

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

**Wednesday**

July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Met in Commissioner's Chambers

**Meeting Called to Order:**

Chair Brewer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Commissioners Present:**

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

**Minutes:**

**ACTION #1**

Commissioner Galt moved to approve the minutes from June 20<sup>th</sup> 2023

**Road/ Fire Report – Jake Kusek:**

Rescheduled for July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 9 a.m.

**Sheriff Report – Jon Lopp:**

Sheriff Lopp entered the chambers at 9:30 a.m.

Sheriff Lopp he had reviewed the current Law Enforcement Interlocal Agreement with the City of White Sulphur Springs. The current agreement was signed in 2019 and automatically renews unless appropriate notice has been given and the Public Safety Committee has been given an opportunity to resolve any differences. The Meagher County Sheriffs Office (MCSO) can submit a proposed budget for amounts in excess of \$75,000 on or before May 1 of each year.

Lopp would like to update the current agreement to include the increase in costs associated with current law enforcement activities.

Lopp reported on Legislative issues affecting law enforcement, specifically the ban on synthetic marijuana and the question of how distinguish between marijuana (legal) and synthetic marijuana.

Lopp reported in the month of June there were 5 different individuals arrested charges with felony crimes. Two of the five felons are incarcerated in the Broadwater County Jail. Lopp reported the trial date for Dominic Driscoll has been set for December 11, 2023, however it is very possible the date will get changed. Driscoll will remain in the custody at the Broadwater County Jail until his bond hearing, all costs associated with his stay in Broadwater County will be born by Meagher County. Once a defendant is sentenced they become a ward of the state and all costs associated with the incarceration are born by the State of Montana.

Lopp requested to apply for a credit card for the Sheriff Office. The credit card will be used for ordering supplies and hotel reservation for trainings. The Commission agreed as long as all of the required back up documentation would be provided with each claim.

Lopp reported he will have to special order the ammunition for the .223 rifles received in the firearms trade with Bird LLC, Chris Bird. The rifles are made to accommodate a law enforcement vehicle and have a shorter barrel and require a different load than a longer rifle.

Lopp the reported the Under-Sheriff Jerami West vehicle has to get the back window replaced.

Commissioner Hurwiz inquired about the recently purchased drone. Lopp stated that not all of his pilots have been certified to fly the drone. Two out of the five pilots are fully trained; however, they still need to pass the FAA Unmanned Aircraft General – Small (UAG) test.

## **ACTION #2**

### **Resolution FY 23.24 - #1**

Brewer moved to allow the Sheriff office to apply for a Sheriff Office credit card.

Commissioner Galt seconded. A vote was taken and passed. The issue is therefore resolved.

### **Ambulance Board Updated RFP Apgar Ambulance:**

No one in attendance.

EMT Jay Kolbe was contacted by phone and he reached out to Apgar Ambulance Service regarding the updated arrival date of the 2023 or newer Type 1 Dodge 4X4 SLT 4500 diesel Ambulance. Apgar stated the new ambulance will be ready to put into service by July of 2025. Finance Officer Dayna Ogle will reach out to County Attorney Burt Hurwitz to amend the RFP with Apgar Ambulance Service.

### **Mountainview Medical Center, Harmon Request – Rob Brandt:**

Rob Brandt entered the chambers at 10:50 a.m.

Mountainview Medical Center CEO Rob Brandt opened the meeting by giving an update on the new hospital project. In order for the project to move forward with the USDA funding they secured, MVMC will need to provide a guaranteed maximum price from the contractor. Brandt expects to have that number by next week and construction would then start in September 2023.

Brandt then gave an overview of the proposed Paul R. Hill Community Center Building. The estimated cost for the building is \$3 million. The building would have multiple sound proof rooms for community members to use as study rooms or to take online tests along with an office space for the County Health Nurse and a large meeting area with a prep kitchen. The meeting area would have an occupancy level of 100-150 people. This would allow organizations to hold larger training or gathering in White Sulphur Springs. At this time MVMC is not planning to charge the public for the use of the building. Brandt asked for a donation of the Harmon Fund to leverage the project. The value in the Harmon Fund is \$1.7 million and MVMC has secured \$1 million in donations from Michael & Mary Porter. Brandt stated MVMC has not collected any hospital mills from the taxpayers of Meagher County since 2012. Brandt estimated that to be roughly \$2 million not collected. Commissioner Galt inquired about the plan for the current hospital building. Brandt stated they are not looking at selling the building. They would like to utilize the building as long as it has useful life left in it. Brandt stated they are looking at possibly converting the current nursing home portion of the building into an assisted living facility, converting the basement into a child care facility, converting the clinic area into office space and possibly creating a Central Montana Study lab utilizing the current lab and imaging equipment.

Commission Hurwitz expressed the need for workforce housing and utilizing the Harmon Fund in some type of revolving loan program for that need. Commissioners Brewer and Galt stated they might be willing to donate some of the Harmon Fund but not the entire amount.

Commissioner Galt stated he has some fund-raising ideas that might work for the Community Building. Galt will research the possibilities.

**Extension Update – Makayla Paul:**

Extension Agent Makayla Paul entered the chambers at 11:30

Paul opened by reporting construction on the 4H Beef barn started on Monday and construction should be complete by the end of this week. The electrician will complete the wiring in the building by next week.

Paul continued with a 4H update. Fair clean up day is scheduled for July 15<sup>th</sup>. The 4H Horse show will be on July 18 and the 4H Fair and Livestock auction will be on July 20<sup>th</sup>. Paul stated 45 out of 54 members have projects entered in the fair. Paul will be attending 4H congress next week with 5 county members. The 4H clubs hosted a community BBQ over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and entered a float in the parade and had 4H members present the colors at the beginning of the parade.

Paul attended an Ag Update in Miles City where she toured a feedlot, winery and For Keogh. Paul has seen an increase in office consultations related to soil testing, diseases in gardens and nitrate testing.

Paul will be attending The National Association of County Agriculture Agents Conference will be held on August 12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> in Des Moines IA. MSU will pay for all cost associated with the training with the exception of meals. The conference will be held in Montana in 2025.

**Lunch**

**Public Comment:**

No Public Comment.

**Claims Approved:**

Commissioners were presented with Claim Check # 60429 through Check #60469 totaling 458,990.86. All Checks were signed as presented.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

**Next Meeting:**

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**CLERK & RECORDER**

**CHAIRMAN**

**SEAL**

**VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**COMMISSIONER**

Note: Minutes taken by Clerk to the Commission Rebekah Luchterhand  
Distributed July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to Chairman Brewer, Vice Chair Hurwitz, and Commissioner Galt, and Clerk & Recorder West.