

APRIL 4, 2023 TUESDAY

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 8:00 AM in their office at the Courthouse. Those present were Commissioner Larry Hendrickson (Chair), Commissioner Justin Wickum, and Commissioner Joette Woods (phone).

MSU EXTENSION

Jesse Fulbright, MSU Extension Agent, was in to update the Commissioners on a mental health flier that the Extension Office came up with. Jesse went to represent Liberty County at the Marias Fair Board meeting. They plan on leaving the fair in the same week in July.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Charlie Tilman came in to hand in his letter of resignation. His last day will be April 14th.

LEPC

The Commissioners attended the monthly LEPC meeting. The main topic of discussion was the runoff from snowpack in the hills. This could potentially flood through the Cottonwood Creek here in town. We will be looking to advertise potential hazards and how to mitigate the flooding. The Town of Chester will provide sand and bags to fill the sand in for the citizens to fill if they choose.

LIBRARY

Julie Erickson, Librarian, was in to update the Commissioners on the bathroom project she is investing in at the library. She found an architect to draw up the plans, and asked the Commissioners to approve taking some extra money out of her CIP fund. Motion to approve allowing the Library using their capital improvement fund, made by Commissioner Woods. Commissioner Wickum seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Robert Padmos, County Attorney, was in to update the Commissioners on the issue pending at the airport with a structure. He updated the Commissioners about the people incarcerated and how that is affecting the budget considering one is a juvenile.

TOWN OF CHESTER

Terry Tyler, Town Manager, was in to let the Commissioners know the Town will be putting sand on Adams Street for people to fill sandbags for their personal property should Cottonwood Creek overflow.

WEED DEPARTMENT

Jim Ghekerie, 911 and Weed Department Head, requested for the Commissioners to sign the surplus property program as authorized signers for him to bid on equipment. Commissioner Woods made a motion to sign and Commissioner Wickum seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor. He is waiting to hear from the Bureau of Land Management on grant monies for the Weed Department.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

Nick Erickson, Sheriff, was in to inform the Commissioners that the computers in the Sheriff's Office have to be updated at least to Windows 7 in order to be able to run the radios.

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH OPPORTUNITY

The Commissioners met with Many Rivers Whole Health to listen to a presentation about a mental health counseling opportunity they would like to provide for Liberty County. The county will hopefully be providing a space for them to come and provide mental health services.

VOCA

Amy Jacques, VOCA, was in to ask the Commissioners about the USDA grants involving new county structures, this includes courthouses and sheriff offices.

SENIOR CENTER

Glenda Hanson, Senior Center Director, was in to update the Commissioners on happenings at the Senior Center. She is still waiting on her grant buses to come.

JUSTICE COURT

Chris Case, Justice of the Peace, was in to update the Commissioners on his office happenings. The Commissioners are considering moving the Justice of the Peace position from a half time to a three-quarter time position.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

APRIL 5th, 2023 WEDNESDAY

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 8:00 AM in their office at the Courthouse. Those present were Commissioner Larry Hendrickson (Chair), Commissioner Justin Wickum, and Commissioner Joette Woods.

COURTHOUSE FIRE SAFETY

The Commissioners and Department Heads replaced the smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors throughout the county buildings. This came about after realizing that some were not working properly.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

Kyle Heppner, Undersheriff, was in to visit with the Commissioners about the needs for the Sheriff Office. We are looking for grant money to get some upgrades. He discussed the radio issues they have been having.

PAYROLL

Payroll Specialist Jordan Miller presented payroll to the Commissioners for them to review and approve. Upon review, Commissioner Wickum made a motion to approve payroll. Commissioner Woods seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

COURTHOUSE CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

The Commissioners called WWCE about an updated price on a courthouse build. WWCE will contact the architect Scott Cromwell from Slate Engineering and they will get back to us next week.

RESOLUTION 23-09 B

Commissioner Woods made a motion to approve resolution 23-09 B Requesting Authority for Distributing of County Minimum Allocating Grants for Water and Sewer Infrastructure Projects. Commissioner Wickum seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

Resolution 23-09

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING AUTHORITY FOR DISTRIBUTING OF COUNTY MINIMUM ALLOCATION GRANTS FOR WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS; Section 4 of Chapter 401 of the Montana Session Laws of 2021 through House Bill 632 Section 4 allocated the amount of \$150 million of the coronavirus state fiscal recovery funds to be used to provide minimum allocation grants for water and sewer infrastructure projects eligible for funding under the American Rescue Plan;

WHEREAS; The amount a local government is eligible to receive in water and sewer infrastructure grants under this section is in the same proportion and using the same ratios provided for in 15-70-101 (2)(b), (2)(c), and (3) giving county a minimum allocation of \$453,935.00.

WHEREAS; Montana's counties do not generally own or operate water and sewer infrastructure;

WHEREAS; Grant funds must be applied for by November 1, 2022 and awarded or in a pending status by January 1, 2023.

WHEREAS; Because counties generally do not own water and sewer infrastructure, HB 632 Section 4 allocated grant funds for qualifying water and sewer infrastructure projects within the counties for which it was allocated, but that any local government eligible to receive minimum allocation funds under HB 632 Section 4 could apply for and pledge matching funds for the counties proportion.

WHEREAS; (CITY, TOWN) is local government as defined in HB 632 Section 4 and has committed to request the funds by November 1, 2022, if the county's allocation made eligible to them and the county has determined this to be a priority use of the allocated funds.

THEREFORE, NOW BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. County has determined that the proposed project is eligible as a minimum allocation project and is a high priority within the county and;
2. By this resolution, Liberty County requests the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation allow, through its developed application and distribution processes, (CITY/Town) \$150,000.00 of its share of the allocated minimum allocation funds for the City of Chester Sewer Project.

Larry H. Hendrickson

Justin Wickum

Commissioner
ATTEST: *David Gittington*



CEMETERY BOARD

Jesse Fulbright, Cemetery Board, was in to update the Commissioners on a Cemetery Board issue.

PREDATOR CONTROL

The predator control helicopter will be in the area this week to help take care of some coyote problems up north by the hills.

CLAIMS

Claims Specialist Monica Serrato presented claims for the Commissioners to review and approve. Upon review, Commissioner Wickum made a motion to approve claims. Commissioner Woods seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

COTTONWOOD CREEK

The Commissioners visited the portion of the Cottonwood Creek bed that runs through town. They are trying to help clean out the worst spots that may slow water due to run-off.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Public Health Nurses stopped in to update the Commissioners on their junior high vaccination clinic they put on today at CJI. They also gave the opportunity for citizens to come down and update or receive any vaccines they need to be current.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

APRIL 11th 2023 TUESDAY

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 8:00 AM in their office at the Courthouse. Those present were Commissioner Larry Hendrickson (Chair), Commissioner Justin Wickum, and Commissioner Joette Woods.

DISASTER/EMERGENCY SERVICES

Kayla Johnson, DES, visited with the Commissioners to discuss the flood. She is wondering if we will use our emergency mills that are available for disaster and emergency purposes. After discussion, the Commissioners have decided to declare use of the emergency mills available for disaster in Liberty County. Commissioner Woods made a motion to adopt the Liberty County Disaster Declaration Resolution 23-09. Commissioner Wickum seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor. These funds will go to help fix roads that have had water over them and or washouts that will need maintained.

RESOLUTION 23-09
LIBERTY COUNTY DISASTER DECLARATION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Snow melt flooding has caused severe damage to county roads within the County on April 9, 2023; and

WHEREAS, restoration of these roads is essential to ensure the healthy, safety and welfare of residents of the County; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Commissioners that a Disaster is hereby declared pursuant to Section 10-3-403, MCA, because expenditures for repair and damaged facilities will be beyond the financial capability of the County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that there shall be appropriated immediately to the Emergency Fund Number 2260 and amount equivalent to two (2) mills on the taxable valuation of the County outside the incorporated municipalities, pursuant to Section 10-3-405, MCA. Said two (2) mills will be levied during fiscal year 2023 and be utilized for restoring services and repairing facilities damaged by the flooding.

BUT IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of the resolution be filed with the County Clerk and Recorder, County Assessor and the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services Division in Helena.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Liberty Board of County Commissioners this 11th day of April, 2023.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



ATTEST:

Davin Buffington
Davin Buffington
Liberty County Clerk and Recorder

[Signature]
Chairman

[Signature]
Commissioner

[Signature]
Commissioner

The Commissioners were in Monday helping the town sandbag and prepare for Cottonwood Creek to rise.

The Commissioners and local DES updated the Liberty County Procurement Policy. The changes included raising the cost before putting work or items for repair out to bid. Commissioner Woods made a motion to approve the changes and include updates. Commissioner Wickum seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

SENIOR CENTER

Glenda Hanson, Senior Center Director, was in to update the Commissioners on the buses and the ADA-compliant van. They have not been able to get these vehicles since the 2020 pandemic.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

The county has had several road closures due to spring flooding.

JUSTICE COURT

Chris Case, Justice of the Peace, was in to provide updates to the Commissioners on his office.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

The Sheriff Department has been helping to check roads in town. Sheriff Nick Erickson provided updates to the Commissioners.

WEED DEPARTMENT

Jim Ghekerie, Weed Department Director, was in to let the Commissioners know he that is looking into online vehicle sites as possible resources for purchasing a new county vehicle should the decision be made to upgrade the aging county car. He is also looking for a trailer for the Weed Department,

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Robert Padmos, County Attorney, was in to update the Commissioners on some of the issues happening in his office.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

APRIL 12th 2023 WEDNESDAY

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 8:00 AM in their office at the Courthouse. Those present were Commissioner Larry Hendrickson (Chair) (via phone), Commissioner Justin Wickum, and Commissioner Joette Woods.

MSU EXTENSION

Jesse Fulbright, MSU Extension Agent, was in to inform the Commissioners that MSU Extension Director Cody Stone will be traveling through Chester on April 13th.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

The Road Department is out flagging some of the roads that are still rough until they can get to them and smooth them out with graders. They are hoping to get a maintainer to the rough spots this week.

HOUSE BILL 442

Commissioner Woods will be in Helena on Friday April 14th to testify in support of HB 442. This bill would give all counties access to tax money from marijuana sales in Montana which would go towards county road maintenance.

COTTONWOOD CREEK UPDATE

The water level in town around Cottonwood Creek came up a little bit in the morning but it has started falling. This is a good sign that there will be minimal or no flooding to homes by the creek through town, as it is believed that the level has already peaked.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Robert Padmos, County Attorney, was in to visit with the Commissioners about some upcoming events.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND DISASTER/EMERGENCY SERVICES

Public Health and DES came in to update the Commissioners on the Coop-Cog that they are working on. This is a continuity of operations. Kayla Johnson, DES, dropped off the updated procurement. The Commissioners will finalize and adopt it next week. Kayla also dropped off the DES budget for the next fiscal year's funds.

JOPLIN RESIDENT CONCERN

The Commissioners received a call from a Joplin resident informing them that the sewers are backing up. It is believed that maybe some tree roots are the cause. Commissioner Wickum and some of the road crew went to investigate and try to aid.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

In light of the recent heavy rains/flooding, the County will continue to leave some roads closed while the rest of the runoff is still running over in places. The County is hoping that we will get these roads open by tomorrow.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

APRIL 18th 2023 TUESDAY

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 8:00 AM in their office at the Courthouse. Those present were Commissioner Larry Hendrickson (Chair), Commissioner Justin Wickum, and Commissioner Joette Woods.

DISASTER/EMERGENCY SERVICES

Melissa Kantorowicz and Kayla Johnson were in to update the Commissioners on the DES budget. Commissioner Woods made a motion to approve the DES budget. Commissioner Wickum seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor. They also would like to schedule a post-flood debrief.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Robert Padmos, County Attorney, was in to update the Commissioners on an employment issue. Robert will also read through the procurement policy that was updated.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION (DNRC)

Eric Eneboe, DNRC, was in to visit with the Commissioners. There is a new fire specialist on the DNRC crew, Mason Quick. He provided phone numbers for fire issues this summer should there be any.

CLERK AND RECORDER

Davin Buffington, Clerk and Recorder, was in to discuss some overage in vacation time for a few employees. The Commissioners will work with Department Heads to address this. The Clerk and Recorders Association will be in Helena tomorrow for an election bill.

SENIOR CENTER

Glenda Hanson, Senior Center Director, was in to provide updates on the Senior Center. The Commissioners informed her about her staff who have an overage of vacation time and that she will need adjust scheduling to allow the vacation time to be used. She is planning to send the new transit bus driver to training. Jerry Ghekiere informed the Commissioners about a bird problem at the Senior Center. The Commissioners will hire Darin Stanley's construction company to put up tin in the problem areas.

TREASURER

Denise Wanken, Treasurer, was in to discuss some tax deeds with the Commissioners. One of the properties going to deed is in Swank's 2nd addition, a square tract of 140' X 140'. Commissioner Woods made a motion for the county to take over the tax deed for this property. Commissioner Wickum seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

CLAIMS

Claims Specialist Monica Serrato presented claims for the Commissioners to review and approve. Upon review, Commissioner Wickum made a motion to approve claims. Commissioner Hendrickson seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

JUSTICE COURT

Chris Case, Justice of the Peace, was in to provide updates to the Commissioners about his office.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

APRIL 25th 2023 TUESDAY

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 8:00 AM in their office at the Courthouse. Those present were Commissioner Larry Hendrickson (Chair), Commissioner Justin Wickum, and Commissioner Joette Woods.

COUNTY WEBSITE

Julie Gagnon, County Website Administrator, stopped by to discuss a new website design with the Commissioners. Commissioner Wickum made a motion to give Julie the ability to change the website domain name to match the email domain. Commissioner Woods seconded the motion. Hearing no public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

Kyle Heppner, Undersheriff, was in to update the Commissioners on issues the Sheriff Department is dealing with.

SENIOR CENTER

Glenda Hanson, Senior Center Director, was in to let the Commissioners know there has been a turnover in the North Central Area Agency on Aging (NCAAA). This raises potential funding issues for the Senior Center, which she will be looking into and sharing her findings with the Commissioners at a future date.

CLERK AND RECORDER

Clerk and Recorder, Davin Buffington, was in to go over the budget to actual numbers.

PERMIT QUESTION

Jill Streit was in to ask the Commissioners about permits to use agriculture land for building purposes.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE

Shannon Chamberlin, MACo Property Casualty Trust, was in to meet with the Commissioners about the new 2023-2024 insurance rates for our County employees. She reviewed the entire policy and explained all the increases. Tina Wood and Kassandra May were also in attendance from Wood Enterprise Insurance, as they provide other insurance services for the County.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Rob Laas called the Commissioners about a road by his house that needs work. The Road Department will go out to his area to take a look.

ARPA FUND CLARIFICATION

The Commissioners had a call from Trisha Bodvic with Robert Peccia & Associates to discuss which pot of money we can fund the ARPA projects. Pot A has \$453,945 and is revenue replacement. Pot B has \$525,000 and is a federal grant. Pot C is \$2.2 million and is a competitive grant. The Commissioners asked to switch the pot of money the funding for the Town of Chester project is to come from.

LIBRARY

Julie Erickson, Librarian, was in to update the Commissioners on their inventory. She is also looking for help at the library for the summer.

WEED DEPARTMENT

Jim Ghekerie, Weed Dept/911, was in to update the Commissioners on his staffing for the summer. He also shared that he has received most of his grant funding for the last quarter.

MSU EXTENSION OFFICE

Jesse Fulbright, MSU Extension Agent, was in to update the commissioners on his trip to the Northern part of the county. He was out checking moisture levels in the fields.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman