

**PUBLIC MEETING
MARCH 13, 2014
MINUTES**

The Lewis and Clark County Commissioners Public Meeting was held on Thursday, March 13, 2014, at 9 a.m. in Commission Chambers Room 330 of the City-County Building, 316 North Park Avenue, Helena, Montana.

Chair Susan Good Geise called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Andy Hunthausen and Commissioner Mike Murray were present. Others attending all or a portion of the meeting included Eric Bryson, Marni Bentley, Sherrel Rhys, Laura Erikson, Misty Edwards, Kellie McBride, Robbie Culver, Merissa DeMuir, Bonnie Bowler, Freyja Bell, Carole Solomon, Peter Sullivan, Rick Hays, Sarah LaRue, and Rita Cortright, Recording Secretary.

Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone recited the Pledge.

Consent Action Items. (Eric Bryson)

- a. Vendor Claims Report for the Week of March 10, 2014. (Marni Bentley)
- b. Amendment #1 to Joint Powers Insurance Authority Bylaws, Article X(3) Board of Trustees. (Eric Bryson)

Eric Bryson reported on the consent action items and recommended approval.

No public comment was received.

Commissioner Murray moved approval of consent action items 2 a. and b.

Commissioner Hunthausen seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

Professional Services Contract between Lewis & Clark County and Blue Ridge Services, Inc. (Sherrel Rhys) The Commissioners will consider the contract to complete and perform a Comprehensive Operational Review of the Lewis & Clark County Landfill and the City of Helena Transfer Station in an amount not to exceed \$62,240 for the period March 13 – June 30, 2014.

Sherrel Rhys, Solid Waste Manager, presented the Professional Services Contract between Lewis & Clark County and Blue Ridge Services, Inc. for a comprehensive review of the County landfill and City of Helena Transfer Station in the amount of \$82,610. Under a Memorandum of Understanding approved by the City Commission on March 10, 2014, the City would reimburse the County for half of the contract amount. The Scratch Gravel Solid Waste Board fully supported the study and pledged \$41,805 to cover the County's portion of the study. The contractor was selected from a list of firms with expertise in solid waste management, not through a bidding process. The study was intended to determine the cost-effectiveness of all processes, including waste disposal and recycling. A public information gathering process was being considered; data collection would begin immediately based on information routinely gathered. Neil Bolton will attend a Joint City/County meeting to address questions; the final comprehensive report will be presented to the Commission in a public meeting.

Discussion –

Commissioner Murray expressed concern that the contract was with a company outside of Montana. Sherrel Rhys explained the decision to go with Blue Ridge Services was made by

Public Works Staff and the Scratch Gravel Solid Waste Board.

Commissioner Hunthausen represented the Commission on the Scratch Gravel Solid Waste Board, and confirmed the group had evaluated qualifications and was unable to locate Montana firm with the same level of expertise in evaluating solid waste operations as Blue Ridge Services.

Eric Bryson noted the Commission's preference for hiring local vendors when possible; however, it was not possible in this case. The selected consultant was well qualified and was expected to produce a comprehensive evaluation.

No public comment was received.

Commissioner Hunthausen moved approval of the Professional Services Contract between Lewis & Clark County and Blue Ridge Services, as presented.

Commissioner Good Geise seconded the motion.

Discussion –

Commissioner Hunthausen stated the process had been long in reaching this point. Some inefficiency in the process between the City and County had been identified; hopefully, the evaluation would provide guidance in improving efficiencies that would result in savings to the residents, and he supported the motion.

Commissioner Murray noted the on-going contract with Stahly Engineering since the inception of the dump; they provided periodic evaluation on the closing and opening of new cells and ensured the operation stated within State protocols. However, this was a special niche firm from California and he would support the motion.

Commissioner Good Geise supported the contract as there were many questions that hopefully the comprehensive evaluation would answer.

The motion carried 2-1; Commissioner Murray voted no.

Community Development Block Grant Housing Application to MT Dept. of Commerce for YWCA Rehabilitation Project. (Laura Erikson) The Commissioners will consider the grant application in the amount of \$450,000.

Laura Erikson, Grants Coordinator, reported on the Community Development Block Grant Housing Program Application in the amount of \$450,000 for the YWCA to rehabilitate their historic building by making electrical, plumbing, ADA accessibility upgrades, kitchen renovation, and fire suppression installation. Residents would be relocated during the construction. The Commission had sponsored two previous applications for the YWCA; a Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities, and a HOME Funds application. A change in the MT Dept. of Commerce requirements now allowed transitional housing eligibility. The most recent housing grant sponsored by the County was for the River Rock Senior Low Income Housing that was now closed out, allowing for this sponsorship intended to provide the funds necessary to complete the renovation project. SMA was the project architect, and Stahly Engineering was providing project management.

Public comment –

Kelli McBride, YWCA Executive Director, provided history on the YWCA building. The building was constructed in 1918; doors opened in 1918 and little had been done to upgrade the building since then. A new boiler was installed in 2008; a new roof put on in 2010. An electrical failure on the first floor in January cost \$500 in repairs. A survey of area homeless people taken on January 22, 2014, indicated 210 women and 166 children were in need of services. The YWCA provided transitional housing services for women and children; 48% served last year were from Lewis & Clark County. YWCA staff worked closely with area agencies and the School District to ensure resident children were supported and attended school. The current Capital Campaign brought in \$155,000 from the community. The Treacy Foundation provided \$325,000 for kitchen remodeling; and a \$15,000 grant had been secured. Ms. McBride urged support of the CDBG grant application.

Freyja Bell, Treatment Court Coordinator, stated her close work with the YWCA and the services they provided to the community. She offered her support for the project and urged Commission support for the application.

Sarah LaRue, YWCA Board President, stated the board was dedicated to completing the project. The CDBG funding would provide the balance necessary to complete the renovation. YWCA staff was recognized for their selfless dedication to residents. Not rehabbing the building now would be doing the community a disservice, and she urged support for the application.

Rick Hays, 504 Dearborn, Helena, saw this as a community issue; a huge need that required Commission and community support. The CDBG grant was intended for organizations such as the YWCA, whose board was totally committed and managing well the operations of this non-profit organization.

Peter Sullivan, 28 Reeders Village, Helena, a member of the community since 1953, had observed the operations of the YWCA over the years. Kelli McBride was commended for her work in moving the organization forward, and he urged support for the application.

Carol Solomon, 501 N. Park Ave., Helena, house mother at the YWCA, spoke about the women who had come to the YWCA seeking support, and the tireless efforts of the staff in helping them refocus and restore their lives. Deficiencies in the building were listed and she urged favorable consideration of the application.

Commissioner Hunthausen moved approval of the Community Development Block Grant Application to the Dept. of Commerce for the YWCA Rehabilitation Project, as presented.

Commissioner Murray seconded the motion.

Discussion –

Commissioner Hunthausen stated this was a community issue and the County Commission should fully support the efforts. Kelli McBride, Laura Erikson and Robbie Culver were recognized for their efforts.

Commissioner Murray expressed his appreciation to the YWCA Board and Kelly McBride and to Rick Hays for their leadership.

The motion carried 3-0.

Eric Bryson recognized Laura Erikson for her passionate efforts in seeking and obtaining funding for the YWCA project.

Professional Services Contract between Lewis and Clark County and Solid Ground Consulting. (Misty Edwards) The Commissioners will consider the \$6,000 contract for research and analyses of similar Montana programs funded by open space bond monies to identify effective strategies for identifying and attracting landowners into the Open Lands Program. Contract period: March 11 – June 30, 2014.

Misty Edwards, Adm. Assistant, presented the Professional Services Contract between the County and Solid Ground Consulting in the amount of \$6,000 for research and analysis of similar Montana programs funded by open space bond monies. The consultant would develop a set of strategies designed to enhance the County's ability to identify and increase participation in the Open Space program. Proposal had been solicited through newspaper advertisements, resulting in three proposals. A subcommittee reviewed and scored the proposals, and recommended to the full Open Lands CAC on March 4 the acceptance of the proposal submitted by Solid Ground Consulting. The Open Lands CAC voted 10-0 to offer the contract to Solid Ground Consulting in the amount of \$6,000. Staff recommended approval of the contract.

Commissioner Murray expressed concern with granting a \$6,000 contract to an out-of-county firm. Misty Edwards noted the consultant, Bill Long, resided in Helena; his company was based in Portland, and specialized in conservation easements. The other two proposals were more marketing and development focused.

No public comment was received.

Commissioner Hunthausen moved approval of the Professional Services Contract between Lewis & Clark County and Solid Ground Consulting, as presented.

Commissioner Murray seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0.

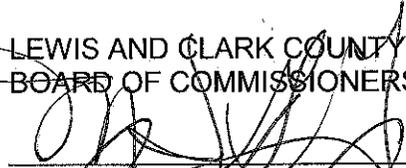
Public comment on any public matter within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not on the agenda above.

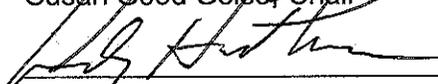
There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

ATTEST:


Paulette DeHart, Clerk of the Board

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Susan Good Geise, Chair


Andy Hunthausen


Michael Murray