025. The new state grant for Avian Flu and Respiratory Illnesses must be spent by mid-January. Kerr updated the Commissioners on Avian Flu, nebulizer machines for the clinic, and measles cases.

Fire Reorganization Discussion

Fire Chief Ron Teig entered the chambers at 10:08 a.m.

Fire Solutions Jess Secrest entered the chambers at 10:19 a.m.

Greg Philpot entered the chambers at 10:19 a.m.

County Attorney Burt Hurwitz entered the chambers at 10:27 a.m.

Attorney Kate Dinwiddie entered the chambers at 10:27 a.m.

Clerk and Recorder Liv West entered the chambers at 10:27 a.m.

Ron Frisbie entered the chambers at 10:27 a.m.

Crime Victim Advocate Laura Taylor entered the chambers at 11:14 a.m.

Attorney Dinwiddie started discussions stating that a legal description has come in as of yesterday. Previously, there was discussion about creating a fire district outside of Martinsdale and the existing fire districts for the remainder of the county. It is a petition process that takes 40% or more of real property owners and 40% of the taxable value. The Commissioners then get to create the fire district after adequate notice. The first step has been accomplished in receiving a legal description, the next step is to determine what budget we are looking at for the non-voted mills for the fire district.

Dinwiddie discussed with the Commissioners the benefits of creating a fire district, consolidation of fire districts and service areas, a fire district budget, Volunteer Fire Fighters Retirement, ISO's area, and interlocal agreements.

Frisbie, Teig, Hurwitz, Dinwiddie, Secrest and Commissioners discussed working on a financial report to bring to the public for starting a fire district area.

Hurwitz proposed a \$150,000 budget. He suggested a full-time employee to do paperwork, compiling, grant writing, training budget, etc.

Dinwiddie will take the information she received from the legal description and work with Clerk and Recorder West to create a draft petition for the landowners. County Attorney Hurwitz, County Representatives, and Commissioners will review the draft and then she can create a press release promoting the fire district and benefits.

Frisbie added the need of a medium-duty truck for fire needs. He is currently working on possible grants through the Montana Tourism Grant or Ag West Grant. However, if the grant application is unsuccessful, he inquired whether the county would be willing to share the cost of purchasing one. The estimated cost of the truck is between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

The next meeting will be tentatively scheduled for February 10th, 2026.

Clerk and Recorder Update-Fees and Policy Review-Liv West

Clerk and Recorder Liv West entered the chambers at 11:38 a.m.

County Attorney Burt Hurwitz entered the chambers at 11:38 a.m.

Victim Witness Advocate Laura Taylor entered the chambers at 11:14 a.m.

West distributed to the Commissioners the current fees that were set in 2021. Commissioners reviewed West's research and discussed increasing fees. Legislation has increased the amount we can currently charge for some services.

West requested the Commissioners make a resolution that will include fees for public information records requests.

Rodeo Club Meeting

Clerk and Recorder Liv West entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Victim Witness Advocate Laura Taylor entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

County Attorney Burt Hurwitz entered the chambers at 11:58 a.m.

Extension Agent Madisen Lindsey entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Mayor Rick Nelson entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

County Planning Board Member Kathy Hochstrat entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Great West Engineering Kevin Angland entered the chambers at 11:58 a.m.

Representing 4-H Rachel Wahlstrom entered the chambers at 11:59 a.m.

Rodeo Club President Shane Sereday entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Rodeo Club Member Jerry Paugh entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Stewardship Council Cassie Coburn entered the chambers at 12:03 p.m.

Great West Engineering Ryan Holm entered the chambers VIA ZOOM at 12:08 a.m.

Jay Berg entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Judy Berg entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Trent Townsend entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Ron Burns entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

4-H Vance Voldseth entered the chambers at 12:00 p.m.

Sereday started the discussion stating that 5-10 years ago, the rodeo grounds could hold all spectators. Now the number of spectators and the quality of contestants have increased. Different options have been explored for parking; however, the hospital grounds are no longer available for parking space. Horse trailer sizes have also drastically increased the need for significant parking as well.

At the November meeting with Commissioners, different land options were discussed and explored. Sereday stated they are considering moving the rodeo grounds to the land near Castle Mountain Grocery. The projected date for everything to be finished would be 2027. The sellers of the land have accepted the Rodeo Club's offer and closing is set for the end of January.

The discussion continued to cover several key topics, including the possibility of constructing a street that provides direct access to the hospital, moving current rodeo equipment, selling 78 lots at the existing rodeo grounds for affordable housing, and using Harmon trust funds to acquire the land for the new rodeo grounds. Additional considerations included liability issues, utilities, insurance, and determining ownership of any new buildings. The group also addressed plans for relocating the 4-H buildings, ongoing maintenance responsibilities, and establishing clear timelines for the projects.

Coburn will look into vehicles to make the existing rodeo grounds available for affordable housing.

Once the plan is set, Great West Engineering will look into drainage, provide a master plan, infrastructure costs, where everything is situated on the land, and access to the new hospital.

ACTION #3

Vice-Chairman Galt moved to move the Rodeo Club Grounds Discussion for December 16th, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. Commissioner Brewer seconded. A vote was taken and passed.

Legislative Update-Thomas Manninen

Thomas Manninen entered the chambers at 12:57 p.m.

Manninen gave the Commissioners updates on the recent government shutdown, the federal land management (specifically wildfire policies), AFRC, and senator stewardship with the New Mexico Senator for better access to public lands and land management policies.

Claims Approved:

Commissioners were presented with Checks #63166 through Checks #63188 for the amount of \$14,183.90.

Commissioners were presented with Electronic Checks #-99393 through Checks #-99391 for the amount of \$2,001.03.

The total amount for Claim Checks: \$16,184.93. All Checks were signed as presented.

Meeting Adjourned:

Meeting was adjourned at 1:22 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Tuesday, December 16th, 2025.

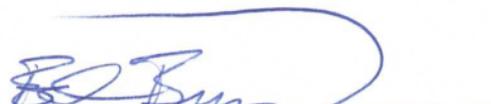

CLERK & RECORDER


CHAIRMAN

SEAL




VICE-CHAIRMAN


COMMISSIONER

Note: Minutes taken by Clerk to the Commission Briana Frasier.
Distributed December 16th, 2025 to Chairman Hurwitz, Vice-Chairman Galt, Commissioner Brewer, and Clerk & Recorder Liv A. West.