

Prairie County Board of Commissioners Meeting

July 30, 2021

Prairie County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9 a.m. In attendance were Road Specialist Gary Pfiefler, County Fire Dwight Tague, and guest Colton Braddock.

Discussion held of yearly fire trainings offered. It was suggested by Mr. Tague before fire radios are handed out, the individual must go through DNRC basic and wildland fire training.

Mr. Tague reported County Fire receiving an equipment and training grant. The County will be responsible for a 10% or \$600 match that will be added to the fire budget. Mr. Tague will also obtain one 4 x 4 and one 6 x 6 military surplus vehicle from Fort Harrison, Helena Montana. Mr. Tague reported he would not be able to attend the 1:30 p.m. Fire Meeting but would be available by phone.

July 19, 2021, road minutes were reviewed. Road Specialist Pfiefler met with Bureau of Land Management Geologist Carissa Shilling and will proceed with the applications for the county gravel pits.

Discussion held on the concrete from the old low water crossing on Coal Creek Road. Mr. Dennis Teske joined the meeting and stated he will use it for riprap.

Discussion held on the Cherry Creek Gravel pit, and it will be stressed to the County Road Crew that the gate must be kept locked when not in use to prevent trespass. Bureau of Land Management has noted the gravel pit has several hundred cubic yards of gravel not accounted for. Mr. Pfiefler will prepare the letter requested by BLM for the City of Terry to terminate authorization and operate the pit through the County permit.

The road hearing on Warner Road will be placed on the August 16, 2021, agenda.

10 a.m. County Attorney Dan Rice joined meeting. Clerk Recorder Shari Robertson in with payroll, timesheets, and claims.

Clerk Robertson reported per MCA 39-71-118(3) Volunteer Firefighters that the employer shall maintain a roster of service that lists all volunteer firefighters who have filed out a membership card prior to performing services as a volunteer firefighter. The flat assumed rate for Workman's Compensation monthly payroll of \$83.33 shall be reported for each person on the roster for any month in which the person is on the roster of service.

Clerk Robertson and Commissioner Devlin requested \$12,500 draw for the Prairie County Fallon Flats Irrigation Study from Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Program, Department of Commerce.

Timesheets, payroll, and insurance warrants were reviewed and signed in the amount of \$138,493.44.

Clerk Robertson reported that Richland County Sanitarian could not service Prairie County. A conference call will be set up with Dawson County Sanitarian Brant Gordon and Dawson County Commissioner Brad Mitchell for August 3, 2021. (406)377-1717.

10:30 a.m. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to sign Record Destruction Document (RM88) for 1995-2017 timesheets, Juror Questionnaires 2000-2007, and individual trial lists from 2002-2003. Commissioner Devlin seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

Claims reviewed and warrants signed in the amount of \$20,120.90.

Clerk & Recorder Shari Robertson requested the August 31 meeting be changed to August 30, 2021, due to trainings.

July 19, 2021, minutes were reviewed. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Motion seconded by Commissioner Devlin. All in favor, motion passed.

11:10 a.m. Cemetery Caretaker Art Henry in to discuss payment of his Medicare Supplement. It was agreed that since the cost of the supplement could not be taken from employee contributions, the hourly wage would be calculated to include the actual cost of the supplement.

11:30 a.m. July 14, 2021, County Budget Minutes were reviewed. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Motion seconded by Commissioner Devlin. All in favor, motion passed.

July 15, 2021, County Budget Minutes were reviewed. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Motion seconded by Commissioner Devlin. All in favor, motion passed.

July 23, 2021, County Budget Minutes were reviewed. Commissioner Kelter made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Motion seconded by Commissioner Devlin. All in favor, motion passed.

Clerk Robertson in for a payroll correction warrants in the amount of \$1,420.61.

12p.m. to 1 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Fire Meeting In attendance were Colton Braddock, Clifford Householder, Lon Reukauf, Vicki Reukauf, Tim Popper, Brock Tibbetts, Tate Pehl, Ron Tibbetts, Bailey Kortum, Lana Tibbetts, Don Kuehn, Shane Eaton, Wayne Mitchell, Commissioner Devlin, Keltner, and Bockness, Sherriff Keiffer Lewis, and Undersheriff Tim Therrien.

Lana Tibbetts discussed several areas of concern. She requested the maps for northern Prairie County be utilized, wanted Prairie County Fire to supply radios for communication during the fires, requested compensation for volunteer firefighters, requested the use of the weed four wheelers for firefighting, and wanted more training, supplies, and equipment.

Lon Reukauf noted need to utilize the Rural Address Book to find locations when not in familiar areas.

Vickie Reukauf suggested developing a Fire Facebook page for communication fire updates and locations. Tate Pehl suggested using a Fire App that utilizes GPS google maps and coordinates mutual aid.

Sheriff Lewis reported the fire page system is limited to <100 people and has currently 70+ people are on the system.

Discussion held on the high cost of Volunteer Firefighters Workman's Compensation and the fiscal responsibility of the County to have only those on the fire page be those who are trained to respond to fire fighting.

Discussion held on initial fire call miscommunication and wrong locations called into the 911 system. It was explained that the dispatch initially reports what initially was called in.

Discussion held on the use of smart phones vs radios, cost of radios and scanners, lack of cell phone reception in areas of the County.

Shane Eaton discussed sending group texts to core volunteers, utilizing phone trees, or fire page groups.

Commissioner Devlin and Sheriff Lewis discussed the difficulty in obtaining the BLM travel management two-track trail maps for emergency and law enforcement as BLM does not want the liability until the road data is proven.

Discussion of rural water supplies and the possibility purchasing oilfield frack tanks to store water though out the County.

Discussion held of the need for the Road Crew to have training in blading wildland fires.

Lon Reukauf discussed the fire danger in the Wilderness Study Area noting that firebreaks are no longer allowed by the Bureau of Land Management. The pros and cons of placing county fire restrictions was discussed.

Sheriff Lewis reported on the duties of the Fire Warden per MCA 76-13-116.

Shane Eaton requested fire data on the past fires to be utilized for future planning and training purposes. Sheriff Lewis will supply data.

Discussion held of compensation of volunteer fire fighters and having an appreciation event. Suggestions also made were getting local landowners to contribute towards equipment and to have a County Fire Board and a strategic management plan.

Discussion held on how the Weed Department equipment could be coordinated and utilized for firefighting.

Discussion held on the need for training on equipment, CPR, wildfire training, radio communication training, and the use of triangulation to locate fires.

Discussion of Hunting Season and legalities of hunter management and what can be done to prevent fires.

3:30 p.m. Community Center Director Karen Rausch and Board Member Robert Brubaker

A Bid was received from Brinks, Inc. (Doug Ward @ 794-8229) for a 60-inch Vulcan 10 burner natural gas stove with two ovens for price of \$6805 with choice of regular or \$500 extra for a convection oven. The price includes shipping and setup. Bid received from Shephard Stainless for an exhaust hood, fan, and fire extinguishing system for \$20,916. Commissioner Keltner will call electricians for prices The ARPA covid money will be utilized as the Community Center will be the back-up disaster and emergency location for the Prairie County Hospital and the community.

4:00 p.m. Commissioner Devlin made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Bockness. All in favor, motion passed.

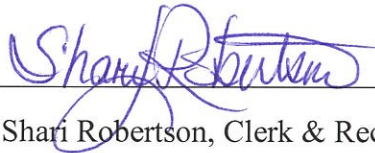
Commissioner Keltner attended the Transportation Committee Meeting with Noell Martinson, Superintendent of Schools, Mark Ehinger Superintendent & Principle, Jody Huber, and Jessica Thomason.

Signed this 3rd day of August 2021.



Todd Devlin, Commission Chair

ATTEST:



Shari Robertson, Clerk & Recorder