

BOARD OF MADISON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
May 18, 2021, Meeting Minutes

On Tuesday, May 18, 2021, a meeting of the Board of Madison County Commissioners came to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana, with Commissioners Jim Hart and Ron Nye present. Commissioner Dan Allhands, Chairman, was absent for personal reasons. Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant to the Board of Commissioners, was present to take minutes.

Those people in attendance at the meeting were Joe Brummell, Gail Nelson, Dave Reintsma, Emilie Saylor, Vicki Tilstra, Jani Flinn, Esther Lince, Chris Christensen, Kathy Barnes, Britani Allhands, Antoinette Bloem, and Suzanne, Nellen. Ryan Wolter, IT Support Specialist, was present to administer the Webex connection. Those present via Webex were Jani Flinn, Jennifer Martens, Kathy Barnes, Keeley Larson, Lynda Holt, Michelle Schriock, Robert Wallingford, Craig Erickson, Becky Lawson, Janie Alt, JM, and others that were not identified.

Approval of Minutes: Jim Hart moved to approve the April 13, 2021, Commission Meeting minutes as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the April 26, 2021, Preliminary Budget Hearing minutes as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the April 30, 2021, Preliminary Budget Hearing minutes as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the May 10, 2021, Preliminary Budget Hearing minutes as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. Jim Hart moved to approve the May 12, 2021, Preliminary Budget Hearing minutes as presented. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

COVID -19 Update: Joe Brummell, DES, reviewed current COVID information, stating that Madison things are looking extremely well and that we are currently sitting at one active case. There have been a total of 790 confirmed cases, 781 have recovered, there have been 8 fatalities, and a total of 51 hospitalizations but with no current hospitalizations. He added that the State is moderate with just over 1000 active cases, but that the fatalities, unfortunately continue to slowly rise, active hospitalizations are at 63 and the bed capacity across the state is phenomenal. He reviewed active cases across the state and cumulative cases. He stated that there are no upcoming CARES reimbursement opportunities and discussed vaccine distributions. At this point there was discussion regarding whether there is still a need for weekly COVID updates. After discussion, it was determined that these updates would be scheduled every other week with the nursing homes COVID updates. Joe also discussed T-Mobile first responder cell phone plans, Incident Command structure, weather, noting that there is a winter weather watch for Wednesday, the drought index, and reviewed structure fires. He stated he is still looking for a Public Information Officer.

Nursing Homes COVID Update: Gail Nelson, Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center Administrator, presented COVID updates for both facilities. Dave Reintsma, Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center Maintenance, Emilie Saylor, Public Health Director, and Joe Brummell, DES, were present for this portion of the meeting. Gail stated that she is giving the update for both facilities starting with TRMCC, noting that the current census is 24, no residents are in quarantine or in the hospital, no staff out, and continuous PPE training. The County prevalence rate is close to 15% so they are continuing with staff testing and residents as needed, and visitation is allowed. She stated that everything is the same for Madison Valley Manor except their census is at 18. There was discussion about applications and referrals at TRMC. Gail stated they have the potential for a few more admits in the next few weeks. She also noted that she bumped up staffing to meet the needs of the census with 24 being the number that bumps the staffing needs up, but that staff won't need to be increased again after this level.

Lease of House in Sheridan to Cut Agency Staffing Costs for TRMCC: Gail Nelson, Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center Administrator, presented the Board with an agreement to lease a house in Sheridan

for travelers, noting that the cost is much less than housing them in a motel. There was discussion about meeting the requirements of the lease. Jim questioned whether something like this needs to come to the Commissioners or if it is something that can be done by the administrator. Gail stated that they were instructed a while back that all contracts need to come to the County and asked if they have administrative authority to take care of these smaller items, noting that she has discussed this with Justin Ekwall, Deputy County Attorney. After discussion, it was determined that Gail will write a policy for this type of transaction and bring it to the Board at the next update. Gail will also move forward with leasing the house.

Emilie Saylor, Public Health Administrator, met with the Board to discuss the following topics. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, and Joe Brummell, DES, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **Public Health Update:** Emilie stated they've been super busy for the last week and she is impressed with how much they've been able to get done in a week. She said the staff really know what they're doing and that makes it easier and they have great records, which helps her get up to speed and make contact with the right people. They currently have a hand-full of grants that are coming due for reporting and they are working hard to finalize expenses and a couple of amendments that haven't been addressed which she will get to the Board. She is currently defining roles and responsibilities and working on getting people back into their original roles so they can do the jobs they were intended to do. She added that she asked what their expectations are of her and it sounds like they want her to pull some big things off their plates so they can do their jobs. Emilie reviewed a list of priorities to be worked through including PHEP grant deliverables, noting that they got an extension for this one; trainings she plans to attend, including PHEP training and public information training; establishing dates for staff time-off; Fetal Infant Child Maternal Mortality review and training; the IAP which is the next agenda item; budget review; AMDD which is \$40,000 specifically for Mental Health expenses; department planning including a booth at the fair, departmentalizing COVID, and determining what they can do to best suit the needs of the communities. There was also discussion about cooperative efforts with Big Sky and the local hospitals; and setting up mobile vaccination clinics.
- **Amendment to DPHHS COVID Immunization Services Task Order:** Emilie presented the Board with an amendment to the COVID immunization task order. She discussed the details of the task order, noting that this is for \$20,000 which is in addition to funds already received with a potential to get more. She also discussed the possibility of hosting a mobile vaccine clinic with some of the funds. Based on the recommendation of the Public Health Director, Jim Hart moved to approve the DPHHS, Public Health and Safety Division, AD-59, Contract Summary, Amendment #2, to provide additional funding to local health jurisdiction to participate in COVID-19 vaccination planning, in the amount of \$20,794. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering, and Becky Lawson, SMA, met with the Board via Webex to discuss the following nursing home topic. Jani Flinn, Grant Administrator, Gail Nelson, Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center Administrator, Dave Reintsma, Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center Maintenance, and Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, were present for this portion of the meeting.

- **CDBG Request for Reimbursement #2:** Craig reviewed CDBG draw request #2. Jani Flinn asked why it wasn't draw #3. Craig explained that he had submitted a request for reimbursement for electrical work that was done but because the contractor did not pay Davis Bacon wages, the request was denied. He added however, that the cost was allowed to be used as a local match. Based on the recommendation of the on-call engineer, Jim Hart moved to approve the Request for Reimbursement in the amount of \$955.25 from the Community Development Block Grant program for grant administration services for the Madison Valley Manor project. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.
- **Madison Valley Manor Project:** Becky discussed the Madison Valley Manor Project, stating that she and Charlie are reaching out to contractors. She named one that is interested that they have worked with before. She noted they will try to work it in with another project. She is hoping for a bid by the end of the week. Becky discussed the scheduling of the project, stating that the whole project needs to be completed by the end of August and that she will revisit the schedule and make sure the boilers and the generator have priority. She will spell this out in the contract.
- **Generator Procurement:** Becky discussed procurement of the generator, stating she will talk with the contractor to see if it will be quicker for them to get it or if the County needs to do it. She will

find out which way is better and contact vendors. There was also discussion about the PAR meeting at the TRMCC. Becky stated it will be a ZOOM meeting and that they are looking for input from the staff. Ron listed items to look at such as sidewalks, streets, and ADA issues. Ron also asked Craig about a tourism grant. Craig will research it and have an answer next week.

DUI Task Force Preliminary Budget Hearing: Esther Lince, DUI Task Force, met with the Board to review the preliminary budget for the DUI Task Force. Chris Christensen, County Attorney, was present for this portion of the meeting. Esther distributed a copy of the annual plan and the budget, stating that the plan is basically the same as last year's and discussed items they plan to continue with such as education, work with law enforcement, and pursue a DRE (Drug Recognition Enforcement) for Madison County. She explained what this position does, and added that they were sharing one with Jefferson County but have recently lost them. She is hoping to have an officer in Madison County complete the training to become a DRE. Chris further explained the duties of the position. Esther noted that they have set aside \$5,000 for this project and hope to get someone qualified. Esther talked about recruitment for the task force; \$500 in scholarships that were given to Harrison and Sheridan schools and hope to give to Ennis and Twin Bridges next year; compliance checks that have been completed; and getting involved in Big Sky. The DUI Task Force plan will be scheduled on the agenda for next week's Commission meeting for final approval.

Legal Assistant Position Hire Notification: Chris Christensen, County Attorney, met with the Board to discuss the legal assistant position in his office. He stated that things have changed since the budget meeting. Kindra left, he hired Terri Stubbs temporarily to train the new person, and hired Hannah Callahan for the vacant position. He would now like to make Courtney Fischer the lead assistant at the rate that was discussed at the budget hearing. He also requested the 50 cents per hour for notary services that other offices have asked for. Ron stated that it's a pain to be a notary and thinks it's justified. Following discussion, Jim Hart moved to transfer Courtney Fischer to the lead legal assistant position in the County Attorney's Office, approve Terri Stubbs temporary assistance, and approve the hiring of Hannah Dietrich as a legal assistant in the County Attorney's Office. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried. It was noted that Chris's budget request would be amended to include the 50 cents per hour for notary services and amended regarding who would be paid at the lead legal assistant rate. It was also noted that elected officials have the jurisdiction to hire who they chose but the County Attorney has elected to bring it to the Board.

Claims: The Board approved claims.

Compensation Board Renewal: Jim Hart moved to re-appoint Ken Walsh to the Madison County Compensation Board for another three year term that will expire on June 1, 2024. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

On-Call Engineer Proposals/Interview Strategy: The Board briefly discussed interviews for the on-call engineer position.

Madison Valley Rural Fire District Board Appointment: Jim Hart moved to re-appoint James King to the Madison Valley Rural Fire District Board for another three year term that will expire in May of 2024. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Insurance Renewal and Health Insurance Committee Recommendation: Antoinette Bloem, First West Insurance and current Blue Cross/Blue Shield Agent, presented the Board with the health insurance renewal for 2021-2022. Vicki Tilstra, Finance Officer, Britani Allhands, Finance Assistant, and Kathy Barnes, Sheriff's Assistant, were present for this portion of the meeting. Antoinette said she is very pleased with the renewal and thinks it's very fair given the medical loss ratio that they've seen this year. She added that several months in this year were over 100% loss and December was at 161% medical loss ratio. This year she is presenting a 5.9% increase, noting that last year's renewal was negative 4% and two years ago there was no increase. There was discussion about family rates, what could be done to shift rates, and employees lost because of high cost of family insurance rates. Antoinette stated that if rates are shifted to accommodate families, the County would see a huge increase in premiums because we have so many more individuals insured than we do families. Kathy Barnes, Insurance Committee member, presented the Board with a recommendation from the Insurance Committee and discussed the loss of employees in the Sheriff's Department due to the high

cost of medical insurance and the loss of an employee in the County Attorney's office for the same reason. She stated that the insurance committee recommends renewing the BC/BS health insurance plans for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and that the County contribute an additional \$150 per month for each employee needing spouse/children/family plans to ease the burden of coverage for these few employees. There was discussion regarding how our family rates compare to other counties. Britani stated that the committee talked after writing the recommendation and feels that the amount should be more than \$150. Laurie agreed with Kathy, stating that we don't want to keep losing good, young employees but the county has also lost applicants because they've found out that the cost of insurance is extremely high. Kathy stated that it would help if we could keep the family premium under \$500 per month. Vicki agreed. Laurie suggested doubling the amount suggested by the Insurance Committee and giving them \$500 per month and discussed reasons why. Ron agreed that would be more in line with what other counties are paying. Following much discussion, Jim Hart moved to accept the recommendation of the Insurance Committee to renew the BC/BS health insurance plans for the 2021-2022 fiscal year with the caveat of adding \$200 to the portion paid by the County for family premiums, for a total of \$400. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Justice Court Administrator Hourly Wage: Suzanne Nellen, Justice of the Peace, met with the Board to discuss the hourly wage for the Justice Court Administrator. She stated that Jordan is leaving, which will be a big loss and a very difficult position to fill. They've advertised for the position and got two applicants, one of which has a tremendous amount of experience. She reviewed the experience this candidate has and stated that the rate of pay that the position was advertised at is not enough for the amount of experience that she has. She would like to pay her \$24.04 per hour and make it retro-active back to the date of hire. There was discussion about people not applying for the position, if the former employee would have stayed if the same rate was offered to her, increasing the wages of all County employees, and other budget considerations. Following much discussion, Jim Hart moved to amend the Justice Court preliminary budget request to reflect an increase in the Justice Court Chief Administrator's wage to \$23.91 per hour. Ron Nye seconded the motion. All voted aye and the motion carried.

Calendars: The Board reviewed calendars.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Next meeting: The next regular Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 25, 2021, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Second Floor Court Room of the Administrative Office Building in Virginia City, Montana.

Dan W. Allhands, Chairman
Board of Madison County Commissioners

Date Approved: July 6, 2021

Minutes prepared by:

Laurie Buyan, Executive Assistant

Attest: _____
Paula McKenzie, Clerk and Recorder, Madison County