

**BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**May 10, 2022, Meeting Minutes**

On Tuesday, May 10, 2022, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 10:01 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Dan Allhands, Ron Nye, and John Heckler present. Jane Bacon, Commissioners' Clerk, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Hannah Brook, Brad Owens, Laurie Buyan, Tommy Luksha, Ellis (Eli) Thompson, Justin Gatewood, Vicki Tilstra, Craig Schroder, Duncan Hedges, Kevin Germain, and those on the attached list. Ryan Wolter, IT Support Specialist, administered the Webex connection. Those who attended via Webex or by phone included Jeremiah Theys, Craig Erickson, Justin Cole, Jeff Weldon, Kyle Stone, Trever Dowton, Kristy Ranson, Cori Koenig, Cris Fanelli, Joshua Denny, Megan Ellis, Lisa Stapp, Mark Davis, Jennifer Westfall, Hanna Dietrich, Jon Swanson, Karen Ketchu, Allison Veland, Brooke Schandelmeier, Britani Allhands, Ben LaPorte, Jason Petrillo, Kate Rose, Janie Alt, Kellie Greco, Abby Thomas, Jason Monroe, Mike Callahan, and unidentified phone attendees.

Bill Todd and Brian Conklin, District 3 Commissioner Candidates, were present to observe portions of the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:** Following review, John Heckler moved to approve the March 29, 2022, Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Ron Nye moved to approve the Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes for October 12, 2022 with corrections. John Heckler seconded the motion. Dan Allhands and Ron Nye voted aye. John Heckler abstained from voting as he was not present for that meeting. The motion carried on a majority vote.

**Grants:** Hannah Brook, Grant Writer/Administrator, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Brad Owens, County resident, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Cliff and Wade Lake Road FLAP Agreement:** Hannah said she has reviewed the details of the FLAP agreement with Western Federal Lands Highway Division for the Cliff and Wade Lake Road gravel surface preservation project, and understands the project will start on July 15, 2022. After review, John Heckler moved to approve and sign the Cliff and Wade Lake Road FLAP agreement as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Public Discussion on Items Not Listed on the Agenda but Within the Board's Jurisdiction:** Brad Owens, County resident, came to talk with the Board about Axolotl Lakes Road. Hannah Brook, Grant Writer/Administrator, was present for this portion of the meeting. Brad has heard various things about maintenance on that road and came for clarification from the Board. Dan said the BLM has a grant for fixing the road with funds to be used this year, so he will contact the BLM Supervisor to check the status and let Brad know what he finds out.

**Great West Engineering:** Jeremiah Theys, Great West Engineering, met with the Board via Webex to discuss the following topic. Hannah Brook, Grant Writer/Administrator, and Brad Owens, County resident, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Big Hole River Restoration Plan – DNRC RRGL Grant Application:** Jeremiah reviewed information from a previous discussion about the Big Hole River restoration plan that includes Madison County being the applicant for a DNRC grant to get the project design started and the plans shovel ready. He reviewed the seven project areas and phases of the overall project, the design permitting process, other grant funding that might be obtained for the construction phase, developing a memorandum of understanding between the involved parties, and ideas for future monitoring and protection of river banks around the bridges. Following discussion, Ron Nye moved to approve the grant authorization for the Big Hole River Restoration Project as presented. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Great West Engineering:** Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering, met with the Board via Webex to discuss the following topic. Hannah Brook, Grant Writer/Administrator, was present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Madison Valley Manor Project Update:** Craig reviewed upcoming events including a walkthrough for the generator and boiler components, the bid opening for the kitchen remodel, and a public meeting on the TRMCC project preliminary architectural report.

**Town of Virginia City:** Justin Gatewood, Virginia City Mayor, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Tommy Luksha, GIS Coordinator, and Ellis (Eli) Thompson, Virginia City resident, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Adobetown Road Viewing Committee:** Justin discussed the viewing committee for Adobetown Road with the Board and recommended adding a Virginia City resident to the committee, Dan reviewed the reasons for choosing the current viewing committee consisting of Tommy Luksha and John Heckler, and public meetings were briefly discussed. Tommy reviewed maps initially created when the Road Review Committee was asked to look into Adobetown Road, and layers added as alternate routes have been discussed.
- **Location of Adobetown Road Public Hearing:** Justin discussed the location of the upcoming public hearing on Adobetown Road pointing out reasons to hold the hearing in the Virginia City Community Center, and Dan reviewed the reasons behind the Board's decision to conduct the hearing at the Alder Fire Hall. Livestreaming the meeting on Facebook was discussed as well as acoustics, internet capability, central location, and building capacity.

**Development of a Special Taxation District for Parks and Recreation:** Commissioner Heckler discussed developing a Special Taxation District for Parks and Recreation, primarily located in District 3 excluding Big Sky. Tommy Luksha, GIS Coordinator, Brad Owens, County resident, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting, and Jon Swanson, Madison County Golf Course Treasurer, participated by Webex. John described the entire process and timing for creating a special district, from informal surveys to elections and tax revenues, and explained how the idea to add support for parks and recreation as well as a variety of children's services has grown out of discussions about providing funding for the Madison County golf course. There was discussion about the golf course agreement expiring in November and negotiations with Madison County Golf Association, the possibility of temporarily extending the agreement, examples of other programs that could be supported through a special taxation district, funding amounts requested by the Golf Association, estimates of funding that would support a special district including the golf course, and educating taxpayers about what a special district could provide, as well as tax consequences, prior to an election.

**Sheriff's Department:** Craig Schroder, Undersheriff, and Duncan Hedges, Detention Officer, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Brad Owens, County resident, Tommy Luksha, GIS Coordinator, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Communication Center Staffing:** Craig and Duncan reviewed the serious understaffing situation in the Communication Center (Dispatch). Currently there are only three dispatchers on staff to cover 24 hours per day, seven days a week, and the department needs help to avoid burnout. Temporary solution ideas were discussed such as having other qualified employees and former dispatchers take shifts and requesting assistance from other counties. Longer term solutions were also discussed, including recruiting and hiring (noting that new hire training is quite involved and takes 12 weeks), improving retention, job stress, shift work, compensation and competitive wages for dispatchers and the Communications Coordinator, and reworking a management plan to preserve a permanent team. Based on the Undersheriff's recommendation, John Heckler moved to adjust the pay scale for Communications Officers to a range from \$21.25 (80%) to \$26.56 (100%) per hour, based on experience and the recommendation of the Sheriff's Office, starting today for the remaining four pay periods of the fiscal year. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Lone Mountain Land Company:** Kevin Germain, Lone Mountain Land Company, met with the Board to discuss the following topic. Those on the attached list were present for this portion of the meeting as well as several Webex participants.

- **Proposed Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD) at Moonlight:** Kevin presented and discussed an idea to form a Targeted Development District (TEDD) for Moonlight Basin in Big Sky. The Big Sky Chamber of Commerce worked on this idea several years ago and determined at that time a TEDD was not an appropriate tool for Big Sky, but since the Montana Legislature recently made changes to TEDD rules it is now a better fit for tourism and recreation-based areas. Kevin discussed increased problems with workforce housing and infrastructure deficiencies, Madison County's mills compared to other Montana counties, how Big Sky tax revenue benefits the County, and the inequity of tax collections and distributions. He went on to describe how a TEDD works and how it could be used to solve several of these issues. When a TEDD is formed it freezes the tax base for the area designated, the tax revenue from the incremental growth during the TEDD's 15-year lifespan goes to that TEDD district, and when it sunsets that property tax goes to the existing taxing districts. Kevin described it as an investment in the future, and outlined how the TEDD would be administered by County Commissioners with recommendations from a Citizen's Advisory Board. There was discussion about Moonlight's future growth, whether a lesser percentage of incremental growth could be used, allowable uses for TEDD revenue, defining district boundaries, school budgets, TIFFs versus TEDDs and legislation regarding each, duration flexibility, and the research and thoughtfulness required to put something like this in place.

**Claims:** The Board approved claims.

**Planning Office - Request for Training:** The Board considered the Planning Clerk's request to attend a virtual, 3-hour Microsoft Excel training class at a cost of \$149. Following review, Ron Nye moved to approve the Microsoft Excel training requested by Michelle Schriock, Madison County Planning Department Clerk. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the Board of Commissioners, joined the meeting at this point and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

**Date for Compensation Board Meeting:** Laurie discussed potential dates for the Compensation Board meeting and reviewed the list of those who should attend the meeting including the County Attorney, three Commissioners, three additional elected officials, and two to four members of the public, as well as the Finance Officer who is not on the Compensation Board but typically attends the meeting. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to set the date for the Compensation Board meeting at 2:00 p.m. on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June, 2022, in the Public Meeting Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**MSU Clinical Student Nursing Agreement:** The Board discussed the MSU Clinical Student Nursing Agreement for the Public Health office. Following review, John Heckler moved to sign the agreement between Montana State University – Bozeman, Clinical Student Nursing Agreement, with Madison County as agent, dated May 10, 2022. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Solid Waste Board Resignation:** After review, Ron Nye moved to accept Richard (Tikker) Jones' letter of resignation from the Madison County Solid Waste Board as presented, advertise for a replacement, and send a letter thanking him for his 32 years of service. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**DUI Task Force Appointment:** Following review, John Heckler moved to appoint Dana Preston to the DUI Task Force to fill the remainder of a three year term that will end on December 31, 2024. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**DUI Task Force Secretary/Treasurer Agreement:** The Board discussed a DUI Task Force Secretary/Treasurer Agreement. Laurie agreed to contact the Task Force Chair for clarification, the agreement will be sent to the Deputy Attorney for review, and the topic was continued to the next regular Commission meeting.

**Big Sky Parks District Board Renewal:** The Board reviewed a request for reappointment to the Big Sky Parks District, and Laurie noted that Park District terms expire in April. Following review, John Heckler moved to reappoint Madeleine Feher to the Big Sky Parks District Board. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Big Sky Parks District Board Appointment:** The Board considered an application for the Big Sky Parks District Board. Laurie explained the makeup of this board consisting of both Madison and Gallatin representatives, noted that this application is for a joint position, and if approved by the Board it will be sent back to Gallatin County for approval by their Board of Commissioners. Following discussion, John Heckler moved to name Whitney Harris Montgomery to the Big Sky Parks District Board as the joint representative, needing the approval of Gallatin County as well. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Big Sky Transportation District Board Appointment:** Laurie explained that the Big Sky Transportation District Board is another Big Sky board that has members from both Counties, and this application is to replace a Madison County position. The applicant lives on the county line, technically in Gallatin County, and works in Madison County. The position has been open for some time and could continue to be advertised, although there is precedent for this type of appointment. After discussion, Ron Nye moved to appoint Matthew Duffy to the Big Sky Transportation District Board for the remainder of a three year term that will expire on December 31, 2023. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Intergovernmental Transfers for Nursing Homes:** Laurie reviewed the Intergovernmental Transfer program for nursing homes. After review, Ron Nye moved to approve the Senior and Long Term Care state fiscal year 2022 Intergovernmental Transfer of funds as presented. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Letter of Support for RVCD - Upper Jefferson River Restoration Project:** Following review, Ron Nye moved to approve the letter of support to the DNRC for the Upper Jefferson River Restoration Project as presented. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Petition for Road (Alley) Closure in Pony – Accept Petition, Appoint Viewers Committee, Set Date for Public Hearing:** After review, Ron Nye moved to accept the Petition for Road Closure for the alley in Block 4 of Schmaulhausen’s Addition to the townsite of Pony, Montana, as presented; set the public hearing date for June 21, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.; and appoint a viewing committee consisting of Frosty Armstrong, Ron Nye, and Calvin Young. John Heckler seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

**Calendars:** The Board adjourned to the office to review calendars.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

**Next meeting:** The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

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Dan W. Allhands, Chairman  
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: July 5, 2022

Minutes prepared by:

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Jane Bacon, Commissioners’ Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Paula McKenzie, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County