

**January 28, 2025**

**The Board of County Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in a regular session in the Commission Office of the Granite County Courthouse with Commissioner McLure, Commissioner Adler, and Commissioner Kulaski attending. Also attending was Commissioners Assistant Maranda Williams and Granite County Attorney, Blaine Bradshaw, who attended a portion of the agenda items in-person. The session was livestreamed through the Zoom internet-based program available for the public to view the session and provide public comment. The public was also allowed to attend in person and provide comment. The session convened with the pledge of allegiance.**

**Also, in attendance were Treasurer Ashley Todd, Luke Ulatowski from the Press, and members of the general public Elena Gagliano.**

**BOARD MINUTES; Commissioner McLure suggested to separate the Board of Health minutes and also moved to accept the board minutes for January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025. Commissioner Kulaski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**CORRESPONDENCE;**

**Electronic mail was received from Five Valleys Land Trust invitation to the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet and Auction in Missoula on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.**

**Electronic Mail was received from ML&GPA (Montana Liquid and Gas Pipeline Association) inviting Commissioners to the Montana Public Safety Officer Standard and Training Certification program at multiple dates/time throughout the state.**

**Electronic mail was received from Matthew Ulberg of MSU inviting commissioners to a Bridge Maintenance Training Webinar on Wednesday January 29<sup>th</sup> from 11-12 pm.**

**Mail was received from Caterpillar in regards to the Motor Grader financed by Caterpillar to notify if equipment location has changed.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT: Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano that it is going to be interesting watching all of the Commissioners on camera but is nice to see them during the meeting. Regarding the Agenda; minutes are at 9:01 until 9:05 if 3 minutes is allowed per person to talk and there's 3 people here there's 9 minutes. Times are estimated but should be looked into she suggests. Closed session isn't in tune with MT Codes Annotated. She thanks the Commissioners for trying this and see what happens. She also inquired about people who are in attendance in-person and asked about the podium and when people speak and go to the podium with people sitting on both sides of the room as well, she suggests it's good to go back to that setup. Commissioner Adler said it's all a work in progress with the new Owl system. She then stated that since this is experimental, everything Commissioners said she hope would be in minutes because she can hardly hear what was said and that the video and audio froze for a second. Commissioner's Assistant was switching speaker output for louder output and may have frozen during the meeting.**

**ROAD & BRIDGE WEEKLY REPORT; & SOLID WASTE UPDATE WITH ROAD & BRIDGE SUPERINTENDENT PAUL ALT; ROTATING CREW MEMBERS THROUGHOUT JOBS; Granite County Road & Bridge Superintendent Paul Alt joined the Commissioners for this portion of the meeting to update the Commissioners on roads. They have been sanding and scraping roads and putting snow back where it needs to be. Maintenance on trucks and there's always something at the shop to do.**

**SOLID WASTE UPDATE; Burning in February 2025 at dump sites when the permits are good.**

**ROTATE BULK FUEL PURCHASE; Commissioner Adler asked about bulk fuel purchases. Paul Alt said there needs to be additive in it so the trucks don't gel up. Not confirmed if anyone does that or not but they have rotated through Fic's and Antonioli's Bulk Fuel. Commissioner McLure asked about the Cenex and Paul Alt said he would need to make sure they have additives and check pricing prior to purchasing. Paul Alt will check into that.**

**Commissioner Adler mentioned that people need to not plow into the roadway of County roads from their private driveways etc. This could cause some damage to vehicles when it hardens. Paul Alt asked about the insurance claim for a wrecked snow plow. They have not reached back out after getting an estimate and photos.**

**The Commissioners' went into a closed session for a personnel matter.**

**GEORGETOWN LAKE OUTFLOW; DAM TENDER'S REPORT; The lake level was reported at 6428.59 feet; 10.92" inches below full pool, according to the USGS lake level gage and the dam tender's report for the week. Commissioner Kulaski moved to stay at 10 CFS which matches the estimated inflows; in alignment with the current FERC Order in place. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion. There were no public comments and the motion passed unanimously.**

**HB 6 update from Blaine Bradshaw testified Friday for County being willing to put a match in and in the past there hasn't been a match requirement. Hopeful they amend the bill and that MACo was going to sponsor a Bill. Discussion of sending a letter to Representatives for an agenda item next week.**

**RESOLUTION 2025-4; GRANITE COUNTY RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO ESTABLISH A COUNTY C-PACE PROGRAM; FIRST READING AND DISCUSSION;**

**Granite County held a meeting discussing Resolution 2025-4, a resolution of intent to establish a County C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy) program. This program would allow for energy-efficient building projects to be financed through tax assessment loans, where private lenders fund the projects, and repayment occurs via property tax assessments. Ashley Todd, the County Treasurer, provided insight into the program and the role of the Department of Revenue (DOR) in assisting with setup.**

**The program is intended to be open to the entire county, with an emphasis on businesses, especially those in need of building retrofits like updated plumbing, rather than new**

construction. Questions were raised about its potential benefits for agricultural land and what that looks like for Ag needs. Blaine Bradshaw outlined the process for moving forward with the resolution: adopting the intent, holding a public hearing, deciding, and then establishing the program. A business must show evidence it has sufficient income to qualify for the program, and if a business defaults, it's treated like a delinquent tax, and the tax deed process is followed. Blaine Bradshaw did express his frustration with the state legislature that seems to have good ideas but want the County to run their programs.

Public comment received from Elena Gagliano who was looking at the community link on the website and that it's interesting it's on the website. Elena Gagliano also commented that the Towns were being approached to run this program too so why should the County run it. There are a lot of changes coming with executive orders, etc. that could put this program in jeopardy. There's a lot of questions the remain and that it isn't free money, there is no free money, it all comes from the taxpayers and there's a lot of unanswered questions about this.

Blaine Bradshaw mentioned that Carolyn Jones (from C-Pace program) would only be requesting the Towns in Granite County to be involved if the County decided to opt out as County approval would be countywide access to the program, the Towns. The program isn't federally regulated it is a state program. Treasurer Ashley Todd shared that other counties are supportive, with no negative feedback so far. She suggested the county might charge administrative fees if multiple projects arise. There was additional discussion about agriculture needs included in the program.

Public comment was received from Elena Gagliano who looked at the link for the C-Pace as far as the proposed public hearing on February 25, 2025 goes and pointed out that it is going to be at 11:00 am so many owners won't make it; they are working. This is a public hearing; a lot of people don't know about it. Is there going to be anything in the newspaper she asked and that the time isn't convenient for a lot of business owners. Newspaper notice will be published twice and that notice will request attendance at the hearing and written comment to be submitted by the public, Blaine Bradshaw stated.

**NORTHWESTERN ENERGY POWER POLE REPLACEMENT AT RIDDICK FIELD;** Donovan Jones discussed concerns about the airport's overhead power lines, noting the poles are in poor condition, with some leaning against a hangar. He recommended converting to underground power with the new beacon location. The Northwestern Energy Company has completed the easement application, but documentation on the legal description is limited. A DNRC application is also underway to relocate the main service in the northeast corner. Temporary power is urgently needed for the beacon, with an estimated \$22,000 cost for the whole power replacement project. Donovan Jones suggested breaking the work into two phases to manage costs, potentially using grant funds. Commissioner Adler advised splitting the cost into two proposals, while Blaine Bradshaw suggested spreading expenses across two fiscal years (e.g., June 2025/July 2025). The new beacon tower is expected soon, and commissioners have looked at those plans previously. Donovan Jones will consult with Northwestern Energy and provide a final proposal for approval and signatures.

**A public comment was received from Elena Gagliano regarding the County website. She mentioned that the email provided on the site indicated that a proposed site plan was attached; however, no attachment was included.**

**CEMETERY DISTRICT BOARD VALLEY AND PHILIPSBURG CEMETERY BOARDS; APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES; Matt Latray Philipsburg Cemetery Board Secretary, Ron Wetsch Chairman of Valley Cemetery Board, and William Parke Valley Cemetery Board member joined the Commissioners for this portion of the meeting to address the process for trustee appointments per Montana statute 7-35-2132, regarding appointment of financial trustee. The group emphasized streamlining oversight without making the process burdensome while maintaining compliance. There was concern over expenditure approvals, equipment needs (e.g., a new lawn mower), and ensuring operational autonomy for routine decisions. Suggestions included quarterly reviews of financial reports by the commission and ensuring updates were provided without micromanaging board activities. Commissioner Kulaski moved to petition the District Court before Judge Jeffrey Dahood for Granite County Commission to be the financial trustee for both cemetery districts (permanent until further order of the Court) with the two local Cemetery Boards to submit their quarterly financial statements to the County Commission going forward. Commissioner McLure seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**The Session Adjourned at 11:16 a.m.**