

Prairie County Board of Commissioners Meeting

March 20th, 2024

*Prairie County Court House Commissioners Room
217 West Park St Terry, MT 59349*

Prairie County Board of Commissioners Todd Devlin, Christine Keltner and Dennis Teske met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. In attendance Commissioner Secretary Harry McNall.

9:00 a.m. Ross Feehan with Next Era, stopped to speak quickly with Commissioners and let them know that he will not be here at 11:00 a.m. Their Company would start building in 2026 if all permitting goes through, to go active in 2028. Their focus is on private and state land builds, North of Yellowstone spanning across Prairie, Dawson, and McCone counties and the project name is Glendive Wind Project. They changed the times to meet Commissioner because they had a meeting in Colstrip this afternoon. The windmill project is currently focused on land studies and research. Commissioner Devlin made it clear our county will not reduce taxes for them.

9:30 a.m. Norma Peebody phoned into the meeting, to say she doesn't want the Windmill Project in the community, and because of health issues with human and animal health due to the windfarms. Ross Feehan responded with Norma, and they say they have not seen any health issues related to the Windmills.

9:30 a.m. Road Supervisor Todd Henry joined the meeting.

9:36 a.m. Commissioner Teske made a motion to pass **Resolution 24-20 "A Resolution approving the loan in the amount \$130,365.00 for Stockman Bank to Finance the purchase of road equipment"** seconded by Commissioner Keltner, open to discussion, "all in favor" motion passed.

9:40 a.m. Commissioner Devlin made a motion to accept the Petition for permit for water, electrical or utility line, or excavation across county property, for installation of water and power from Homestead Cattle Co. LLC, seconded by Commissioner Teske, "All in favor" motion passed.

9:43 a.m. Commissioner Teske made a motion to accept the "Petition for Permit for approach for field access by Sackman Inc." seconded by Commissioner Devlin, "All in Favor" motion passed.

9:50 a.m. Commissioner Teske called Eric Urban to follow up with the Cherry Creek Pit Permit and DEQ permit. Commissioner Teske left a brief message for Eric.

9:55 a.m. Commissioner Teske called Brandon Duffey with Great West Engineering, to speak about bridge bid processing for the Milwaukee bridge.

10:00 a.m. Commissioner Devlin read **Resolution 24-21 "A Resolution Cancelling the June 4, 2024, Primary Election of Certain County Officers and Moving them Forward to Appear on The General Ballot"**. The vote will be at 3:00 p.m.

10:15 a.m. Eric Urban returned Commissioner Teske's call and updated him on the DEQ permit.

10:20 a.m. Commissioner Keltner provided an update on flooring; it has been delivered and will be installed starting this Friday.

10:30 a.m. Commissioner Teske lead the conversation on "The Big Sky Rail Discussion", which Commissioner Teske is on the board. Sheila Dixson commented that there are other areas along the route that would benefit from the project as well. Commissioner Teske is not in support of it because it cannot stand on its own, without subsidies.

10:45 a.m. Interim County Treasurer Cheryl Morrison into speak with commissioners about Court order bill wording of the property tax bills for the additional mills required to get to 95 mills. Also, she updated commissioners on the DMV computer system updates. The state sent down a paper for commissioners to sign off on, and Cheryl recommends that they sign off on it. Cheryl provided the commissioner with information regarding the School Mill Tax Bill wording.

11:00 a.m. Many different citizens showed up for the meeting, to hear from Nextera Energy. Nextera had a schedule change and was not present. Shane Eaton gave commissioners updates on the meeting in Glendive, and he was not happy with the change on the agenda. He is concerned that Montana Law does not require a bond till year 15, and his contract with them shows no bond till year 10. What happens if no bond is in place and the company goes out of business. Tylene Eaton expressed her concerns about the company coming at public comment instead of coming in at their scheduled time. Commissioner Teske ask County Attorney Dan Rice about bonding for the windmill company, he doesn't have answers right now, he will have to research. Shane has two major concerns, that the company could walk away before the bond is due, or down the road the cost to removal of windmills is much higher than the cost of the bond, and the company leaves the bond and walks away leaving all their equipment. Shane's main concern is the future environmental and county liabilities.

12:00 p.m. Commissioners attended the Board of Health Meeting in Courthouse.

1:00 p.m. North Renew Energy in to discuss Potential Wind Farms. A large crowd of citizens came to listen to the presentation. Scott Chapel and Kevin Ward, with North Renew Energy Partners. They provided a history of themselves and the company, and how they managed to find Prairie County as a possibility for a windfarm. They would be happy as time passes to have representatives from their company to meet with locals and answer the more technical questions that they cannot address. The company representatives did their best to answer questions and provide information.

2:05 p.m. Clerk & Recorder Shari Robertson and Deputy Clerk Aria Walters provided commissioners with Meeting Schedule and Claims, Journals, and Records Disposal.

Prairie County Vouchers# 1106 \$44,027.07

Prairie County Vouchers# 1107 \$5,602.12

2:15 p.m. The following account is overspent Account#2190.510 Property Casualty Liability Insurance, the commissioners are aware of the cause and will make a resolution at the end of the FY.

2:30 p.m. Commissioners read minutes from the March 6th, 2024, commissioners meeting.

2:40 p.m. Commissioners Keltner made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 6th, 2024, commissioners meeting as corrected, seconded by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

2:45 p.m. Commissioners signed RM88 for records that have met their retention dates according to Montana Code 7-5-2132, from the Clerk & Records office.

2:57 p.m. Commissioner Devlin made a motion to sign "The Arcsearch commissioner images agreement" seconded by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

3:05 p.m. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to pass **Resolution 24-21 "A Resolution Cancelling the June 4, 2024, Primary Election of Certain County Officers and Moving them Forward to Appear on The General Ballot"**, seconded by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

3:15 p.m. Commissioner Devlin signed the Mileage Certification form for gas tax roads in Prairie County.

3:30 p.m. Travis Lacquement to speak with commissioners about applications for the weed department. Commissioners discussed county and MACo policy concerning family applications with the county.

4:00 p.m. Public comment (Not on Agenda) no public comment.

4:30 p.m. Sheriff Keifer Lewis joined the meeting to go over the 911 board meeting as well as cameras for the courthouse final quotes.

4:55 p.m. Treasurer Cheryl Morrison visited with the commissioners about various treasurer questions and concerns.

5:15 p.m. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to purchase the camera system for the courthouse and commissioners' room for \$18,021.47, seconded by commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

5:25 p.m. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

Signed this 27th day of March 2024



Todd Devlin, Commissioner Chair

ATTEST: 

Shari Robertson, Clerk & Recorder