



PUBLIC MEETING

June 10, 2025
MINUTES

The Lewis and Clark Board of County Commissioners Public Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 9:00 AM in Commission Chambers, Rm 330.

Roll Call

Chair Candace Payne, Commissioner Andy Hunthausen and Commissioner Tom Rolfe were present. Others attending all or a portion of the meeting included Roger Baltz, Nicho Hash, Keegan Shea, Sarah Sandau, Beth Norbeg, Fred Sargeson, Misty Edwards, Angie Hubbard, Phil Drake, Jenny Chambers, Dakota McKinnis, Larry Sickerson, Carol Cloninger, Tom Rygg, Jennifer Whitfield, Jolene Jennings, Brian Coplin, Leonard Cloninger, Jackie Rygg, Stephanie Wallace, Heather Irby, Emily McVey, and Brandi Spangler Recording Secretary.

Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone recited the pledge.

Consent Action Items

- a. Memorandum of Understanding Between Lewis and Clark County and Blue Bell Lode Water Users Association, Inc. (Audra Zacherl)

[2:37] Roger Baltz, Chief Administrative Officer, reported on consent action item 2a and recommended approval.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Rolfe and seconded by Commissioner Hunthausen. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

Action Items

Discussion of Petition to Address Health, Environmental, and Code Violations. (Candace Payne)

[4:58] The Commissioners discussed a petition regarding health, environmental, and code violations at 7710 N. Montana Ave.

[8:39] Nicho Hash, County Attorney, stated that the County Attorney's office has looked into this matter. The property had a contract for deed when the owner passed away and the previous owner is also deceased. The estate closed and a warranty deed was filed to her name. That makes this situation unique.

[10:00] Dakota McKinnis, granddaughter of decedent, introduced herself and provided contact information. She is unsure who is all on the property. Corrina, the decedant's daughter, may be on the property but she is hard to get a hold of and no one knows where she is for sure. She is uncooperative and owes her ex-husband money who has a lien on the property. She and her father are actively trying to gain ownership of the property.

[17:14] Beth Norberg, Environmental Program Supervisor, has had a complaint open since 2017 about the property. Started as concern over junk vehicles and potentially one occupant in an RV. They had sent out violation request but found property owners are deceased. No violations can be enforced for Community Decay until the property changes ownership. They update photos and files every month. Finding violations of onsite septic regulations are difficult because you have to charge one person. The Sheriff's Office have visited the site seeing no one to talk to. The trailers are behind locked gates with aggressive dogs. This has been the most challenging case they have had. The situation is very unfortunate and rare.

[21:21] Commissioner Hunthausen listed all the county departments who have looked into the situation and the Commission can only act within their boundaries. They have looked into possible next steps. Everyone is concerned, but he is unsure how the Commission can take action without a property owner.

[30:45] Mr. Hash stated that as a board, they can encourage staff to continue to address the issue and try to clarify property ownership the best they can. The Commission's authority is derived through state statute and written notice must be given to the owner, and since there is no property owner, the shift is made to violations on the land. Once there is a property owner, that sets the catalyst for how the county can act. Since the county has no property interest, they cannot petition a judge to reopen the estate. The circumstances are very limited to reopen an estate.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

[54:22] Larry Sickerson, 1000 Wild Wind Rd, is concerned about the property and unpaid taxes. Is that an option to influence or force the hand for someone to step forward and take ownership. Is this lien legal? Is any action taken after the deaths legal?

[57:11] Carol Cloninger, 1210 Ropers Rd., neighbor of property has witnessed law enforcement, animal control and fire department on the property. She is concerned about fire hazards.

[1:05:16] Tom Rygg, neighbor, appreciates the time speaking about this matter. He thinks MACo may be able to put something before the legislature to help out in situations like this.

[1:07:50] Larry Sickerson, neighbor, thanks Beth Norberg for her work and efforts.

[1:09:09] Commissioner Payne spoke to Dakota McKinnis.

Grant Task Order Award to Lewis and Clark Public Health from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. (Sarah Sandau)

[16:46] Sarah Sandau, Public Health Grants Specialist, presented a grant task order award from the Department of Public Health and Human Services Behavioral Health and Disabilities Division for the Crisis Diversion in Montana Communities Grant in the amount of \$396,161.11. The grant period is July 13, 2024 through June 30, 2027. Staff recommends approval of the award.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Hunthausen and seconded by Commissioner Rolfe. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

Subrecipient Agreement Between Lewis and Clark Public Health and Many Rivers Whole Health. (Sarah Sandau)

[1:24:37] Sarah Sandau, Public Health Grants Specialist, presented a subrecipient agreement with Many Rivers Whole Health to reimburse purchase of the Journey Home Facility to reopen a crisis facility through the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Crisis Diversion in Montana Communities grant in the amount of \$324,600. The agreement begins upon signature through June 30, 2027. Staff recommends approval of the agreement.

[1:27:58] Jennifer Whitfield, Many Rivers Whole Health, gave an update on the progress of opening the Journey Home and ways they are working to get the Journey Home name out there to gain referrals for enough patients to sustain funding for the facility.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Rolfe and seconded by Commissioner Hunthausen. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

Subrecipient Agreement Between Lewis and Clark Public Health and the United Way of Lewis and Clark Area. (Sarah Sandau)

[1:48:55] Sarah Sandau, Public Health Grants Specialist, presented a subrecipient agreement with the United Way of Lewis and Clark Area for their housing tenancy work through the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Crisis Diversion in Montana Communities in the amount of \$52,455.24 with the subrecipient to provide \$65,570 in match. The agreement begins upon signature through June 30, 2026. Staff recommends approval of the agreement.

[1:50:42] Emily McVey, United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area, gave an update on the housing first work happening currently and future plans for tenancy work around the state.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Hunthausen and seconded by Commissioner Rolfe. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

Contract Between Lewis and Clark Public Health and Christa Weathers Consulting, LLC. (Sarah Sandau)

[2:02:08] Sarah Sandau, Public Health Grants Specialist, presented contract with Christa Weathers Consulting LLC to speak about Naloxone at the Coordinating Hope: A Summit on Support and Recovery event in the amount of \$300. The contract begins upon signature with work completed by June 30, 2025. Staff recommends approval of the contract.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Rolfe and seconded by Commissioner Hunthausen. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

**Contract Between Lewis and Clark Public Health and Montana Public Health Training Center.
(Sarah Sandau)**

[2:05:50] Sarah Sandau, Public Health Grants Specialist, presented a contract with Montana Public Health Training Center to speak about burnout and compassion fatigue at the Coordinating Hope: A Summit on Support and Recovery event in the amount of \$600. The contract begins upon signature with work to be completed by June 30, 2025. Staff recommends approval of the contract.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Hunthausen and seconded by Commissioner Rolfe. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

Designation of Fiscal Year 2026 Earmarked Alcohol Tax Funds. (Misty Edwards)

[2:10:14] Misty Edwards, Finance Coordinator, presented the designation of Earmarked Alcohol Tax Funds for FY 2026. Staff recommends funds be distributed as follows: Boyd Andrew: 25%; Intermountain Community Services: 25%; Florence Crittenton: 20%; YWCA: 15%; and Helena Valley Addiction Services: 15%.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Rolfe and seconded by Commissioner Hunthausen. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

**Subdivision Improvement Agreement Extension Request for Scenic Vistas Major Subdivision,
Project No. SUBD2025-010. (Applicant: Able Planning LLC, Joe Nistler) (Planner: Angie Hubbard)**

[2:15:23] Angie Hubbard, Planner II, presented a request for extension of completion date under the existing Improvements Agreement of the Scenic Vistas Major Subdivision until July 16, 2026. Staff recommends approval of the extension.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Hunthausen and seconded by Commissioner Rolfe. The motion Passed on a 3- 0 vote.

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

Adjourn

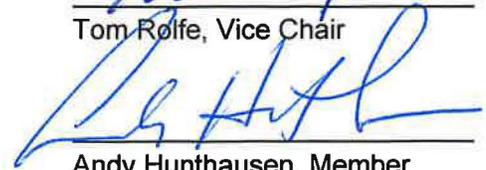
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:29 am.

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Candace Payne, Chair



Tom Rolfe, Vice Chair



Andy Hunthausen, Member

ATTEST:



Amy Reeves, Clerk of the Board