

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS
MEAGHER COUNTY, MONTANA

February 7, 21, 28, 2012

Tuesday

February 7, 2012

8:45am-4:10pm

Met in Commissioner's Chambers

Meeting Called to Order:

Chair Schlepp called the meeting to order at 8:45am.

Commissioners Present:

Chair Nancy Schlepp, and Vice Chair Ben Hurwitz. Commissioner Herb Townsend joined the meeting by phone.

Ray Ringer and Bruce Smith—Road Report:

Road Department Supervisor, Ray Ringer, and Road Department Foreman, Bruce Smith, met with the commissioners to give the monthly road report. Smith told the commissioners about the batch of applications he had received for the road crew job opening. He said he had only received four applications and would prefer to wait till they can post the job as permanent, with the hopes of attracting more applicants. It was agreed to do so, re-running the newspaper ad for two more weeks for a "permanent position beginning April 1." It was also agreed to keep the current applications and hold them for consideration in the next round.

Commissioner Townsend left the meeting at 9:15am.

Schlepp told Smith she had received three calls from a gentleman with the State about road millings. Smith replied that he does not want them. Schlepp asked Smith to contact him directly and tell him. He said he already has but would do so again.

Smith then told the commissioners there were still issues on Martinsdale East Road. There is still enough leakage for water to accumulate on the road, then freezing and melting, turning the road into a rutted mess. The head gate needs fixed and the water shut off during winter he continued. Hurwitz commented that Russell Berg said he would take care of it when they visited with him a few months ago. The County will have to fix it, he continued, but we will make them pay. Hurwitz suggested writing a letter. He then said the first letter will be from the commissioners and the second from the County Attorney. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Musselshell Ditch Company demanding that the head gate be fixed and the situation taken care of.

Six-Month Budget Review:

Clerk & Recorder Dayna Ogle joined the meeting at 9:50am.

Lump-Sum Payments

Hurwitz raised the issue of the County making lump-sum payments to entities like Public TV and the Senior Center. He said it was something the County has been doing for a long time, but he was concerned after the recent audit of the issue of oversight of those funds. He suggested requiring such organizations that receive County money but do not run claims through the County somehow to document their use of the funds. Schlepp agreed but stressed the importance of being consistent with all entities that receive County money. She suggested drafting a letter to send out to such organizations, and having (auditor) Sharon Tripp review it beforehand.

Six-Month Budget Review

Ogle reviewed with the commissioners departments which are under 50% of their budgets for the year. She then recommended that budget amendments be done once, at the end of the fiscal year, unlike in the past when they were done periodically as needed.

Airport Loan Review:

Action 1:

RESOLUTION 2012-#04

Chair Schlepp moved to forgive a loan from 2006 from PILT for an avgas purchase, in order to remove the loan from the books. Hurwitz seconded. A vote was held and passed unanimously (2-0). It is therefore resolved.

Kari Jo Kiff—Health Nurse Update:

County Health Nurse, Kari Jo Kiff, met with the commissioners to give her monthly report. First, she told them she was not sure whether she would hire a replacement for her assistant, who recently informed Kiff she was leaving. She discussed some child protection issues that had arisen in the County. She informed the commissioners that she finally worked out an agreement with Blue Cross/Blue Shield to get them to pay claims for vaccinations for federal and state employees that they had not been paying before. Now, County Health Officer, Brett Williams, is listed as provider instead of the County Health Department. Finally she concluded by telling the commissioners she needs a new color printer/fax machine. They gave her permission to spend some of her remaining grant money on whatever she needs.

County Health Insurance Discussion:

Deputy Clerk & Recorder, Christy Rogers, visited with the commissioners to present the results of some comparisons she had done between the current County health plans and three that were proposed recently by Julie Blockey, an insurance broker. Also present were Commissioner Townsend (by telephone), Clerk & Recorder Ogle, Treasurer Sue Phelan, and Deputy Treasurer Shauna Porter.

Rogers began by telling the group that she had found that one of the three plans originally presented by Blockey appeared to be the fairest across the board for the employees, with only two employees who would not save any money. The Blue Dimensions Plan, she said, would result in an annual savings of up to \$27,000. If everyone signed up for the Tier 2 level, the County would save \$39,000 and the employees would save \$21,000. Phelan asked Rogers about prescriptions. Rogers replied that there is a 90-day mail order plan available through the local pharmacy. She added that if the County were to sign on with the plan, Blockey would come the next day to meet with employees and to discuss dental and vision insurance as well. Blue Dimensions, she added, would not carry over the deductible from MACo Health Care Trust, the current County insurance provider, but across the board the plan is fair.

Schlepp asked if there were any rate locks. Rogers replied that there were not, but the County would be in a more stable pool with less premium volatility. In recent years the maximum premium increase has been 8%. Schlepp pointed out to Townsend that it is similar to the current plan but with savings to the County of \$27-39,000. Townsend agreed those savings are hard to ignore but warned that it sounds too good to be true. He encouraged Schlepp and Hurwitz to reach out to Pam Walling, MACo's representative, to give her a chance to make a counter offer. Schlepp replied that they had tried several times to contact her. Rogers added that MACo can only give an overview, with no solid numbers until the end of February. Hurwitz pointed out that MACo is expecting a 7-10% premium increase for the year. There is no way they can compete with Blockey's proposal, he contended.

Townsend told Schlepp and Hurwitz he would not oppose whatever they decided but encouraged them just to be careful. He was not sure how a business could pay out more in claims than they take in from premiums. He told them it was their decision and left the meeting at 1:30pm.

Hurwitz asked Porter and Phelan what they thought of the proposed plan. He added that, while saving money for the County was important, he also wanted a good deal for the employees. Schlepp said they simply cannot ignore a possible \$30,000 annual savings. Phelan said she has had a positive experience with MACo. Hurwitz wondered what the next step was. Rogers replied that the commissioners should decide on the health insurance while she looks further into dental and vision. She added that Blockey wants to know the County's decision by February 21.

Schlepp added that she *needs* to know by March 1. Phelan asked if the County would have to stay with the plan for a certain period of time. Rogers was not sure.

Minutes:

Action 2:

Hurwitz moved to accept the minutes from the month of January with one change. Schlepp seconded. A vote was held and passed unanimously (2-0).

Redistricting Discussion:

There was a discussion regarding four separate draft plans of potential new legislative districts for Montana. The commissioners decided to support the plan that groups Meagher County with Broadwater County.

County Building Maintenance:

The commissioners next discussed the issue of maintenance for County buildings and whether to replace the previous Building Maintenance Supervisor. Commissioner Townsend joined the meeting by phone. Also present were Clerk & Recorder Ogle and County Attorney, Kimberly Deschene. Deschene began the meeting by going through a checklist of fifteen criteria an individual must meet in order to qualify as an independent contractor. The individual in question was Alvin Kujath, whom the County wanted to hire to shovel sidewalks and mow the lawn at County buildings. Deschene pointed out the risk of liability if something were to happen to Kujath on the job if he was neither an independent contractor nor county employee. Schlepp commented on the extremely bad workers' compensation laws in Montana. Hurwitz suggested hiring a separate entity to hire Kujath. He is not trying to hire on the cheap, he added. He just does not want to bring another employee onto the payroll. Townsend wondered why the County would not just pay workers' comp. Schlepp agreed. Deschene suggested hiring him as temporary part-time. Ogle said that would mean less than 20 hours a week and less than 12 months. Schlepp pointed out that they would also need a handyman and boiler person. Hurwitz countered that all handyman stuff can be handled by licensed contractors and, a boiler person could be found in the community.

Townsend agreed with hiring Kujath part-time and paying workers' comp on him. Someone else could be hired to take care of the boiler. Ogle read from the County Policy Handbook that that would mean no health insurance or other benefits other than those required by law. Schlepp pointed out that Kujath would need to know he would be taking care of the library and sheriff too. Townsend countered that the sheriff can take care of his own facilities.

Action 3:

RESOLUTION 2012-#05

Townsend moved to hire Alvin Kujath as temporary part-time with less than 20 hours a week, at \$8 an hour, with workers' compensation, to keep snow off the courthouse and library sidewalks and steps and to mow the lawn. Hurwitz seconded. A vote was held and passed unanimously (3-0). It is therefore resolved.

Safety Coordinator:

Schlepp mentioned that Angie Ringer had resigned as Safety Coordinator. Deschene asked how much of a benefit the County was receiving for having the safety program in place. Schlepp replied that they had yet to see any benefit but that Meagher County was in the highest risk bracket. It was agreed to have (Mid-Montana Insurance Agent) Jodi Tierney come to explain how much can be saved by instituting the safety program.

Jon Lopp—Sheriff Report:

Jon Lopp met with the commissioners to give his monthly sheriff report. Before he started, Hurwitz asked him if it would be possible to change the phone number listed on the County's FAA website from his own, to the number of dispatch. Hurwitz explained that he frequently receives calls from pilots all around the county asking about the status of the runway. Since he lives 30 miles outside of town, he told Lopp, he felt it would make more sense for pilots to call

dispatch instead. Lopp said it was possible and suggested getting him a list of contact people and their phone numbers so calls could be forwarded appropriately. Hurwitz said they would also get some answers to questions typically asked in order to give the dispatchers.

Lopp told the commissioners about some local folks that were arrested for exceeding the legal limit of medical marijuana they were allowed to grow. Deschene said she would ask the State Attorney General for help with the case due to the complexity of the new laws. He then told the commissioners that they have been receiving stuff from a military surplus place for the ambulance service, most recently some vital signs monitors that would have cost \$15,000 apiece. All they had to pay was shipping. He added that they had been trying to get some Humvees for Search and Rescue but was too late. Hurwitz told him he did not support Search and Rescue owning vehicles, as little as they are used. He would prefer to pay somebody with a vehicle that gets used more regularly.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

CTEP Grant Proposal:

Jim Richard, who has been writing grant proposals for the County to receive CTEP funds from the State Department of Transportation met with the commissioners to discuss receiving some kind of remuneration for his work.

Action 4:

RESOLUTION 2012-#06

Hurwitz moved to pay Jim Richard a flat \$250 a month, out of the Commissioners' Professional Services Fund (1000.000.201.410100.350), for the next six months as compensation for writing grants for CTEP funds. Schlepp seconded. A vote was held and passed unanimously (2-0). It is therefore resolved.

Claims:

Commission was presented Voucher #1247, CK#43556 through CK#43620 totaling \$49,887.09. Commission approved and signed checks as presented.

Meeting Adjourned:

Chair Schlepp adjourned the meeting at 4:10pm.

Next Meeting:

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Tuesday, February 21, 2012.

CLERK & RECORDER

CHAIRMAN

SEAL

VICE-CHAIRMAN

COMMISSIONER

Note: Minutes taken by Assistant to the Clerk & Recorder, Nathan Sanders
Distributed February 21, 2012 to Chairman Schlepp, Commissioner Hurwitz, Commissioner Townsend, and Clerk & Recorder Ogle

Tuesday
February 28, 2012
10:00am – 3:15pm
Met in Commissioner's Chambers

Meeting Called to Order:

Chairperson Schlepp called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

Commissioners Present:

Chairperson Nancy Schlepp and Vice Chair Ben Hurwitz. Commissioner Herb Townsend joined the meeting by telephone.

Mid-Montana Insurance—Property Review/Safety Program:

Safety Program

Jodi Tierney from Mid-Montana Insurance and Emelia McEwen from MACo JPIA/JPA met with the commissioners to discuss the County's safety program and to review County property. Also present were Clerk & Recorder, Dayna Ogle, and Bill Dodson from Arrowhead Meadows Golf Course.

Tierney told the commissioners she had asked McEwen to come along due to the recent resignation of the County's Safety Coordinator.

McEwen explained that an active safety committee must be in place. Claims must be investigated. Training must be carried out. Buildings must be inspected. A Return to Work program must be in place. And all of this must be documented. If not, no credits will be issued toward liability premiums.

Hurwitz asked what the premium is currently. Tierney told him \$58,000. She also told him that the County's MOD factor, at 1.25, is as high as it can possibly be. Schlepp told McEwen that the County would soon be hiring a contract maintenance person. She wondered if "safety coordinator" could be part of the job description.

McEwen explained that the County's goal needed to be getting the MOD factor below 1. At 1.25 Meagher County is paying 25% more than it would normally pay due to its claims history. Ogle added that by bringing down the MOD factor, Workers' Comp costs would fall, thus resulting in lower payroll expenses. Hurwitz asked what the County could save. McEwen told him by bringing the MOD factor down to .75, they would save 25%. Schlepp stated that the premiums at a 1.0 MOD factor would be around \$44,000. Ogle added that the County currently pays \$50,136 in Workers' Comp premiums alone.

Hurwitz asked how long it would take to reduce the County's MOD factor. McEwen replied that it would take at least three years with a safety program in place. So it would take three years to save \$10,000, and only if nothing happens claim-wise, he asked. McEwen reminded him that the County would still receive credits. Hurwitz replied that he is starting to get the idea that it might be worth serious money to do a safety program if it could be paid for. Schlepp asked McEwen if it might be possible to have a new maintenance person be the safety coordinator as well. McEwen said it was possible but that person would need to be computer literate. Tierney stressed the importance of focusing on the long-term.

Townsend argued the biggest savings to the County will come from reducing claims, but it has to be effective. If department heads do not buy in, it will not work. McEwen concluded by mentioning some webinars and workshops the County could get credit for by participating in. Dodson suggested that premiums would fall after four or five years without accidents regardless of whether a safety plan is in place. McEwen and Tierney agreed that that was the case. Schlepp said they would make no decisions today.

Property Review

Tierney handed the commissioners spreadsheets listing statements of value for County assets. She explained that if there was a value listed with the asset, that was the amount the asset was covered for. If no value was included, the asset was insured only for liability. Hurwitz asked Dodson what would happen at the golf course if the shed burns. Dodson stated that members' carts should be covered by the members themselves. Only the structure should be covered. Dodson told Ogle and Tierney he would get them a list of golf course equipment.

Townsend, Ogle, and Dodson left the meeting at 11:25am.

Rick Seidlitz—Fire/DES Update:

Rick Seidlitz met with the commissioners to give his monthly Fire/DES update. Of note, he mentioned that the RAC funds that were approved for Meagher County are still being held up. Seidlitz said Jess Secrest, from the Forest Service, has no idea when or how they would be made available.

Minutes:

Action 1:

Schlepp moved to approve the minutes from the February 7 and February 21 meetings with minor changes. Hurwitz seconded. A vote was held and passed unanimously (2-0).

Public Comment:

Jason Phillips from Meagher County News visited with the commissioners during public comment time. The commissioners reviewed the day's proceedings with him. He then mentioned that he had seen the Castle logo on some materials that had originated from the County. He reminded the commissioners that the Meagher County News owned that image and he would appreciate it if the image disappeared from County computers and materials. The commissioners told him they were unaware the newspaper owned the image and they would take care of matters right away.

Claims:

Commission was presented Voucher #1253, CK#43677 through CK#43719, totaling \$19,054.29. Commission approved and signed checks as presented. Also presented were Payroll Voucher #13, CK#218039 through CK#218051, totaling \$12,714.15; Payroll Deduction Voucher #1251, CK#43663 through CK#43669, totaling \$80,518.85; and Health Insurance Voucher #1252, CK#43670 through CK#43676, totaling 16,097.50. Commission approved as presented.

Meeting Adjourned:

Schlepp adjourned the meeting at 3:15pm.

Next Meeting:

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Tuesday, March 6, 2012.

CLERK & RECORDER

CHAIRMAN

SEAL

VICE-CHAIRMAN

COMMISSIONER

Note: Minutes taken by Assistant to the Clerk & Recorder, Nate Sanders
Distributed March 6, 2012, to Chairman Schlepp, Commissioner Hurwitz, Commissioner Townsend, and Clerk & Recorder Ogl

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS
MEAGHER COUNTY, MONTANA

Thursday

February 23, 2012

2:00pm-3:45pm

Met in Commissioner's Chambers

Meeting Continued from Tuesday, February 21, 2012:

Chair Schlepp called the meeting to order at 2:00pm.

Commissioners Present:

Chair Nancy Schlepp, and Vice Chair Ben Hurwitz. Commissioner Herb Townsend joined the meeting by telephone at 2:05pm.

County Health Insurance:

The commissioners were joined by County Attorney, Kimberly Deschene; Clerk & Recorder, Dayna Ogle; and Deputy Clerk & Recorder, Christy Rogers. Deschene began by saying the main issue in the decision is whether MACo can assess a penalty for leaving the Health Care Trust early. She said that it looks like they can, but never have. Rogers added that according to Julie Blockey, MACo's by-laws and their contracts are different so they have never enforced them. Deschene suggested it looks like they can assess penalties. Townsend said that Obamacare forced MACo to re-write their contracts regarding notification. He said he felt that MACo would not sue and to make the decision without fear of retribution. Schlepp pointed out that the County never priced these plans for July 1.

Hurwitz stated that there would be total savings of \$67,000 for the first year. And the County already knows there will be a rate increase of 7% for the second year. Rogers pointed out the 7% was actually an average increase for the last seven years. Townsend argued that because the County is "old and sick," and has received more in claims than it has paid in premiums, it is likely to take a hit in the future. Hurwitz replied that MACo would probably be glad to get rid of Meagher County for that reason. Townsend agreed that the Trust would be better, but added that that is not why the Trust was set up. It was set up to help counties when Blue Cross/Blue Shield was "ripping everyone off."

Hurwitz argued that the savings for leaving now are huge. Townsend countered that the County's share of equity in the Trust is over \$90,000. Hurwitz wondered if perhaps the Trust worried too much about building up its reserve at the expense of its members. Deschene said it would be awful to walk away from the \$94,000 in the Trust's reserve and then get hit with penalties on top of it. She said she would prefer to have an agreement in place before a move was made. Townsend reiterated that no one was going to sue anyone as long as the rules were followed. Schlepp suggested that even by waiting till July 1, there were sure to be significant savings. Rogers pointed out that the employees would have to complete new health questionnaires. Next some questions sent by MACo Executive Director, Harold Blattie, were addressed.

Hurwitz pointed out that the \$660 that most employees enrolled in the Trust are paying monthly would go up to \$733.92. With the County now paying up to \$610 per employee, the employee is still paying \$50. By moving to the new plan, however, the \$660 would drop to \$468. The employees would not have to pay anything out of pocket. And the County's payment would drop from \$660 to \$468. The savings are significant, he added. And he is almost offended, he added. "I say we quit them and go to Blue Dimensions," he argued. He feels bad that the County and its employees have been paying as much as they have. MACo is not even close to being competitive.

Schlepp wondered if they would pay out of reserve if they got hit with penalties. Deschene said the first step would be to try to mitigate. After all, the County is doing them a favor by leaving, she added. Schlepp said she has no problem leaving the Trust for \$60,000 in savings. Hurwitz said that is for the first year and there would be a \$50,000 savings even if premiums rose in the

second year. Schlepp asked if the County changes now and risks taking a hit? Or do they re-price for a July 1 change? Townsend countered Hurwitz, stating that the County has received 106% of its premiums paid out in claims. Add in 15-20% administrative costs and it is clear that MACo did not rip off the County. Hurwitz agreed with the point.

Townsend contended that Blue Cross cannot continue their savings year after year while losing 30% on premiums. He suggested staying with the Trust another year, answering Blattie's questions, doing more research. He just thinks the County is being premature. Plus, the County would be walking away from \$94,000. Schlepp pointed out that was only if the Trust were to fold.

Schlepp asked Deschene if this was a battle she would be willing to take on. She said she would be but that there was risk. Schlepp suggested re-bidding for a July 1 start date to be fair. Ogle pointed out that she would have four days to do so, given MACo's March 1 notification deadline. Deschene said that missing the deadline would mean paying an entire year of premiums.

Hurwitz pointed out that they had been asking (MACo Health Care Trust Marketing Coordinator) Pam Walling for numbers since December. MACo put the County in this position, he contended. Ogle added that Walling was supposed to have numbers to her by February 1. She was 20 days late. Deschene stated that the \$67,000 savings in the first year would recoup most of any potential hit. Townsend argued that the County should take its concerns to MACo. If they aren't providing service, they should go to them.

Deschene asked if it was true that other counties pay less. Hurwitz said it was true. Deschene argued that a county like Meagher needs to be in a bigger pool. Schlepp said she was not saying they would not bid again in three years, but if they could save \$120,000 over three years, they would be irresponsible not to do it. Townsend said his proposal is to stay at least one more year. If they have the same issues next year, they can change.

Rogers said if the County stayed with MACo, there is a chance she would drop her family from coverage. Deschene added that she is dying to add her family but can't at the current rates. Hurwitz said he was disgusted he paid \$15,000 last year. "People matter more to me than loyalty," he concluded. Schlepp added that Shirley Lucas told her that she cannot afford to stay with MACo anymore.

Action 1:

RESOLUTION 2012-#10

Hurwitz moved to change the county health plan from the MACo Health Care Trust to the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Blue Dimension Plan under discussion, and to consolidate the current dental plans into Guardian Dental, beginning March 1, 2012. The vision plans would be consolidated into one plan during open enrollment period in June 2012. Schlepp seconded. She asked if there was any further discussion. There was not. A vote was held and passed 2-1, with Townsend voting against. It is therefore resolved.

Townsend told Schlepp and Hurwitz not to feel bad if he tells them "I told you so" next year.

Payroll Issues:

Ogle told the commissioners there are significant payroll issues involved in the change as health insurance is a payroll deduction. Changes would need to be made across the board in the payroll system and that will take considerable time. She wondered if it would be possible to push payday back to Friday (March 2). Schlepp said they could address the issues individually but did not want to push payroll back.

Meeting Adjourned:

Chair Schlepp adjourned the meeting at 3:45pm.

Next Meeting:

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Tuesday, February 28, 2012.

CLERK & RECORDER

CHAIRMAN

SEAL

VICE-CHAIRMAN

COMMISSIONER

Note: Minutes taken by Assistant to the Clerk & Recorder, Nate Sanders
Distributed February 28, 2012 to Chairman Schlepp, Commissioner Hurwitz, Commissioner Townsend, and Clerk & Recorder Ogle

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS
MEAGHER COUNTY, MONTANA

Tuesday

February 21, 2012

8:15am-5:10pm

Met in Commissioner's Chambers

Meeting Called to Order:

Chair Schlepp called the meeting to order at 8:15am

Commissioners Present:

Chair Nancy Schlepp, and Vice Chair Ben Hurwitz. Commissioner Herb Townsend joined the meeting by speaker phone throughout the day.

Mark Pryor:

Commission met with Mark Pryor regarding boiler and maintenance for the courthouse and the sheriff's office. Commission agreed to discuss and contact him with their decision.

Claims Review:

Commissioners reviewed claims and approved for them to be processed.

Minutes:

Commission will review and address February 7, 2012 minutes at the next meeting scheduled for February 28, 2012.

Treasurer Update:

Treasurer Sue Phelan met with commission to give an update. Treasurer Phelan presented a cash sheet for the current month; which the commission reviewed and signed. Treasure Phelan reported that CSA has a mandatory upgrade. CSA sent a bill for the installation and training which Phelan questioned if she is required to pay. Commission asked for her to see if the county's IT can install and then do the training over the phone to avoid fees.

Phelan reported that a tax payer will be coming in to discuss his personal property tax and noted in her opinion the county should not be responsible for reimbursing overpayment. Phelan noted that her office has contacted around 180 for the WSS TV District Survey and at this point just over half is in support of keeping the district.

Building Maintenance Update:

Commission discussed the budget for the building department and what maintenance can be done within those funds. Carpet in the courtroom and windows throughout the building are priorities. No decision was made regarding the Building Supervisor Position.

Predatory Control:

Commissioner Hurwitz would like to have an ad in the local newspaper regarding predatory control to notify residence of service. Commission decided that Commissioner Hurwitz will write an informative article to inform land owners of the service available to them for predatory control.

Ken Mikesell-Personal Property Tax:

Becky Hurwitz-Ledger, Department of Revenue; Sue Phelan, Treasurer; Kimberly Deschene, County Attorney, and Ken Mikesell were in attendance to discuss Mr. Mikesell's personal property tax. Mr. Mikesell requested Meagher County to reimburse him for personal property

tax that had been overpaid. After discussion it was determined that Mr. Mikesell did not file the proper paper work and by law he was required to file within the current tax year of the discrepancy and he did not. Commission did not grant his request. Mr. Mikesell also asked if the commission would forgive the back taxes on a trailer house and pay him to dispose of it. He noted it is unlivable and was abandoned by renters. The commission discussed options and determined they would forgive the back taxes on the trailer but Mr. Mikesell will be responsible to dispose of it in a timely manner at his own cost.

Action 1:

RESOLUTION #2012-07

Commissioner Hurwitz moved to forgive back taxes totaling \$839.42 and to take the trailer house 1976 Blairhouse 12X60 M/H SN: 20762 Title#M785285 off the tax rolls, with the agreement that he will dispose of the trailer house in a timely manner. Chair Schlepp seconded. A vote was taken and passed unanimously, therefore it is resolved.

Sheriff Update:

Sheriff Jon Lopp met with commission to discuss the possibility of getting a camper trailer for search and rescue. Sheriff Lopp noted he would like to sale the current search and rescue trailer. He has two people that are willing to drive down and pick it up for only the cost of their fuel. Commission advised Sheriff Lopp to contact Fire Chief Seidlitz to see if it was possible to sale the current search and rescue trailer. The commission was supportive of getting a new trailer that was insulated, heated and has a bathroom if there is no cost to the county. Sheriff Lopp agreed to follow up with Fire Chief Seidlitz.

Action 2:

RESOLUTION #2012-08

Chair Schlepp moved to allow the Sheriff's office to purchase proposed trailer as long as there is no cost to the county. Hurwitz seconded, a vote was taken and passed unanimously, therefore it is resolved.

Sheriff Lopp also reported that the boiler in the sheriff's office quit working so they had repairs done. Hurwitz stated that the county is considering hiring someone to maintain both the sheriff's boiler and the courthouse boiler for a total of one hour per day.

Ambulance:

Commission reviewed the Bair Grant application for the proposed Ambulance Building and is in support of the grant application. At this time the Ambulance Building projected cost is \$108,000. Commission signed application acknowledging their support.

Hospital District Board Update:

Pam Sundstrom, Marcy Rethwisch, and Helen Hanson met with commission regarding the Hospital District. Commissioner Townsend joined the meeting by phone. Mrs. Sundstrom gave commission a printed bound copy of the districts findings. She also gave the commission a letter from Mr. Dracon requesting funds to print a copy of the district findings for each member of the district board.

Action 3:

RESOLUTION #2012-09

Commissioner Hurwitz moved to allow the district board to print additional copies of their findings to give to the district board members at the county's cost. Chair Schlepp seconded, a vote was taken and passed unanimously, therefore it is resolved.

Mrs. Sundstrom discussed the current correspondence between the district board and the hospital. The district board is concerned about not getting itemized financials from the hospital and would like to have them. They feel it is important to have so they can oversee public monies that the hospital is receiving. Both Ms. Rethwisch and Mrs. Sundstrom expressed frustration with not receiving the itemized financials that they have asked for. The hospital stated they will not give itemized financials due to confidentiality, but the district board feels they can receive most of the information and just leave out wages. Mrs. Sundstrom noted that they received the audit as requested and will be given a copy of the hospitals 990 when it is available in May. Ms. Rethwisch requested the commission to get a legal opinion from the attorney general to see what is public and what is private. Commissioner Schlepp stated she felt an opinion from the attorney general was not needed. Commissioner Hurwitz agreed that it was not needed at this time. Commissioner Townsend recommended that County Attorney Deschene look into it and also see what other information other counties receive from hospitals. Mrs. Rethwisch said she is very concerned about the management company, and the hospital finances. She feels all of the hospitals finances need to be scrutinized to make sure they are being financially wise. Chair Schlepp read Resolution #2011-71, "due to the clinic declining the acceptance of county mils, the Meagher County Commissioners support the continuation of the Meagher County Hospital District Board and the narrowing of its scope to a monthly report of any publicly available financial information." Chair Schlepp then encouraged the hospital district board to remain within their scope and to contribute towards the healing of the community. Commissioner Hurwitz added that the purpose of the board is to know how the hospital is doing and to inform the commission. Commissioner Hurwitz said he felt we are close to what we need. He recommended the district board write down specifically what they wanted and give it to the hospital. Mrs. Hanson asked what the district board is looking for in the detailed report. It was agreed the district board would write a letter to the hospital noting what they specifically wanted and Mrs. Hanson would also get a copy. Discussion was ended with Commissioner Townsend stating he appreciated the district board and representing the people of Meagher County.

Lunch:

Commission broke for lunch at 12:00

County Health Insurance:

Julie Blockey from Southwestern Montana Financial Center met commission to answer any questions they may have. Commissioner Townsend joined by phone. She noted that a number of counties are looking for bids, and she is here to help all employees make the proper selection. Some people are even better to go out independently. Carol Anderson was also in attendance to find out what plans the county is looking into. The commission agreed to look at the proposal and they will make a decision after they meet with Pam Walling from MACo later today.

Julie went over the proposal for a March 1st start date and a April 1st start date. They are the same plans but the premiums increase for the April 1st start date. She noted the plans are very comparable to what the county has now but the differences are that the Tier I has a \$35 doctor visit co-pay and a \$100 emergency room co-pay. She added that both co-pays go toward the total out of pocket. The Tier II has pharmacy coverage and the \$100 emergency co-pay. The premiums are significantly less than the current MACo rates. Life Insurance bid is from UNUM, they do not have any reduction due to age until age 70(65 is typical age). They will cover all employees, even ones that don't have the health insurance. \$20,000 life insurance for all employees (including commissioners). The spouses are \$10,000 and children over 6 months old will be \$5,000. This is a higher level of life insurance than the county has currently. UNUM gives a 3 year rate guarantee. The dental plans is proposed by Guardian and premiums depend on participation percent. The plan is comparable to Brokers which the county has. The Fort Dearborn policy the county has is minimal coverage at a lower premium. BCBS will run on a calendar year. The rates are good for 12 months and there are no contracts or commitments.

Commissioner Townsend gave a history of MACo Health care trust. They were created to help keep premiums down, and since then other insurance carriers are starting to be more comparable. He pointed out that our group has high utilization and are not very healthy.

Airport Board Update:

Bill Galt, Ed Roatch, Julian Theriault, Kurt Burns, and John Zawada, Mike Beckhoff (by phone) were in attendance to discuss the fencing project. Mr. Beckhoff explained that the fence is going to be eight feet tall with three rows of barb wire on top. There will also be an automatic electric gate to help with security. The county match is projected at \$18,696. Mr. Beckhoff noted that it has increased because the Federal Share went from 95% to 90%. He asked if the county still wanted to proceed as planned. After discussion it was agreed by the Airport Board and the Commission to proceed as planned. Mayor Theriault asked if the city will be responsible for any of the cost. The commission clarified the city will not have any cost, and that the county is paying the match. The commission then said they would like the Airport Board to be active and involved. They feel the Airport Board has a better understanding and knowledge of the Airport and want them to be active to keep up on all the details of the Airport. The Airport Board discussed many things such as lighting, wind socks, fuel purchases, keys, filters, purging system, documentation of weekly maintenance, snow plowing and the long range plan. The board agreed to have a meeting to designate a manager and to get organized, and then Chairman Roatch will meet with the commission to update them of their decisions.

Predatory Control:

Mr. Galt asked the commission if they would be willing to do away with the tax for predatory control. He currently pays the additional tax and does not use the service. He wondered if other ranchers also were paying for a service that was not being utilized. Commissioner Hurwitz told Mr. Galt they had decided earlier to put in an informative article in the paper so ranchers could use the service when needed. Commissioner Hurwitz agreed it would be good to survey the tax payers to see if it is even needed at this time, and that he would follow up.

MACo Health Care Trust Update:

Harold Blattie, Pam Walling, Carol Anderson were in attendance to discuss MACo Health Insurance. Commissioner Townsend joined by phone. Harold handed out their proposal and went over it with commission in great detail. One thing he noted was if someone leaves the pool they leave their equity behind. Mr. Blattie noted that Meagher County has about \$94,000 of equity at this time. If Meagher County stays with the trust and it folds then the county would receive the equity. Commissioner Hurwitz asked what the premium increase is for this year. Mr. Blattie said the projected increase is 11.2%, he added that the actual increase will be within 3%. The commission discussed the health plan options, coverage, deductibles, out of pocket costs, premiums, contracts, cancellation notification, what other counties are doing, and the permissive mills at great length. It was determined that the commission will recess until Thursday, February 23, 2012 at 2:00pm to make a decision. They will use the time to review all the information and have all their questions answered by then. Harold noted he values Meagher County and wants to retain the county as a member of the MACo Health Care Trust.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jerry Zieg and Bob Jacko from Tintina met with the commission to give an update on the mine. They reported that their shares are currently at \$0.54. They have had a good year and the drilling was successful. They have increased the volume from 7 million to 12.5 million. They are still in the early phases but are confident in the success of the mine. There is another deposit and feel it will bring them over a million pounds. They are drilling in the deeper zone and will re-calculate resource once they are done. Funding is solid and should not be an issue. They plan on advertising their stock soon. They are working on permitting and plan on starting the decline phase in the Spring in 2013, which is when the commissioners can see an increase in labors coming to the area. Mr. Jacko said the construction phase will last 18 months (short time) and that they will have a large crew, and will guess around 300 people. This phase will be around 2016 or later to break ground and construction. This date will definitely change over time. Increase in tonnage will add 3 to 4 years so they figure the mine will be operational for around 12 – 15 years.

Claims:

Commission was presented Voucher #1250, CK#43624 through CK# 43662 totaling \$25,671.15
Commission approved and signed checks as presented.

Meeting Recessed:

Chair Schleppe recessed meeting at 5:10pm until this Thursday, February 23, 2012.

Next Meeting:

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Thursday, February 23, 2012.

CLERK & RECORDER

CHAIRMAN

SEAL

VICE-CHAIRMAN

COMMISSIONER

Note: Minutes taken by Deputy Clerk & Recorder, Christy Rogers
Distributed March 6, 2012 to Chairman Schleppe, Commissioner Hurwitz, Commissioner Townsend, and Clerk & Recorder Ogle