

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

Tuesday

January 21st, 2025

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Met in Commissioner's Chambers

Meeting Called to Order:

Chairman Hurwitz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Commissioners Present:

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

Minutes:

ACTION #1

Commissioner Hurwitz moved to approve the minutes from January 14th, 2025. Commissioner Brewer seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the minutes were approved.

Library Report – Rachel Wahlstrom

Library Director Rachel Wahlstrom entered the chambers at 8:55 a.m.

TJ Paulsen of Western Skies Construction has contacted Wahlstrom and will start repairing the library ceiling next week.

Wahlstrom stated the library is already gearing up for summer reading program by ordering supplies. Wahlstrom also informed the commissioners that the conference room at the library is getting regular use. Wahlstrom stated the library does not charge for the use of the conference room.

Wahlstrom stated the Library Board has adopted new by-laws and will bring them to the courthouse to be stored for permanent record.

Treasurer Report – Maura Kusek

Kusek requested Commission Clerk Jennifer Deems present the Commissioners with the November and December Treasurer's Cash Report for signature.

Fire Reorganization Discussion

Meagher County Fire Chief Jake Kusek, County Attorney Burt Hurwitz, White Sulphur Springs Mayor Rick Nelson, City Council Member Ron Frisbie, Chief Finance Officer Dayna Ogle, Secrest Fire Solutions Jess Secrest, Clerk & Recorder Liv West, City Council Member Rick Ellison entered the chambers at 10:00 a.m.

Chief Finance Officer Dayna Ogle presented scenarios on how combining city and county fire departments would affect tax bills for both city and county residents. Secrest stated that combining the departments would allow for better management and, with the increasing workload, having a full-time fire chief would be beneficial. Additionally, there is a need for updated equipment over time.

Frisbie mentioned that a combined department would be more eligible for grants and noted that the average number of responders on scene varies from 4 to 7 firefighters, depending on the time of year and the nature of the call.

Commissioner Hurwitz asked about the city's need to update equipment. Frisbie added that regardless of whether the departments combine, the city will need funding for new fire equipment. Kusek pointed out that while updating County trucks would be nice, the County is currently well-equipped.

It was noted that the majority of fire calls are for the county, Frisbie stated that about 50% of volunteer firefighters live within city limits, while the other 50% live outside city limits.

Attorney Hurwitz suggested that this could be an opportunity to integrate existing fire districts into one county wide fire service area. Kusek mentioned that Meagher County has mutual aid agreements with Broadwater, Park, and Lewis and Clark Counties, but it is unclear if there is mutual aid with Wheatland County.

Discussions will resume on February 18th at 9:30 a.m.

Airport Snow Removal – Kurt Burns

Airport Board Chairman Kurt Burns, Jack Galt, Hospital Board Member Bill Galt, County Road Supervisor Jake Kusek, White Sulphur Springs Mayor Rick Nelson, Mountainview Medical Center CEO Rob Brandt, and Hospital Board Member Shane Sereday entered the chambers at 11:00 a.m.

Airport Board Chairman Kurt Burns introduced Jack Galt to the Commissioners. Jack Galt requested to be a member of the Airport Board.

ACTION #2

RESOLUTION 24.25 #55

Commissioner Brewer moved to approve Jack Galt to the Airport Board, and Commissioner Hurwitz seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed. Issue is hereby resolved.

Burns noted that during the last significant snow storm, the airport runway was not plowed. He mentioned that upon contacting Road Supervisor Jake Kusek, he was informed that the airport was not a priority compared to school bus routes and mail routes. Commissioner Galt proposed that the priority list be reconsidered. It was also suggested that the Airport Board be given the authority to contact an alternate service to plow the runway if the County Road Department is unavailable.

Sereday raised a concern about why county roads are not plowed on weekends, emphasizing that during major snow events, plowing should occur as needed.

Discussion will resume at the County Commission meeting on February 4th 2025 at 9:30 a.m.

ACTION #3

RESOLUTION FY 24.25 #56

Commissioner Galt moved to give the Airport Board authority to contact an alternate service to plow the Airport runway in the event the County Road Department is not available.

Commissioner Hurwitz seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed. The issue is hereby resolved.

Public Comment:

No Public Comment.

Claims Approved:

Commissioners were presented with Check #62261 through Check #62273 totaling \$13,298.44 and Electronic Check # -99713 through #-9710 totaling \$1,162.14. All Checks were signed as presented.

Meeting Adjourned:

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Next Meeting:


Commissioners are scheduled to meet Tuesday, February 4th, 2025.



CLERK & RECORDER

SEAL




CHAIRMAN


VICE-CHAIRMAN


COMMISSIONER

Note: Minutes taken by Clerk to the Commission Jennifer Deems
Distributed February 4th, 2025 to Chairman Hurwitz, Vice Chair Galt, and Commissioner Brewer, and Clerk & Recorder Liv West.