

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS
MEAGHER COUNTY, MONTANA

Monday

February 2nd, 2026

8:45 a.m.-11:51 a.m.

Commissioner Chambers

Meeting Called to Order:

Chairman Hurwitz called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

Commissioners Present:

Chairman Ben Hurwitz, Vice-Chairman Errol Galt and Commissioner Rod Brewer were present for the meeting.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Ambulance Billing Software

Nancy Hereim entered the chambers at 8:45 a.m.

Hereim and the Commissioners discussed a newly available ambulance billing software that is more affordable than the software they recently contracted with. Hereim addressed the possibility of canceling the current contract, noting that no transactions have occurred to date.

Sheriff Report-Jon Lopp

Sheriff Jon Lopp entered the chambers at 8:58 a.m.

Lopp and the Commissioners discussed the recent fires in the area.

Lopp presented a Complaint Report for the month of January 2026 and a Complaint report for the year of 2024. In the month of January 2026, the Sheriff's Office received one hundred seventy-four incoming calls, twelve 9-1-1 calls, and one hundred fifty-seven people coming into the Sheriff's Office. For a total of three hundred forty-three people who contacted the Sheriff's Office.

For the month of January 2026, two incidents were required to be reported to NIBRS in the city and two were required in the County. Two tickets were issued in the city and eight in the County. Zero warrants of arrest were served in the city and zero in the county. Seven sets of civil papers were served in the city and one in the county.

Lopp and the Commissioners discussed grants for generators around town. There is a county share with the grants, 25% of the total spent. Lopp figured around \$175,000 for the generators which would be approximately a \$40,000 match. Lopp stated that generators are critical during power outages, particularly for individuals who rely on medical devices that must remain operational. Lopp will continue to update the Commissioners regarding the grant status and the cost of the generators. The Sheriff's Office currently has a 25-year-old generator that requires replacement, which would also include the purchase and installation of a new buried propane tank.

Lopp stated the Sky Ranch Repeater that was damaged in the wind was not covered on our insurance. He will be taking the repeater to Helena to get it looked at. He is also looking into moving the Martinsdale repeater.

Road Report-Jake Kusek

Road report was rescheduled for a future date.

Call for Bids-Lee Zehntner

County Weed Sprayer Lee Zehntner entered the chambers at 9:40 a.m.

Bids received on the 2021 Polaris Ranger 1000 XP with weed spray unit attachments were as follows:

\$11,500.00 – Doug Chapman

\$12,000.00 – Wylie Galt

Zehntner will make the necessary phone calls.

Commissioners and Zehntner also discussed putting the next Polaris ranger up for bid this spring.

New Fund and Fund Transfer – Briana Frasier

Finance Officer Briana Frasier entered the chambers at 9:58 a.m.

Frasier and the Commissioners discussed creating a new Fund for the fairgrounds to make it easier to track transactions. The Commissioners thought it wouldn't be necessary at this time.

Treasurer Report-Dayna Ogle

Treasurer Dayna Ogle was not able to attend. Finance Officer Frasier distributed the cash report for Vice-Chairman Galt's signature.

Montana Business Assistance Connection

Katherine Anderson, Community Development Coordinator, MBAC entered the chambers at 10:18 a.m.

Wes Feist, Helena Community Relations Manager, Northwestern Energy, and MBAC Board member entered the chambers at 10:18 a.m.

Carlos Joaquin, SBDC Regional Director entered the chambers at 10:18 a.m.

Brian Obert, MBAC Executive Director entered the chambers at 10:18 a.m.

Brian Obert introduced the group to the Commissioners. Obert stated they wanted to come over and introduce Joaquin to the Commissioners. Wes Feist stated that he has taken over for Howard Skejerm who has retired. Obert and the Commissioners discussed the empty lot across the street that was Van Oil to see if there was an update on what might be going in there. There was a concern for the gas spill from years ago on that lot. When they redid the road next to the lot, they ran into problems petroleum based as well.

Discussions also included the mine and the electric provider to the mine. Obert asked about the fairgrounds and the Commissioners updated them on the purchase of forty-seven acres of land to be used for the new fairgrounds. Vice-Chairman Galt inquired if MBAC could gather information on what to do with the lots that made up the previous fairgrounds site. Obert discussed a few options for low-income housing for the rodeo grounds and stated they will have a discussion with Helena Habitat who has purchased land recently for sweat equity homes. He also stated that they can come in and do soil testing if needed. Carlos Joaquin discussed a no cost counseling option available provided by MBAC, SBA and the Department of Commerce for anyone planning, launching or growing a business. He also discussed local upcoming events.

Obert stated that they will be back visiting White Sulphur Springs a few more times this year and will be able to gather information/ideas for the county to consider.

Board of Health-Eva Kerr

Mayor Rick Nelson entered the chambers at 11:18 a.m.

County Health Nurse Eva Kerr entered the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Victim Witness Advocate Laura Taylor entered the chambers at 11:31 a.m.

Mayor Nelson explained that they just had a sanitary survey done and the lagoon was originally believed to serve thirteen hundred residents, but it is actually rated for only one thousand, one hundred and thirty-four residents. Based on the current population, the city has sufficient capacity to add approximately sixty homes to the sewer system. The city is in the process of reapplying for its discharge permit. If the permit is not approved, the city could face fines due to elevated E. coli levels in the water. At present, discharge levels exceed state standards. Six to seven years ago, the DEQ granted a temporary allowance, requiring warning signs every three hundred feet stating that fishing and swimming were prohibited. If the city is required to implement advanced (EV) treatment, the estimated cost would be \$1–2 million, including treatment infrastructure and power to the lagoons. This improvement would allow for population growth within the town. Nelson stated that when the new hospital was annexed, its sewer and water usage was based on its current consumption, with no increase anticipated. He also stated that a new developer is planning to add twenty-two housing units across the highway from Rooney's in the near future.

Regarding water capacity, the city is currently at maximum capacity and cannot accommodate additional demand until another study confirms sufficient supply. The city anticipates being online with Willow Creek in 2027 after necessary preparation work is completed. Projected costs for the Willow Creek project range from \$2.1 to \$2.5 million, and there are currently two grants to help offset expenses. In the past eight years, rates have not increased, however, discussions to increase rates by approximately \$1.25–\$3.00 per month to cover the resulting debt.

Taylor asked for an updated Commissioners signature on the VOCA Grant.

Kerr presented the Commissioners the Report for the County Board of Health for their review. During the year, there were four reported cases of COVID-19, one case of campylobacteriosis, and one lead poisoning investigation. Several animal bite incidents were reported, with rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) recommended in one case. Influenza activity included forty-three cases of Influenza A, resulting in one death and four hospitalizations, and nine cases of Influenza B. This brings the total number of influenza cases for the year to fifty-two.

Influenza, COVID-19, and other respiratory illnesses have increased in the community over the past several weeks. Through the PHEP Avian Flu grant, she was able to purchase at-home influenza and COVID-19 combination tests. The adolescent vaccination campaign has begun for sixth-grade students, as well as catch-up vaccinations for junior high and high school students. As in previous years, these clinics will be held at the Health Department rather than in schools. This process is slower and requires additional reminders, particularly due to new guidelines and recent changes that add to the challenges. Brief discussions were also held regarding sanitation services, ensuring AirBnB properties are up to date, and Safe Serve courses.

County Health Report - Eva Kerr

County Health Nurse, Eva Kerr, presented her report for the County Health Department for January, 2026. She explained that there is a new staff member at the State working with the Child Mortality Review Team. When a child under the age of 18 dies, the case must be investigated and then presented in Great Falls. She will need to travel to Great Falls for the most recent case and will check to see if a deputy can accompany her. There were discussions on Immunizations, year-end reports for grants, the workforce grant, advertising for new clients in the Homemaker program, and Stop the Bleed classes. A suicide training instructor from the State conducted a training for first responders, the school crisis team, and hospital staff. The training was funded through the Community Education Grant, and twelve individuals attended. Taylor and Kerr will go and teach CPR classes at the school this month.

Kerr presented a letter to Chairman Hurwitz regarding approval for a Bair Grant Application. As well as a letter of intent for Homemaker and Respite Programs.

Claims Approved:

Commissioners were presented with Checks #63300 through Checks #63333 for the amount of \$23,110.05. All Checks were signed as presented.

Meeting Adjourned:

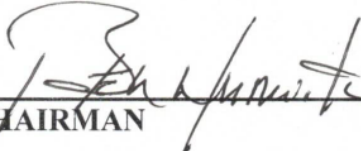
Meeting was adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

Next Meeting:

Commissioners are scheduled to meet Monday, February 9th, 2026.



CLERK & RECORDER




CHAIRMAN



VICE CHAIRMAN

SEAL





COMMISSIONER

Note: Minutes taken by Clerk to the Commission Briana Frasier.
Distributed February 9th, 2026 to Chairman Hurwitz, Vice Chairman Galt and Commissioner Brewer, and Clerk & Recorder Liv A. West.