

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS**

**MEAGHER COUNTY, MONTANA**

**Tuesday**

November 14th, 2023

8:30 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.

Met in Commissioner's Chambers

**Meeting Called to Order:**

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

**Commissioners Present:**

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

**Claims Review / Minutes Review:**

**ACTION #1**

Commissioner Hurwitz moved to approve the Minutes from November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Commissioner Galt seconded the motion. A vote was taken and minutes were approved.

**County Attorney Report – Burt Hurwitz**

County Attorney Burt Hurwitz entered the chambers at 9:15 a.m.

Attorney Hurwitz presented a Letter of Protest that will be sent to the Department of Revenue with our monthly disbursement indicating the protested tax difference between 95 mills vs. 77.89 mills for the Commissioners to approve. The Montana Association of Counties (MACo), the State of Montana, and the Montana Quality Education Coalition (MQEC) are all urging the Supreme Court to rule on the School Equalization Mills by May 2024 at the latest. Hurwitz mentioned that there is a lawsuit pending, requesting the Courts to rule on whether local governments are the only entities that can levy mills on county tax payers. Mill levies are subject to MCA 15-10-420, which authorizes the amount that can be levied. Dillon Cole, Senior Property Tax Analyst for the State of Montana, is responsible for calculating the state School Equalization Mills. Cole stated in the declaration filed in the Fourth Judicial Court, Missoula County that he uses the same Determination of Tax Revenue and Mill Levy Limitation spreadsheet that Local governments use to determine the maximum amount of mills that can be levied each fiscal year. Galt inquired about the inflationary increase. Ogle responded that the inflation factor used in the spreadsheet is 2.46%. Galt stated that if the court rules that only the 77.89 mills should be levied the schools will still get the 2.46% increase. Following the last two meetings with DA Davidson and Department of Commerce representatives, Attorney Hurwitz spoke with Jerry Grebenc, Great West Engineering, regarding next steps for the affordable housing discussions. Grebenc stated the next step is to apply for a CBDG Planning Grant. The CBDG Grant application is due in March. Grebenc stated it would cost \$5,500 to have Great West prepare the application, including two in-person meetings.

**Action #2**

Brewer moved to allocate \$5500 to Great West Engineering to apply for a CBDG Planning Grant. Commissioner Hurwitz seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed.

Hurwitz stated that he and Treasurer, Maura Kusek have interviewed 3 good candidates for the DMV/Victim Advocate position but have not made a decision. Hurwitz stated he is going to meet with Finance Officer Dayna Ogle to discuss budget and they may come with a proposal next week.

**Health Nurse – Eva Kerr**

Health Nurse Eva Kerr was not able to attend the Commission meeting due to an accident.

**Building update – Rosie Spaulding**

Rosie Spaulding and Bill Dutton entered the chambers at 10:25 a.m.

Spaulding presented the Commissioners with an updated bid of \$20,939 from Frontline Glass to replace the Courthouse front door. Spaulding stated Frontline Glass reduced the bid by \$2,155 due to our continued business with them. Frontline Glass would require the County to pay half the cost up front and the balance when the job is completed.

**ACTION #3**

Commissioner Hurwitz moved to accept the updated bid of \$20,939 from Frontline Glass to replace the courthouse front doors with a deadline of June 1, 2024. Commissioner Galt seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed. The bid from Frontline Glass was accepted.

Spaulding inquired about getting someone here to shovel in the afternoon when Spaulding and Dutton have gone home for the day. The Commission suggested reaching out to Brent Ramsey (seasonal weed sprayer) to help with shoveling on snow days. Dutton or Spaulding will contact Ramsey.

**Southwest Financial – Julie Blockey**

Julie Blockey attended by Zoom at 12:24

Blockey presented the Principal Renewal rates for Dental and Vision 2024. Blockey inquired if employees were satisfied with Principal. Commissioners stated they have not heard any comments regarding the plan good or bad. Blockey informed the Commissioners the Dental plan will increase slightly and the Vision plan will stay the same. Blockey will have one of her staff set up open enrollment toward the end of November.

**Cemetery Report – Rosie Spaulding**

Board Member Rosie Spaulding, Sexton Mike Marion and Board Member Kathy Palmer entered the chambers at 12:50 p.m.

Spaulding presented the Commission with the minutes from the Cemetery Board Meeting. The Cemetery Board discussed ways to limit the cost of overtime for the Sexton to be frugal with their budget. The Board also discussed increasing Cemetery fees and presented the Commission with the proposed increases. The Commission had no objections to the changes. Palmer stated the new fees will go into effect on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

**ACTION #4**

**Resolution FY 23.24 #50**

Commissioner Brewer moved to accept the new Cemetery fees. Commissioner Hurwitz seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed. The new Cemetery fees were accepted. The issue is hereby resolved.

**Municipal Election Canvas – Liv West**

Election Administrator Liv West and Chief Finance Officer Dayna Ogle entered the Chambers at 1:30 p.m.

Commissioner Brewer, Commissioner Hurwitz and Chief Finance Officer Dayna Ogle Canvassed the Municipal Election. There were no errors found.

**Public Comment / Claims Approval:**

No Public Comment.

**Claims Approved:**

Commissioners were presented with Claim Check# 60866 through Check# 60881 totaling \$25,915.39. All Checks were signed as presented

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

**Next Meeting:**

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

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**CLERK & RECORDER**

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**CHAIRMAN**

**SEAL**

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**VICE-CHAIRMAN**

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**COMMISSIONER**