

MACO District 10 &11
Missoula County Courthouse
June 11, 2009

MINUTES

Carol Brooker called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Self-introduction of all attendees was completed.

District 10

Flathead:

Lake: Paddy Trusler, Bill Barron

Lincoln: Marianne Roose, John Konzen, Tony Berget

Sanders: Carol Brooker, Tony Cox

District 11:

Mineral: B.J. McComb, Clark Conrow

Missoula: Bill Carey, Michele Landquist, Jean Curtiss

Ravalli: Carlotta Grandstaff, Greg Chilcott

Guests: Pat Ingraham, HD-13; John Ostlund, MACo 2nd VP, Mike McGinley, MACo President; Harold Blattie, MACo Executive Director; Sheryl Wood, MACo Associate Director; Vern Petersen, Joint Powers Trust; Douglas Moeller, Wayne Noem and Gary Larson – MDOT, Lori Kaharl – Sanders County Receptionist

Approval of August 21, 2008 Minutes: Greg Chilcott moved to accept the August 21, 2008 minutes. B.J. McComb seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Steve Kreal – Correctional Risk Services: Sheryl introduced Steve Kreal who spoke about his company, Correctional Risk Services, which offers counties an insurance policy for inmate medical expenses incurred outside of jail. They also provide medical claims management services.

Nominations: Harold announced the nominees for 2nd Vice President of the MACo Board of Directors Executive Committee as Greg Chilcott, Vic Miller, Andy Hunthausen and Connie Eissinger. The nominee for Fiscal Officer is Cindy Johnson. There were no changes to these nominations.

Elections: Marianne Roose motioned to elect Tony Berget as District #10 Chair. Carol Brooker seconded the motion. The motion passed. Paddy Trusler motioned to elect Bill Barron as District #10 Vice-Chair. John Konzen seconded the motion. The motion passed. The terms are for two years.

Western Interstate Regional Overview: Greg Chilcott gave a brief overview of the Western Interstate Regional conference. The hot topic was renewable energy.

National Forest Counties Coalition and Schools Coalition update: Marianne Roose spoke about the likelihood that funding will drop in the future, and emphasized that the coalition needs to strategize for funding over the next two years and that aligning funding with an energy bill is their best shot for funding. She urged members to work at getting school superintendents educated as to the benefits they receive and get their involvement in the process.

Guest Legislative Speaker – Pat Ingraham: HD 13 Representative, Pat Ingraham spoke against Senate Bills 57 & 58 which adds three new employees to update maps for Dept. of Revenue. Representative Ingraham also informed attendees about HB150 which gives greater protection to counties in regard to extreme sports. She also asked county officials to support their Clerk & Records and Elections Administrators in regard to mail ballot elections.

MACo Staff Report:

Harold Blattie reported that they are “nearly” at full staff. There currently is a paralegal position that has yet to be filled.

Harold reported that Becky Berger is urging counties to consider using the 9-1-1 money for salaries but, Harold disagrees with this recommendation. He is not sure how the shortfall will be made up when the 9-1-1 money is gone. Instead, he believes the money is better off in capital reserves. The equipment for 9-1-1 is very high tech and very expensive. That money may be needed to one day replace or update equipment.

The group was reminded that if they have not yet turned in their lists of former elected officials, Mike Harbour still needs them.

Sheryl Wood encouraged the group to remember to respond to the survey regarding how MACo is working. Sheryl also visited with the group about how e-mails, texts, twitters, etc. on the job are all considered public information. Sheryl said that an Electronic Record Retention Committee has been formed. The same laws that apply to the retention of any piece of paper will also apply towards electronic records. Patti Borsberry is beginning work on this; she will be working with the Counties to form policy. MACo is watching this carefully and will keep everyone updated. In addition, Sheryl pointed out to the group, that if anyone is conducting public business on their personal computer, it is also considered public information.

Sheryl briefly discussed setting the salary of the County Attorney. She reiterated that the County Attorney’s salary is set by the County Compensation Board and cannot be more than the District Judge’s salary.

Harold Blattie briefly went the calculations of the FY 2010 Entitlement Share payments. Harold reminded the group that they needed to be mindful that there was a minimum wage raise in January, and there is a raise scheduled for July (\$7.25/hour) that will be effective 7-24-2009.

Harold visited about the COLA / Consumer Price Index Adjustment. He said that using COLA used to be in statute but, in 2001 the Compensation Board was created and COLA was taken out of statute. This year's annual adjustment has been calculated at 3.8%.

The Department of Revenue and the reappraisal cycle was discussed next. House Bill 658 changed the law regarding certified values and the newly taxable properties. There is now no phase in on a new house. Harold said that at this time he is unsure of what other impacts will come out of this new law. Harold also spoke about anticipation of the certified taxable valuations from the Department of Revenue. He is being told that the counties can anticipate receiving those numbers from the Department of Revenue around August 25th to the 31st but, he believes that may be overly optimistic. MACo is recommending that the counties build their budgets around the current taxable value.

Harold visited more about the history of the laws regarding the budgeting timeline. In the beginning the timeline was very well thought out but, two pieces of legislation has changed the timeline. Harold believes that this issue needs to be addressed at the next legislature. He believes that the schools need to be brought on board with this process as well.

MACo Fiscal Year 2010 Budget: Harold began with going through the anticipated revenues. He said that for MACo it is recommended that they maintain a minimum of 25% in the cash reserves. Harold pointed out that about \$536,000 is projected in association revenues for FY2009. They will budget for about \$534,000 in anticipated revenues for FY2010. Harold emphasized that under anticipating revenues and under spending budgets is always a good concept in budget planning.

Harold also briefly discussed the PILT assessment; .75 of 1% goes toward dues. He said that the catch up dollars for the PILT increase should be arriving soon.

MACo President's Report:

Mike McGinley extended gratitude to MACo for their assistance in getting stimulus money for the counties.

MACo Legislative Report: Harold Blattie addressed the past Legislative Session and the MACo Resolutions and Bills. Included with the MACo packet that had been handed out was a spreadsheet detailing these bills. Some of the bills that Harold and Sheryl briefly touched on included:

- HB 244 – Clarify law on absence by county officer
- SB 208 – Include nonprofit hospital employees in county health plan
- SB 726 - Inmate Medical Bill – affectionately named the groundhog bill by Harold Blattie. It is gone for now but, not dead forever. Sheryl and Harold believe that some pro-active steps need to be taken regarding this issue. In the meantime, they recommend that the counties consider contracting through NACo's Inmate Medical Program.
- HB 466 – Providing paid military leave for all public employees

- HB 545 – Revise membership of county compensation boards-This increases the number of members but, is not in effect until next year.
- HB 563 – Legalization of county roads – Harold indicated that this will not effect the Gas Tax distribution.
- SB 489 – Revise taxation laws related to pipelines. Harold explained that it maintains status quo however, Omimex believes status quo is one thing, while others believe it is another.
- HB 645 - Implement receipt of and appropriate federal stimulus and recovery funds- Harold informed the Commissioners that there will be a 12 page contract to sign, and in his opinion this contract needs some fixes. He also indicated that indemnification will be emphasized.
- SB 491 – Revise status of subdivision property tax for health insurance premiums (Permissive Levy). Harold said that they are in the process of developing a spreadsheet to assist the counties in their calculations. The spreadsheet is currently in final testing.
- HB 678 – Revise opencut mining laws (Gravel & RIGWAT) Harold told the group that DEQ is trying to get funding for more staff. MACo has vigorously opposed this fee based funding. 2 ½ ¢ / yard payable when you self-report to the state annually. Harold directed the Commissioners to the spreadsheet that outlined what each county would have had to pay in the past.
- SB 86 – Revised gambling laws. The counties are no longer responsible for raffles and the Gambling Control Division is now, under the Department of Justice.
- 9-1-1 legislation was briefly discussed.
- Mental Health – There were 4 bills of significance effecting mental health issues. They were HB 130, HB 131, HB 132 and HB 634. Sheryl said that a firm commitment from the legislators has been made to begin supporting these issues.

Harold concluded their legislative review by stating that the Interim Committees have already begun meeting. There is a spreadsheet in the packet outlining the Committee Appointments and Interim Studies for the 2009-2010 Interim. Harold also stated that this last legislative session was, in his opinion, a “good session”.

Guest Speakers – Montana Dept. of Transportation:

Gary Larson explained the STIP Project document which encompasses a 5-year window of various phases of projects. Due to the high cost of producing the document, it is now available online at www.mdt.mt.gov or by calling 406-444-6110.

Wayne Noem handed out the secondary road priority lists to each county and reviewed it.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.