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COMMISSIONERS' PROCEEDINGS

March 26, 2024

Commissioners Scott Miller, Scott Blain, and Bill Bullock, and Administrative Officer Angela Newell were present.

8:30 Pledge of Allegiance.

Clerk and Recorder Macque Bohleen met to request a temporary schedule change for Crystal Roascio to accommodate the upcoming election and scheduled leave with other staff. Bohleen would like permission to change Roascio's schedule to 7 am-4 pm Monday – Friday until June. Blain moved to approve the requested temporary schedule change; Bullock seconded; discussion of leave for other staff and impacts to office and continuity of office functions, Bohleen feels the office can accommodate the absence; motion carried.

Election Administrator Crystal Roascio met to discuss the TextMyGov platform that would allow texts communication with residents. The software is \$5,700 for the first year which includes setup costs; Roascio planned to include in software in her budget request but is hoping to onboard earlier. Bullock is concerned the exposure outweighs the benefits. Commissioners would like feedback from other counties utilizing the software before making a decision.

8:50 GIS Coordinator / Fire Warden Tom Kohley met with Commissioners to note the Federal Surplus Case Loader is on its way to the port in Seattle. Also discussed possible road crew fire training on April 24th or 25th. Kohley presented a purchase request for the Zello push-to-talk software purchased under the Rural Fire Capacity Grant; the request was approved.

8:55 Bullock moved to close the meeting for a HR discussion; Blain seconded; motion carried. 9:00 meeting reopened.

9:05 Blain moved to approve the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Grant Concurrence Form; Bullock seconded; motion carried.

Cross presented a request to increase the Clerk to Public Health Director to 1 FTE and to reduce the Public Health Clerk to .8 FTE. Newell noted with vacancy there is room in the budget, but going forward the change would result in a .3 FTE increase in staffing. Bullock moved to approve hiring authorizations; Blain seconded; Bullock asked about timelines. Asbury noted the plan to advertise internally for the Public Health Director's Clerk starting this week and will post other position in the Carbon County News starting next week. Bullock asked about the status of funding; Cross noted both Clerks would be permanent positions that may use grant funding to backfill costs.

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Bullock asked what percent of costs will be covered by grants, Cross does not yet have the exact breakdown. Motion carried.

Cross presented hiring authorization for Crisis Coalition and Community Prevention Clerk which is an entirely grant-funded position. Cross would like to advertise the position as 32.5-40 hours per week to see if the flexibility will get a better candidate pool. Cross noted the position is a requirement of the Crisis Diversion Grant which is funded for a 3-year cycle going into the next fiscal year. Blain moved to approve hiring authorization for Crisis Coalition and Community Prevention Clerk; Bullock seconded; Bullock was concerned about reliance on DPHHS grants and tribulation at the State level. Blain noted the grant source is a more stable funding stream that seems to be underutilized. Motion carried.

Cross presented hiring authorization for a Public Health Nurse, noting she has received a letter of resignation from the current nurse effective the first week of April. Cross would like to advertise the position up to 40 hours per week and has full grant coverage for this year; grant funding for the position will phase out over 4 years. Discussion of advertising strategies. Bullock moved to approve hiring authorization for a Public Health Nurse; Blain seconded; Bullock again expressed concerns about the grant funding basis for the position and concerned about the continual effort to keep the Office staffed, Cross confirmed this is a permanent position. Motion carried.

10:00 BLM Representatives met for an update. Outdoor Recreation Planner Jenny Alexander, Field Manager Nate Arave, Fuels Specialist Stacie Thompson, Tribal Liaison Marsha Pablo, Geospatial Information Systems Coordinator / Fire Warden Tom Kohley, and Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) Coordinator Cyrina Allen were present. Discussed Meeteetse Access "reopening" following flooding. BLM would like to rebuild the Meeteetse Cabin and will need road access. Miller noted continued flooding issues with the change in topography and drainage following the Robertson Draw Fire. Miller is not interested in making significant upgrades to the road but would like a more permanent repair to reduce maintenance demands. Bullock concurred and noted the road is a public right of way created for "wildlife viewing." Commissioners noted the significant costs for installing needed culverts \$40K; and concerns about giving the perception of continued future maintenance for current and prospective landowners. Allen noted in 2023 flooding washed out significant sections of both Grove Creek and Meeteetse. There is an opportunity to get FEMA Public Assistance funding to study the drainage to determine an appropriate solution for the erosion issues but other funding will need to be secured for the permanent repairs. Allen noted the Federal lands adjacent to both roads can complicate projects also noting that some of the erosion issues originate in the Forest Service property up above. Discussion of the construction process for the cabin; road access would be needed for public use not necessarily for construction. Discussion of the need for revegetation to prevent further erosion.

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Allen noted revegetation would be part of the A&E Studies, but would still need a 25% match; Allen asked if BLM had any in-kind resources to help the County meet its match requirement. Allen also asked if BLM would be willing to issue a letter of support for future grant applications to fund the project.

Discussed wild horses. There is a draft Wildhorse Management Plan that BLM hopes to have finalized by the end of the fiscal year. The Plan proposes a reduction in the herd; at the last count, there were 198 horses the target is currently 150, but proposed to be reduced to 120. Arave noted the foal crop all died this year and BLM was able to do some fertility control on about 60 horses. Discussion of the area in their range and upkeep of fence lines.

Cottonwood Travel Management Plan. 340 miles of roads have been inventoried discussion of various alternatives; Alternative B is more restrictive and wildlife friendly, Alternative C is more focused on motorized vehicle access, and Alternative D is a combination of the two. Would like to increase signage and implement a loop system. Hope to make mountain bike trails accessible for ADA. Discussion of permitting processing for use of public lands for motorcycle and bike races. Discussion of Ride Pryor Mountain Side by Side Rentals; BLM is looking into the advertised use of BLM lands and trails. The current BLM Law Enforcement Officer position is vacant and they are relying on coverage from another field office.

Town of Bearcreek water system. Allen noted spring boxes that are the Town's water source are in the Robertson Draw burn area and have been fighting erosion issues. A broken pipe has significantly decreased water intake and the Town was denied FEMA assistance because the damage did not occur within the declared disaster dates. Allen noted the Town has applied for a mitigation grant for preliminary engineering, but will need another grant to pay for the construction. The Town is looking for assistance from BLM and the Forrest Service to help protect spring boxes until they can figure out a long-term solution. Allen asked if there is any emergency funding from the Robertson Draw fire remaining that could be used for revegetation or to place barriers above the spring boxes to protect them. If repairs are within the existing easement, they would be considered maintenance. Allen noted the Town is looking for erosion control and debris flow protection upstream; which would be outside of the current easement.

Discussion of Bridger Radio Tower Antenna permitting.

Discussed Greater Sage Grouse Amendments noting that general habitat areas have been added on the western flank of the Pryor Mountains and that the area in Elk Basin is being re-categorized as a priority habitat.

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Discussed the Subdivision off Ruby Creek Road. Rocky Mountain Timberlands failed to get access to the Subdivision lots. Currently there is no legal right-of-way across BLM to access the subdivision. Kohley noted requests for physical addresses; he has been hesitant to issue addresses as many people think that address provides legal access (which it does not). BLM staff noted landowners will need to go through the Sage Grouse Habitat Committee and BLM could designate a road easement next year in their travel plan.

Discussed Grizzly Bear Food Storage; a food storage Order will be in effect on any occupied habitat this year.

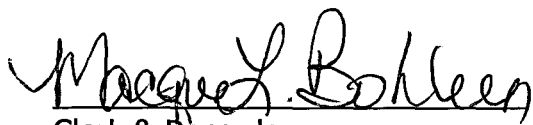
Discussed weed control following the Robertson Draw fire; Thompson noted reseeding efforts will begin in the next several months. BLM representatives, Allen, and Kohley departed.

11:40 Discussion of remaining ARPA funds, follow-up with Joliet and Belfry Seniors, and allocation for Fromberg EWP project match.

Bullock moved to approve employee time as submitted; Blain seconded; motion carried.

12:00 Adjourned.

ATTEST:


Clerk & Recorder


Commission Presiding Officer

Respectfully submitted: Angela Newell, Administrative Officer