

August 5th, 2014 ♦ 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 Rlynn Rockman, Commissioner Larry Hendrickson, and Commissioner Russ Tempel.

LEPC

Eight members attended LEPC monthly meeting. EMS hosted a "block party" in the Gagnon addition for street/ bike safety for kids who are curious when alarms go off. EMS office reconstruction is essentially complete. Tara is working on an MDT grant for a rescue truck. EMS has a new TV in the training room for teaching purposes. Darrell will pursue upcoming grant applications for generators at the Senior Center and CJI School.

COUNCIL ON AGING

Commissioner Rockman attended the monthly meeting for Council on Aging. Treasurers report = \$20,053. Still waiting to hear from Frontier Landscaping on boulevard bid for CTEP grant. Meanwhile, Glenda called nurseries regarding tree prices/ recommendations. No other issues.

COUNTY SALARIES

Current county wages were submitted for approval. A motion was made by Commissioner Hendrickson and seconded by Commissioner Tempel. The motion passed to pay these salaries.

SENIOR CENTER

Glenda Hanson came in to discuss Senior Center issues. The old bus is "heating up" on hot days on trips to Great Falls, so they plan not to use it for long trips/hot days. Glenda took a trip to Great Falls with driver Ken Watson, to observe his driving abilities.

PERMISSION TO LEAVE THE STATE

Holly Frederickson asked to leave the state from Thursday (8-7-14) to Monday (8-11-14). A motion was made by Commissioner Hendrickson and seconded by Commissioner Tempel. The motion passed.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

Conference call by the Commissioners with DOR (Gene Walborn and another rep) regarding current tax valuations. We learned that assessments for classes 4 and 8 "Industrials" (elevators, etc.) for last year were \$15.4million market value (\$463,000 taxable value) compared to this year \$24.6million market value (\$645,000 taxable value). The other centrally assessed enterprises (utilities, railroad, gas/oil, etc.) last year were \$35.3million market value (\$1.5million taxable value) vs. this year \$35.4million market value (\$1.6million taxable value). Therefore, these centrally assessed items are up \$300,000 in taxable values. Liberty County's \$400,000 total reductions in taxable values for 2014 are probably due to the \$100,000 personal property exemption. They will email us a better "breakdown" of the reports.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Marc Holmes stopped in to discuss road issues. Grading is being done due to recent rainfall. Our leased Case tractor was picked up by Torgerson's, who sold it. A replacement is coming.

EXTENSION SERVICES

The fiscal year 2015 Extension Services agreement between MSU Extension and Liberty County was offered for approval. The contract addresses the county's share of the agent's salary (\$24,756.00), administrative support salary (\$31,511.00), staff benefits and termination pay (\$23,400.00), and operations expenses (\$14,975.00); the total contract = \$94,645.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to sign the agreement.

WEED DEPARTMENT

Jim Ghekiere stopped in to discuss weed issues. We asked him to spray the county lot near the Senior Center and the boulevards south and west of the Senior Center parking lot. Two crew members (Mike Hamel, Charlie Diemert) will be going back to college soon. Crew member Wayne Wardell has been essentially part time due to blood pressure/ pulse/ medical issues. Last 2 crew members (Stan Huhtala and Eric Kelly) will work into the early fall on Russian Olives and late spraying.

Jim shared a recent incident on the spray boat. Wayne was controlling the injection pump, which has a sensitive adjustment screw that controls pressure on the diaphragm. The typical pressure is 35lbs., but Wayne adjusted the pressure to over 200lbs. and exploded the diaphragm. No injuries, repair costs = \$399. We told Jim to fill out an incident report with remedies for documentation.

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

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

August 6th, 2014 ♦ 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 Rlynn Rockman and Commissioner Russ Tempel. Commissioner Larry Hendrickson is available by telephone.

COUNTY CLAIMS

The current county claims were offered for payment. A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel and seconded by Commissioner Rockman. The motion passed to pay these claims.

BOR

Mike LaFrenz from the BOR stopped in to say “thanks” for removing the two toilets and cleaning up the two sites near the Marina. These two toilets went to the 4-H campground. FYI: We leased a crane from Dick Irvin’s to lift and re-set the two toilets (\$1480); we used county equipment (backhoe/trucks/etc.= \$0); estimated cost of supplies (hooks/chains/safety fences/fuel= \$2000); and estimated cost of road crew staff (wages/benefits = \$1,500). Therefore, we have around \$5000 invested in these two toilets. Current costs for similar (new/updated) toilets are around \$40,000 each! Our local 4-H Council Board has agreed to reimburse us for part of our costs.

SAFETY COORDINATION

Julie Gagnon will be attending a MACO recommended safety conference in Havre next week. Meanwhile, she completed an updated “written hazard communication” program for our safety manual.

LIBRARY

Librarian, Teresa Fenger, stopped in to discuss a storage shed for the back lot of the library. There are safety concerns in retrieving stored supplies for the library attic (pull-down ladder with steep stairs, confined spaces, narrow access, etc.). She’s looking at a 12’X 20’ structure with a metal roof/siding and a wide/secure walk-thru-door. A quote from Western Lumber = around \$4000 without a cement floor. We discussed a wooden floor on skids. Vern Holmes may have time to build it later this year. Discussion to continue.

LIBERTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Rlynn Rockman, Russ Tempel, and Rachel Ghekiere had a conference call with David Hofer and Todd Hanson regarding Liberty Elementary. Todd runs an educational consulting firm in Havre and has worked with Eagle Creek Colony for the past seven years. He presently is contracted with OPI on a Hays-Lodgepole school issue. He will be assisting with Liberty Elementary’s timely paperwork through the transition period in appointing a new Liberty County Superintendent of Schools. Dave Hofer wants everything to run smoothly, so not to jeopardize their status with OPI. Both men “thanked” Rachel for her dedicated service in the capacity as County Superintendent.

LIBERTY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Rachel’s last official day on the job is August 13th. The current school budget/levies are being finalized next week and must be available for Commissioner approval by August 31st. Rachel has agreed to process this budget paperwork for us on a contractual basis. We have yet to hear from the Republican Central Committee regarding names for her replacement.

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

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

August 12th, 2014 ♦ 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 Rlynn Rockman, Commissioner Larry Hendrickson, and Commissioner Russ Tempel.

WEED DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE

We requested a meeting with Wayne Wardell, Weed Department employee, to discuss several "incidents" involving his work performance this summer; namely,

1. Poor decisions after getting the land-tamer stuck at the lake'
2. Lack of attentiveness in the control/explosion of the pressure pump on the weed boat,
3. Recent judgment on cruising the Whitlash Road on the wrong side of the roadway during a busy traffic season (AKA: harvest time), and
4. Recent use and/or abuse of sick leave benefits.

After a long visit with Wayne, he admitted to continuing health issues and general unhappiness/dissatisfaction with his job at the weed department. We discussed liability issues and the fact that we have been very accommodating/workable to keep him employed this past 1 ½ years. Consequently, we asked Wayne to offer his resignation with two weeks' severance pay, effective immediately. If not, we will seek immediate action via MACO legal division to dismiss him. He will let us know tomorrow.

Additional note: Wayne vented about inconsistent changes in the weed department by management, poor communication between management/employees, abuse of equipment by some employees, need for better training of younger employees, spraying in adverse conditions, etc. He also expressed concern about us calling his physician (Heidi Fritz, FNP) in June, which he said "violated the HIPAA laws". We called only to ask Heidi's interpretation on "No limitations" regarding Wayne's job description/expectations.

SENIOR CENTER

Glenda Hanson stopped in to discuss center issues. They have a "hot" smell this morning in the pantry rooms; possibly a fan. Glenda did submit the "landscaping bid" from Great Falls nursery to Pam at Bear Paw Development regarding the CTEP grant.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Marc Holmes was in to discuss road issues. They worked Blackjack Road cattle guards yesterday to accommodate locals who are hauling hay. Two cattle guards at Engstrom's will be repaired tomorrow. Wanken's called about a culvert near the cemetery; it will be repaired this week. Marc and Charlie managed to retrieve around 400 yards of gravel from the pit floor at the Mark Wickum pit. Bus stop signs (2) have been requested for the Green farm on the Laird Road. Jerry is getting the new fire truck set up (new bed), then he will get the new service pickup done. They repaired the "settled" area near the border crossing last week. Marc will be on vacation on September 2/3/4.

TOWN OF CHESTER

Mayor Noel Walston stopped in to discuss the fire alarm siren. It was inspected by Jim Vinson (North Western Energy) and repaired by Dale Pimely (electrician); so it now works. However, a new pole will not be installed without further request because it requires an expensive 3-phase meter (there is presently no meter in place). In addition, the city would like the siren/pole relocated. Suggestion: is there some money available through 9-1-1 funds to purchase a modern digital siren? Jim Ghekiere was contacted. He will work with Tara Hendrickson to find answers.

WEED DEPARTMENT

Jim Ghekiere was in to discuss weed issues. We shared the new concerns with Jim. He provided two safety incident reports with corrective actions.

CJISCHOOL BOARD

Commissioner Hendrickson and Commissioner Tempel attended the monthly school board meeting today. They spoke in support of the GIS program.

COUNTY JANITOR

The Commissioner's received several complaints by courthouse and library staff about the "lack of thoroughness" of our new probationary janitor. All agree that "there's room for improvement". Commissioner Rockman and Commissioner Tempel met with the employee to address expected improvements.

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

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

August 19th, 2014 ♦ 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 Rlynn Rockman, Commissioner Larry Hendrickson, and Commissioner Russ Tempel.

CLAIMS

Claims were submitted for approval. A motion was made by Commissioner Hendrickson and seconded by Commissioner Tempel. The motion passed to pay these claims.

MEETING WITH ARTS CENTER & MUSEUM BOARD

Rhonda Pimley and Larry Hendrickson met with 10 board members on August 13th to discuss their mill levy options. After much discussion, both boards agreed to the "floating mill" option. The discussion continued by commissioners on August 19th, followed by a motion made by Commissioner Hendrickson and seconded by Commissioner Tempel. The motion passed that we accept the recommendation of the Liberty Village Arts Center Board and the Liberty County Museum Board that we start floating their mills, so they will no longer be capped.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Marc Holmes came in to discuss road issues. Recent heavy rains caused several wash-outs on the Whitlash Road, so graders are there. Also rain in south Liberty County, so Dale is working the Broadhurst Road. Rob Pulst is working the Haul Road. Recent repairs:

1. Cattle guard at Engstrom's
2. Hole in road near cemetery for Wanken's
3. Pulled beaver dam near Engstrom's
4. Rebuilt culvert south of Thorson's
5. Put up school bus stop signs at Green's due to limited visibility, and
6. Replaced 36" culvert west of Lanny Jones' house

Weed mowing is on the priority list. Justin Maki will start work next week. Marc will remove the "Sage Creek" sign from one of our road signs.

WEED DEPARTMENT

Wayne Wardell stopped in to sign his official resignation letter. He produced his county employment records, which shows there was no PERS withheld in the 3 years 2005/2006/2007. He would like clarification on this and would be willing to "buy back" those 3 years of withholdings.

PAYROLL

Commissioner Hendrickson made the motion to approve payroll. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tempel, and the motion passed.

MACO DISTRICT 4 & 5 MEETING

Russ Tempel attended the District 4/5 meeting in Chouteau on August 13th. Highlights:

1. Cascade and Hill County have gone to MACO health care.
2. The state may possibly reimburse to counties for purchasing the road easements.
3. Strong suggestion that payroll clerks attend a MACO meeting regarding special paperwork (i.e. Obama care/etc.).
4. Need for all fire fighters to have worker comp.

MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF OIL, GAS, AND COAL

We received a notice from MAOGCC, Inc. asking for our renewal to their association. A motion was made by Commissioner Tempel and seconded by Commissioner Hendrickson. The motion passed to join. Fees= \$1028.45

MONTANA STOCKGROWER'S ASSOCIATION

The MSA sent us an MOA (memorandum of understanding) for their predator control fund. A motion was made by Commissioner Hendrickson and seconded by Commissioner Tempel. The motion passed to sign this agreement. Total Liberty County stock cattle on tax rolls = 10,778 X \$.50/head= \$5389. The form was signed and mailed.

PAYROLL

Commissioner Tempel made the motion to accept for payment the current County Payroll as it has been presented. Commissioner Hendrickson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

MUSEUM

Betty Marshall came in asking about the status of the Museum's 501-c-3. We will have to check with Hugh Brown and get back to her.

WEED AND PLANNING

Jim Ghekiere wants to know if Liberty County should have professional subdivision review.

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

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman

August 20th, 2014 ♦ Wednesday

REPUBLICAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE & COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Commissioner Hendrickson and Commissioner Tempel met with Garth Good, Chris Kolstad, and Kathy Armstrong to discuss the vacancy and withdrawal of candidacy of the County Superintendent of Schools position. The Republican Central Committee recommends Kathy Armstrong as their replacement candidate on the 2014 General Election ballot.

Commissioner Hendrickson made the motion to accept their recommendation. Commissioner Tempel seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

August 26th, 2014 ♦ 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 Rlynn Rockman, Commissioner Larry Hendrickson, and Commissioner Russ Tempel.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Marc Holmes was in to discuss roads. Recent moisture will prompt grading - all roads need work! John Deere mechanic should be here soon to replace a valve unit (finally). They have a mouse problem with the loader at the Wickum pit. Justin Maki starts at noon today. Marc is taking a week's vacation next week.

MACO CREDITS

JPIA Loss Control credits for 2013-14 policy year = \$632 (2.59%X \$24,386 premiums). JPA Loss Control credits for same policy year = \$646 (.99% X \$65,302 premiums). We received these 2 credit checks from MACO.

SENIOR CENTER

Glenda Hanson was in to discuss center issues. Ken Watson resigned as bus driver. We visited with Glenda about making the facility more available to community functions (i.e. the annual community picnic that was held this weekend at Our Savior's Lutheran Church).

HUGH BROWN, COUNTY ATTORNEY

We asked Hugh Brown to pursue renewing the 501C3 status for the Liberty County Museum.

SCHOOL BUDGETS & LEVIES

Budget reports for the three Liberty County School Districts were presented by County Superintendent (Rachel Ghekiere) for approval. Rachel had calculated the County Transportation and Retirement Fund at 60%, 65%, 70% based on our oil and gas production taxes and interest income. Because the gas and oil distributions were down significantly from July 2013 to July 2014, Commissioner Tempel made a motion to approve the 60% calculations (motion seconded by Commissioner Hendrickson and passed). Additional motion was made by Commissioner Hendrickson and seconded by Commissioner Tempel. The motion passed to approve the three budget reports as submitted.

Recap:

	<u>Total all funds</u>	/	<u>Mill Levies</u>
CJI High School =	\$1,637,032.10	/	49.61
CJI Elementary =	\$1,804,830.68	/	69.00
Liberty Elementary =	\$202,416.13	/	131.09
Whitlash Elementary =	\$157,660.13	/	0
<i>(non-operational)</i>	<i>[\$15,605.60 will be coming from a state school block grant]</i>		
CJI High School =	78 ANB	(based on 3 year average of student population)	
CJI Elementary =	177 ANB		
Liberty Elementary =	25 ANB		
Whitlash Elementary =	0 ANB	(non-operational)	

Special notation:

*Liberty County will pay 97% vs. Hill County's 3% to Retirement/Transportation at CJI High School.
 Liberty County will pay 90% vs. Hill County's 10% Retirement/Transportation at CJI Elementary.
 The difference is due to the acquisition of Cool Springs into the CJI District.*

CORRESPONDENCE WITH MDOT

We received a note from MDT regarding project priorities for secondary roads. We responded with a letter requesting that MT 409 (Whitlash Road) get more priority on the list due to increased usage and future utilization with improvements. Our note was sent to MDOT and our three national congressmen.

LIBERTY COUNTY AIRPORT

We received a compliance inspection report of the Liberty County Airport (inspection date: 6-27-14) from Joe Nye, PE.

LIBERTY COUNTY MUSEUM

Commissioner Tempel and Commissioner Rockman attended the year end meeting of the Museum Board. Their beginning balance on 7-1-2013 = \$16,675.00 and ending balance on 6-30-14 = \$16,697.00. During the year, \$8,512 was disbursed to the Liberty Village. The museum presently has around \$21,000 in their memorial fund. Several proposed gifts (non-monetary) were discussed (i.e. a saddle from the Prescott family dating back to the 1920's). Several repairs requests were made:

- 1. Roof on Gau building
- 2. Sheetrock on ceiling to old school building, and
- 3. Move the gas pumps in the display lot.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

A motion was made by Commissioner Hendrickson and seconded by Commissioner Tempel. The motion passed to appoint Kathy Armstrong to fulfill the remaining term of Rachel Ghekiere (ending 12-31-2014) as County Superintendent of Schools. Holly Fredrickson swore her into the position. She will begin her duties on September 2nd.

GIS / GPS GRANT

Gail Shatkus came in to discuss some final items to be completed to bring the project up-to-date. Commissioner Hendrickson is to meet with CJI administration tomorrow.

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

ATTEST: _____
Clerk

Chairman