

JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
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ROBERT MULLEN, CHAIR

LEONARD WORTMAN

CORY KIRSCH

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**PROCEEDING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY OF JEFFERSON, STATE OF MONTANA  
November 22, 2016**

**Present:** Commissioners Mullen, Wortman and Kirsch; Steve Haddon, County Attorney; Paul Backlund, Terry Murphy

The meeting was called to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**REPORTS**

Commissioner Mullen noted the receipt of the October cash report from the Treasurer.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Commissioner Wortman read a letter from Three Forks Ambulance regarding the proposed Whitehall area ambulance district and that it would take money away from their service. They also complained that they were not contacted about this, and only heard about it through word of mouth. Commissioner Wortman stated that there is no plan to change the way that ambulance service is dispatched, if the district is, in fact, created. He noted that there is a process for an area to opt out if they so choose if the district is created, and further noted that the Three Forks Ambulance service isn't a part of Jefferson County, so they wouldn't be notified. The Commissioners noticed that Terry Murphy was in the Clerk and Recorder's office, and asked him in for comment.

Commissioner Wortman stated that he is surprised to hear that there are people in southern Jefferson County that didn't know about the ambulance issue. He stated that it comes down to notification to people when the Commission has a decision to make and we hear this all the time. He stated that we can't afford to mail everyone a letter on ever decision that we make. We make every effort to make people aware of what we are doing, posting notices in the newspapers and in public places. He asked is it the County's responsibility to make sure everyone is aware of what is going on, or is it the citizen's responsibility to find out what is going on. He stated that when the ambulance group picked the boundaries for the district, they choose the school district

boundary, because it is easy for the Clerk and Recorder to identify everyone in the district. He noted that there is a process to opt out of the ambulance district, if people choose to. He stated that the Commission received a letter from the Three Forks Ambulance service area that claimed that we are trying to take away their service area, and asked why we didn't notify them. Commissioner Wortman noted that there is no Three Forks Ambulance service area in Jefferson County; we have no agreement with them. Whether the district is formed or not, from his discussions with the Sheriff, there will be no change from how ambulances are currently dispatched.

Terry Murphy stated that out in his car at the moment are petitions from almost everyone in a certain area requesting to be left out of the district. They would like the boundary changed before it goes to a vote, rather than trying to change something after the fact. There is a community fight in Whitehall and the people in his area are not part of that. The first that he heard of the district is when Lee Bruner called him and asked if he would be willing to run for the board. Everyone else found out about it from him.

Commissioner Wortman asked Mr. Murphy if he has any ideas of how to fix the notification process; if there is any place to post an agenda. Mr. Murphy stated that he doesn't think that anyone in the area takes the Whitehall paper, with the exception of himself and his brother. Mr. Murphy will be added to the Commission e-mail list, so that he will receive the Commission agenda on a weekly basis. He can notify people in the area of he feels that they would be interested in a particular topic. Commissioner Wortman stated that the Commissioners routinely have night meetings around the county to make it easier for people to attend, and asked Mr. Murphy if he felt that people would attend a meeting in his area. Mr. Murphy stated that if there is an issue on the agenda that concerns them, people would most like attend.

Commissioner Wortman shared a letter that was given to him. The letter was from Shannon Gardner to Jenifer Wise, who also lives on Rocky Road. The letter requested the return of a liability release, signed and notarized, for continued use of a road through her property. Permissive use of the road will be revoked if the signed release is not returned in ten business days.

Commissioner Mullen noted the receipt of a letter from Bob Sims regarding the Whitehall ambulance district, asking a variety of questions. He stated that he will work with the County Attorney to answer the questions from Mr. Sims.

## **CALENDAR REVIEW**

- 11/22 Master Plan Committee - 4:00  
Clancy Water & Sewer District meeting - 6:30
- 11/23 Whitehall town council - 6:00
- 11/24 Thanksgiving - County Offices closed
- 11/28 Center for Mental Health Governing Board - Great Falls - 10:30  
Conference call re: Sugar Beet Row - 2:00

## **COMMISSION REPORTS**

Commissioner Kirsch reported that he attended the DUI Task Force meeting. It was business as usual. One interesting note is that the Boulder Chief of Police is hoping to start a canine program.

Commissioner Kirsch reported that he attended the Ten Mile Collaborative meeting on Wednesday; they are putting together comments on alternative 4.

Commissioner Kirsch reported on the Tri-Co fire meeting. They are still trying to get their LLC together. Lewis & Clark County is trying to give the Title III grant money back to us.

Commissioner Kirsch reported that on Monday night he attended the Boulder town council meeting. They passed the mobile home ordinance on third reading. They also discussing closing the RV dump station behind the city hall, as it is competing with local business.

Commissioner Wortman reported that on Tuesday he and Commissioner Mullen attended the museum board meeting, which was very interesting. Paul Backlund was elected Chair.

Commissioner Wortman reported that he attended the JLDC meeting on Wednesday afternoon. It was a short meeting, and they discussed plans for upcoming projects.

Commissioner Wortman reported that on Monday he attended the groundwater study report in Whitehall. There was discussion about putting together a brochure with layman's terms for the public.

Commissioner Wortman reported that on Monday night he attended the Fair Board meeting. We had some issues with the bleachers, that in the opinion of engineers and the people working on the bleacher cover, should be condemned and not used any more. There were some very rough estimates for repair or replacement ranging from \$45,000 to \$250,000. We will have to make a decision at some point on what to do with them.

Steve Haddon, County Attorney, stated that this certainly creates a liability issue, but the bigger issue is that less than a year after the bleacher cover was installed and they now feel bleachers should be condemned? Commissioner Wortman stated that the bleachers came out of the Carroll College gymnasium and they were put up with no cover for several years. The seats have been replaced, but the problem now is the wood risers.

Commissioner Mullen reported that he attended the Boulder Senior meeting. They discussed upcoming projects and coming events. He wanted to engage them in discussion, making them aware that Whitehall Transportation will be bringing a bus through to go into Helena to go shopping. He is not sure if anyone is going to take advantage of the offer.

Commissioner Mullen stated that he has put up a notice on the north end office, outlining the hours he will be available. He will be there Monday 8 - 10 and Tuesday through Thursday 8 - 9.

**ITEMS FOR COMMISSIONERS' ACTION OR REVIEW**

**RESOLUTION 36-2016 CREATION OF SUGAR BEET ROW RSID**

Commissioner Wortman stated that we have received the resolution from our bond council, but it will need some tweaks. Commissioner Mullen stated that the County Attorney brought over a loan resolution from USDA, which will need to be put on a future agenda. Steve Haddon, County Attorney, stated that he would like to look over the numbers.

Both resolutions will put on a future agenda for signature, after review by legal.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

**ATTEST:**

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**BONNIE RAMEY  
CLERK AND RECORDER**

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**BOB MULLEN, CHAIR**

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**LEONARD WORTMAN, COMMISSIONER**

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**CORY KIRSCH, COMMISSIONER**