November 1st, 2011 ♦ Tuesday

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 10:00 AM in their room at the Courthouse. Those present were: Chairman Larry Hendrickson, Commissioner Russ Tempel and Commissioner Rlynn Rockman.

1400 SOUTH ROAD

On 10/27/2011 Commissioner Tempel and Shawn Norick made a visit to Jim Hall (on Dean Hodges old place) about a tree issue with potential snow drift problems. A plan was implemented.

ROAD SUPERVISOR

Shawn Norick was in to discuss road issues. They're working hard to get over the main roads before the weather turns bad. Charlie's grader needs new tires; Fred Skierka may be interested in buying the old tires (they've been re-capped twice).

CONFERENCE CALL

On 10/26/2011 Commissioner Hendrickson and Cyndee Fraser made a conference call to Emelia McEwen at MACo to get signed up for the "on-line safety program".

TAX ABATEMENT LETTERS

The Commissioners sent official notification letters to Gavilon, EGT, and Columbia Grain, explaining their denial for requested tax abatements.

LEPC

Eight members attended the monthly LEPC meeting. Darrell gave the Commissioner's a proposal plan to update the "Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plans" for Liberty, Toole and Teton Counties. The proposals from Beck Consulting and Tetra Tech show a projected cost to Liberty County at $20,500.

Guest speaker, George Forsyth, made a presentation on ham-radio operation as related to DES. Local "ham operators" are Grover Briggs and Scot Kuyper. Their group can provide emergency communications when all other services have failed. Their group, North Central Amateur Radio, is on our resource list.

COUNCIL ON AGING

Rlynn attended the monthly Liberty County Council on Aging meeting. A recent expenditure was for a water softener at $1941. Harry would like the center to purchase a simple air-compressor and battery charger / booster for the shop for after hours / weekend use.

BOR

Mike Hilliard from the Bureau of Reclamation was in to inquire if we've heard from FEMA. They're expecting the rebuilding materials any day now and plan to store them in a building until next spring.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Commissioners composed an acknowledgement letter to various executives / supervisors (9) of EGT, Gavilon, and MDOT for their exceptional work and cooperation on the two "turning lane" projects on Highway 2.

WIC

The Commissioners received the WIC Satellite Agreement for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 from Hill County. The motion was made by Commissioner Tempel, and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to sign the agreement. The agreement was mailed back to Hill County.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

Hugh Brown provided a copy of a letter that addressed an inquiry by Clerk and Recorder Rhonda Pimley in reference to the recent raises awarded to only the elected officials of Liberty County and the ramifications of these raises as related to non-elected positions "tied in" with their elected counterparts (i.e., sheriff vs. undersheriff). It was Hugh's official interpretation that the Sheriff's deputies' salaries *need not be increased* as they presently fall in the 85% range of the sheriff's salary. This was the initial prior decision by the County Commissioners that led to this inquiry.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

ATTEST:_____ _____
Clerk Chairman

November 2nd, 2011 ♦ Wednesday

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 10:00 AM in their room at the Courthouse. Those present were: Chairman Larry Hendrickson, Commissioner Russ Tempel and Commissioner Rlynn Rockman.

HRDC

Commissioner Tempel attended an executive meeting for HRDC on Tuesday evening (11-1-11) in Havre.

CEMETERY BOARD

Commissioner Rockman attended the monthly cemetery board meeting. The group approved Rachel's response letter to concerned citizen, Ann Wickum, who inquired about the water budget at the cemetery district. In addition, the cemetery district donated an extra air-compressor to the Senior Center. Ted is presently working on a special stantion for use in urn burials. Ted currently has all of the equipment serviced and winterized.

PAYROLL

The current county payroll was offered for consideration. A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel, and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to approve payment of current payroll and deductions.

COURTHOUSE TREE

The big cottonwood tree on the south grounds of the courthouse has many dead limbs and some are rubbing on the building. Doug Riggin was contacted to offer his professional advice, services, and a quote on this project.

SENIOR CENTER BUILDING

The Commissioners spent some time at the new Senior Center, resolving breaker box issues, discussing motion lights at entry ways, and disinfection / drying of the heavy kitchen floor mats.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE CLERK

The Commissioners received the new job description for the clerk's position at the Justice of the Peace office. The Commissioners found the description to be very thorough.

ROAD SUPERVISOR

Shawn Norick stopped in to discuss road issues. Gavilon may be interested in the Valtra. Shawn just purchased eight rolls of wooden snow-fence. He will get one of the County's graders to "level out" the parking lot at the Senior Center.

RDO REPRESENTATIVE

Jerry Ridgeway, sales rep from RDO, stopped in to visit about new machinery. The new John Deere GP's are at about $325,000. At the Commissioner's request, Jerry called the main office to check on our promised "postless wing" for this winter's plowing.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Commissioners sent a letter to the PSC (Attention: Travis Kavulla) in support of the Kenfield Windfarms. A copy of the letter was e-mailed to Bret Kenfield for his records.

COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

All first draft Commissioners minutes were reviewed and corrected. A motion by Commissioner Tempel was seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to accept all of these minutes (with corrections).

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

ATTEST:_____ _____
Clerk Chairman

November 8th, 2011 ♦ Tuesday

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 10:00 AM in their room at the Courthouse. Those present were: Chairman Larry Hendrickson, Commissioner Russ Tempel and Commissioner Rlynn Rockman.

MOODY EQUIPMENT

Dean Heydon stopped in with a bid from John Deere (model #328D) skid-steer loader. The price is $39,100; and includes an 8' snow push ($2,850) and a rail pallet fork ($740).

TRACTOR & EQUIPMENT

On 11-2-11 Kraig Pester e-mailed the Commissioners a bid on a caterpillar (model #246C-S3CB) skid-steer loader. The price is $36,909 (does not include the 7' snow plow, which is priced at approximately $2,300).

VALTRA

The 2008 Valtra tractor was sold to Gavilon on 11-3-11 for the agreed price of $33,000. Our current debt on this Valtra is $21,000.

ROAD SUPERVISOR

Shawn Norick was here to update the Commissioners on road issues. The crew is finishing mowing, grading roads, and tearing out some trees. Also, Ray O'Brien called to discuss our order of 15,000 yards of crushed gravel (1" minus); he is going to begin the crushing. Tomorrow, the crew will begin installing snow fence. There are two culverts up north that need repairs.

EBMS

After discussion, a motion to use EBMS for our flex savings account was made by Commissioner Tempel, and seconded by Commissioner Hendrickson. The motion carried.

STATE OF MT LEASE CONTRACT

The standard lease contract between the State of Montana and counties was signed by the Commissioners and two copies were mailed to Garett Bacon of Helena.

LIBERTY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Commissioners received official written two weeks notice from dispatcher, Amber Thompson, that her last day on the job will be 11-18-2011. She has been offered a position elsewhere.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Holly Frederickson was in to visit about her new Justice of the Peace clerk position. The Commissioners approved the nice job description, reviewed county policy on hiring procedures, and authorized her to advertize the positions.

LIBRARY

The Commissioners received a letter from Peg Duffin, chairwoman of the Liberty County Library Board, which was initially sent to Cyndee Fraser (County Payroll Clerk). This letter requested wage increases effective 12-1-2011 as follows:

1. Bev Jochim = $11.50 (from $11.00/hour) = 5% increase;
2. Deb Haaland, Julie Gagnon, and Jennifer Hawks = $10.00/hour (from $8.50/hour) = 15% increase.

EMS

Region 2A, EMS, Incorporated contract for services was submitted for review and county dues of $250. A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel, and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to approve and sign the contract.

JOB SERVICE

Brenda Evans from the Havre Job Service stopped in with new information regarding the Montana wage and hour laws; minimum wage publication, training and employment notices; and "gold card" initiatives for veterans. This information was shared with Cyndee Fraser.

FAA

The Commissioners went to the Liberty County Airport to meet with Steve Engebrecht of the FAA to"check out" last summer's airport construction project. The Commissioners also discussed the long-range plans at the airport; i.e., purchase of land on the west end for airport expansion and readjustment. He reports that there may be a grant available at 95% payback (includes appraisal fees, land costs, and related charges).

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

ATTEST:_____ _____
Clerk Chairman

November 9th, 2011 ♦ Wednesday

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 10:00 AM in their room at the Courthouse. Those present were: Chairman Larry Hendrickson, Commissioner Russ Tempel and Commissioner Rlynn Rockman.

DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING

Ten county department heads attended a scheduled "safety" meeting with Tina Wood.
Individual Reports:

1. Shawn Norick: mowing is done; there is presently 6-8" of frost in the roads; the Whitlash Road is their priority for repairs.
2. Cyndee Fraser: the election ran smoothly yesterday; there was a 51% voter turn out.
3. Rachel Ghekiere: she recently got two "truant" students (children of elevator laborers) enrolled in school; she is concerned about a bigger / safer bus turn-out at Lothair.
4. Gayle Dahlen: taxes are coming in good; they sent out tax statements totaling about $4 million.
5. Glenda Hanson: they had one recent employee injury; they are getting on the new radio frequency.
6. Anne Seidlitz-Melton: there are several new law changes that she is reviewing; the passport representative was here to visit with Anne.
7. Jim Ghekiere: weed equipment is all winterized; he's working on weed grant renewals.
8. Commissioners: discussed decision on three tax abatement requests.

Tina's report on MACo Safety training:

1. Training to be done in groups via computer and video. We should consider some employee incentives.
2. Worker's Comp claims can be done on the computer by department heads and the two other written forms (Job Safety Analysis and Incident Report) must also be done.
3. This year's goals are completion of these Job Safety Analysis forms and a CPR class.
4. On-going "safety newsletters" are important; encourage employee participation; these are presently sent with salary stubs.
5. The Commissioners received sample copies of Job Safety Analysis and Incident Reports.
6.

WATER DISTRICT APPOINTMENTS

Appointments to the following water districts were submitted for approval and r-appointment:
Sage Creek County Water District: Rick Richter and David Tempel;
South Chester County Water District: Charles Saxton and Rory Seidlitz.
A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel, and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion carried to re-appoint the trustees as submitted. Letters were sent to the four trustees.

ELECTION CANVASS

The three Commissioners served as election canvassers for the "Town of Chester" election dated 11-8-2011. The official results are as follows:
Mayor = Noel Walston
Ward I = Scott Ross
Ward II = Tina Neer
Ward III = Rachel Ghekiere
The official counts were confirmed as submitted by the election judges. A motion by Commissioner Tempel was made and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to accept the results of the election canvass and approval of the candidates.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Commissioners received a response from Travis Kavulla (Montana Public Service Commissioner) about the Kenfield Windfarm. The Commissioners sent him an invitation to visit Liberty County regarding wind farm development.

FEMA

The Commissioners received a letter from the Department of Military Affairs (DES Division), signed by Tim Thennis, which confirms our expected payment from FEMA totaling $35,099.70 (which is 75% of $46,799.58). BOR was contacted.

CLAIMS

Commissioner Tempel made the motion to pay the monthly claims as they have been presented. Commissioner Hendrickson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

MOODIE EQUIPMENT

The Commissioners re-visited with Dean Heydon about the John Deere skid-steer loader, which they plan to use for county parking lots (i.e., courthouse, senior center, etc) and at various repair sites (i.e., culverts, cattle-crossings, etc). All three bids (John Deere, Catepillar, and Titan) with government discounts are very close (approximately $40,000), so we decided to buy from the local dealership (Moodie).

A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel, and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed that they order the John Deere #328D skid-steer from Moodie. The Commissioners signed a purchase order for Dean Heydon. Basic terms as follows: $7,800 down payment; $31,387 financed; $7,550 / year for 5 years at 6.5% interest; no penalty for early pay-out.

PERMISSION TO LEAVE THE STATE

A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to allow Commissioner Larry Hendrickson to be out-of-state beginning November 16th.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

ATTEST:_____ _____
Clerk Chairman

November 15th, 2011 ♦ Tuesday

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 10:00 AM in their room at the Courthouse. Those present were: Chairman Larry Hendrickson, Commissioner Russ Tempel and Commissioner Rlynn Rockman.

BOILER ISSUES

The Commissioners telephoned 4 Season Heating regarding boiler issues.

ANNUAL LIBERTY MEDICAL CENTER MEETING

Commissioner Rockman, Commissioner Tempel, and Commissioner Hendrickson attended the annual public LMC meeting on 11-9-2011. Ray Standiford was re-appointed to the Board. Kyle Rudolph has left the board. Commissioner Hendrickson updated Commissioner Rockman and Commissioner Tempel on what transpired at the regular monthly meeting that same evening.

At the annual meeting for Liberty Medical Center, the FYE statement as of 6-30-2011 showed total revenues of $6,329,638, total expenses of $6,516,724, and therefore, a yearly loss of $187,086. With other income (i.e., county subsidy, restricted gifts, and investments) totaling $724,135, LMC showed an excess gain over expenses of $537,049.

GROWTH POLICY MEETING

The Planning Board met to discuss, update, and approve the Liberty County Growth Policy for 2011. Board members present were Wayne Wardell, John Maatta, Steve Dahinden, Pat Harmon, Todd Wanken, and Jim Ghekiere. Pat Harmon was nominated to be the new chairman of the Planning Board. The motion was made by John Maatta, and seconded by Todd Wanken. The motion passed to approve the current growth policy. The motion was made by Commissioner Tempel, and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to accept the recommendation of the Planning Board to approve the policy. The policy will be "tweaked" as time goes by. Jim also discussed the sub-division rule and regulations with the group.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Steve Dahinden presented a check for $400 for the road and culvert work that our road crew did on his farm road.
Kraig Pester (Tractor & Equipment) stopped by to check on the skid-steer.
The Commissioners talked about the road crossing between the Whitlash Road and the Laird Road with Shawn Norick.

BOR

Mike LaFrentz and Mike Hilliard were in to discuss with the Commissioners future cost share projects on Tiber.

PAYROLL

The current county payroll was submitted for consideration. A motion was made by Commissioner Rockman and seconded by Commissioner Hendrickson to approve the payroll for payment. The motion carried. Of note, there was a total payout to Brad Maples for qualifying sick leave and vacation for $1,084.20 (before taxes).

LIBERTY COUNTY SHERIFFS OFFICE

Two new dispatchers have been hired: Susannna Skierka and Lewis Johnson.

AMERICAN PULSE LTD

American Pulse of Hingham donated 50 lbs. of lentils and 50 lbs. of peas to the Liberty County Senior Center.

HRDC

Commissioner Tempel attended the monthly HRDC meeting in Havre on 11-10-2011.

4-H ACHIEVEMENT

Commissioner Tempel and Commissioner Hendrickson attended the 4-H achievement night on 11-13-2011.

SAFETY LETTER

The Commissioners wrote a "safety letter" to employees requesting work station plans regarding emergency exits and rally places. These letters were sent out with payroll stubs.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

ATTEST:_____ _____
Clerk Chairman

November 22nd, 2011 ♦ Tuesday

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 10:00 AM in their room at the Courthouse. Those present were: Chairman Larry Hendrickson, Commissioner Russ Tempel and Commissioner Rlynn Rockman.

LOTHAIR BUS STOP

The Commissioners drove to Lothair to examine the bus turn-out area, as there was some recommendation for a larger turn-out/turning area for the bigger buses by the County Superintendent. The Commissioners feel the intersection of Willow Creek Road and 3700 South (located 0.2 mile south of Hwy 2) has plenty of room to serve as a bus turn around. Presently, there are maximum 5 high school and 18 elementary students who ride the Lothair route.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Shawn Norick was in to update the Commissioners on road issues. The Road Department needs two new tires for the backhoe at $700 each. The crew is presently screening gravel and hauling gravel to the 2000 road near Mattson's. They're also doing some work at Ben Taylor's plant (staff and equipment is being recorded). They've graded portions of the Whitlash and Laird Roads recently. Dale Carlstad graded and built up the Senior Center parking lot last week. Shawn closed Black Jack Road last week after a Hutterite vehicle left the road from the ice build-up near the springs.

VEBA

The Commissioners examined the VEBA Health Benefit Plan that was sent to them by Melanie from the Department of Administration (Health Care Benefits). The Commissioners will tweak it to fit their needs, and then get the final approval from Melanie before instituting the policy.

CONCERNED CITIZEN

Kord Ramberg stopped in to ask the Commissioners to grade the 1800 Road South at our earliest convenience as he's been hauling grain on this poorly maintained road.

EXTENSION AGENT

Jesse Fulbright stopped in to report the State Extension Office recently sold the old "suburban" that's been stored in our county parking lot. In addition he is finalizing his "Angel Tree" Christmas list.

SENIOR CENTER

Clausen's and Holts will be at the new center on November 23rd, 2011 to solve some recent issues regarding the freezing water lines, fuses blowing in the furnace and re-circulating pumps, continued poor air flow and heating problems in the kitchen, etc.

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

ATTEST:_____ _____
Clerk Chairman

November 29th, 2011 ♦ Tuesday

The Board of Liberty County Commissioners met in regular session on the above stated date at 10:00 AM in their room at the Courthouse. Those present were: Chairman Larry Hendrickson, Commissioner Russ Tempel and Commissioner Rlynn Rockman.

FIRE IN SWEETGRASS HILLS

Sunday evening (11-27-11) a fire was reported in the Sweetgrass Hills near the 7-room cave. Several area fire departments responded, but couldn't get to the actual site. The fire eventually subsided. It was probably started by a final-day hunter.

Monday (11-28-11) Sheriff Burrows got a call from John Wolery, who went up to the site to report that it's "flaring up" again with a lot of smoke. Burrows notified the Commissioners before calling Dave Hamilton at DNRC. They will send a fixed-wing aircraft to locate and identify the fire.

Tuesday (11-29-11) the Commissioners received a call from Eric Eneboe of DNRC. They located the fire site on Monday as section 18, SE4, 36N5E, which is state land due east of Mt. Brown at the bottom of Sage Creek. The fire consumed approximately 15 acres and is presently "smoldering" (with rock on 3 sides), so there's no immediate threat. They are prepared to come on short notice (if it flares up).

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Katie Heath from the office of Public Assistance stopped in to update the Commissioners on their programs (i.e. SNAP, Medicaid, & TANF). She produced the annual agreement for Hill, Blaine, and Liberty Counties (dated 10-1-2011 to 9-30-2014) for consideration. A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion carried to approve and sign the agreement. Katie will send the Commissioners brochures from her office.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Shawn Norick was in to report action at the Road Department. The skid-steer was delivered this morning; note that the tractor was not clean and had 20 hours of use. Breakdowns:

1. A ball-valve broke on the gravel screener, which should be fixed later today.
2. Charlie's truck has an electrical problem they're trying to fix.

They are presently patching holes on the truck route with screened gravel. Commissioner Tempel reported that something needs to be done on the Bear's Den Road. Shawn showed the Commissioners bids on GMC Sierra pick-ups for FWP and Missoula Co. Schools (ranging from $22,300 - $24,000).

PAYROLL

The County Payroll was offered for approval. A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion carried to pay the current county wages and salaries.

GALATA COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

The Commissioners received notice from the Galata County Water District that Elroy Skarderud resigned from their board effective 12-31-2011. Jim Fritz has expressed interest in serving on this board, so they are requesting his appointment for a 6 year term (1-1-12 to 12-31-17). A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion carried to appoint Jim to the board. Two letters of confirmation were sent to GCWD and Jim Fritz.

TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

The Commissioners received correspondence from the Montana Department of Revenue, for an application for the transfer of ownership of the Joplin Bar & Grill to Nancy Nelson. The Commissioners pursued the application and consulted with Karen Salo regarding the inspection.

SENIOR CENTER

The Commissioners met with the general contractor (Dave Clausen) and 2 subcontractors (Holt Plumbing & A.T. Klemens) for two hours Wednesday (11-23-11) to resolve continuing issues at the new center. Plan:

1. Install a supplemental furnace in the electrical room that will heat & cool the kitchen and the wall space plumbing; and
2. The make-up air will be made to re-circulate over the oven area only (as it was intended).

This job will require some new venting, removal and relocation of existing venting, a new thermostat and electrical work, and an access entrance to the crawl space above the kitchen and dining area. The job will be done within the next two weeks.
Expense was never discussed and it was clear that these fixes are necessary for proper operation and comfort of the building.

DPHHS

Melissa Tuemmler returned the Commissioners call regarding a reimbursement report totaling $358.50 from DPHHS. As it turns out, the County gets an 85-90% reimbursement on the inspection fees associated with all licensed establishments (restaurants, bars, trailer courts, etc.) the inspections are reported to DPHHS by the sanitarians and the reimbursements are paid quarterly.

ANNUAL AIRPORT REPORT

Commissioner Hendrickson completed the annual Airport Report for the Montana Department of Administration, and mailed in the requested filing fee of $635.00 (for the recent airport reconstruction project).

There being no further business, the regular meeting of the Board of Liberty County Commissioners was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

ATTEST:_____ _____

Clerk Chairman