



DISTRICTS 4 & 5 MEETING MINUTES

JULY 13, 2022 | DISTRICT 4 HOSTED | LIBERTY CO. COMMUNITY & SENIOR CENTER, CHESTER

COUNTIES IN ATTENDANCE

District 4

X Blaine
X Chouteau
X Hill
X Liberty

District 5

X Cascade
X Glacier
X Pondera
X Teton
X Toole

CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE

Chair Hendrickson called the meeting to order and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Deputy Director Jason Rittal called the roll. All members were represented in both Districts.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

Minutes

Chair Hendrickson called for a motion on approval of minutes from last year. Commissioner Peterson made a motion to approve—second by Commissioner Hutton. There was no discussion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Location

The 2023 host and location were undetermined. Location history indicates it is District 5's turn to host. MACo Staff will follow up with District 5 counties.

District Chair & Vice Chair Elections

Chair Hendrickson called for nominations of District 5's Chair and Vice Chair. Commissioner Overcast of Glacier County nominated himself for Chair. Commissioner Harwood nominated Commissioner Morren. Commissioner Morren nominated Commissioner Snellman of Teton County for Vice Chair. Commissioner Harwood motioned to close the nominations to which there were no objections. The vote for Chair was 5-4 in favor of Commissioner Morren of Pondera County. Commissioner Snellman was elected via acclamation as Vice Chair.

MACo Officer Nominations – 2nd Vice President

MACo Staff reported that one nomination had been received at this point. Commissioner Joette Woods of Liberty County was nominated at the Districts 1, 2 & 3 meeting as well as verbally endorsed by Districts 6 & 7 the

previous day. Commissioner Wicks motioned to support the nomination as well, and Commissioner Peterson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Staff announced that nominations remained open until the closing business session during the membership annual meeting in September.

REGIONAL DAM PROJECTS

A representative from the Department of Reclamation presented regional dam projects to the district members.

MACO PRESIDENT'S & OFFICERS' REPORTS

President Strouf provided an update on his year in office thus far including attendance at the County Leadership Institute, replacing Commissioner Hart on the NACo Board of Directors, and attending the NACo Board Meeting in Atlanta along with the Presidents & Executives meeting and NACo's Conference where he additionally served on some committees. President Strouf also attended MACo's Broadband Summit and served on the MPERA Board of Directors.

MACO UPDATES & FY 2023 BUDGET

Executive Director Bryson gave a staffing update including a report on the cybersecurity/IT initiative, the retirement of Karen Houston who was replaced by Meagan Gallagher. Karen Alley is on board as Associate General Counsel/Land Use with an eye toward the pending retirement of Tara DuPuy.

The MACo budget as approved by the Board of Directors was included in the handouts. Director Bryson went through some highlights including Professional Services which is up due to MPERA lawsuit, CI-121, and the county salary survey. Other expenses of note are the printed county elected officials directories which were done as a result of feedback from membership, the Broadband Summit, and the accounting around the downsizing of the vehicle fleet.

The Board has approved a 4.6% CPI dues increase in accordance with the bylaws, resulting in a 6.46% revenue increase due to changes in tiers of some members who have grown in taxable value.

MACO LEGISLATIVE REPORT & DISCUSSION

Director Bryson and Deputy Director Rittal gave an overview of the legislative process for MACo, and the new makeup of the lobbying team. Shantil will not lobby but will be helping from the office. Jason will be the Legislative Director with a focus on appropriations and orchestrating our efforts. Eric will take Clerk & Recorders and Tax and Karen Alley will take land use, some local government, and fill in where needed.

They then outlined the resolutions that had come forward thus far as well as those that are anticipated and followed with a discussion on the types of legislation that can be expected including elections and property tax reform as well as possible attacks on the Entitlement Share and MACo's ability to lobby. The group had a robust conversation about pending legislation, other issues such as the use of the marijuana tax, mental health, state mandates, and county budget issues.

Other Item of Note: ARPA still has the additional payment slated for counties that Treasury is to get out by the end of the fiscal year. More to follow. The State has applied for Broadband planning funds.

RESOLUTIONS

Broadband – Cascade County – Commissioner Joe Briggs

Commissioner Briggs of Cascade County brought forward two resolutions for consideration. Both resolutions relate to broadband deployment in the state.

1. The first would allow counties to invest funds as a pass through or in the deployment of broadband infrastructure. It in no way means that counties should be able to own and operate as an internet service provider. Given the amount of federal funds becoming available for broadband, it would be a shame for counties if—as potential eligible applicants—are unable to pass those funds through for investment. A motion and second was made to move the resolution forward to the Resolutions Committee. Motion carried.
2. The second resolution relates to clarifying that county and state utility corridors, easements, and rights-of-way may be used for the deployment of broadband. Montana law does not specifically reference that easements, utility corridors, and rights-of-ways can be utilized for the deployment of non-regulated broadband access through fiber or other technologies. Motion to move the resolution forward to the Resolutions Committee was received and seconded. Motion Carried.

MACo staff departed to embark on the journey to their next destination, and MDT along with their Consulting Team working on the Bridge Study took over.

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATES

Secondary Roads, Federal Lands Access Program & STIP: Andy White, MDT
Off-System Bridge Study & Implementation Plan: Lisa Gray, HDR