

March 4, 2024

The Board of Garfield County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday March 4th, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Chambers at the Garfield County Courthouse.

Present were Chairman Justin Dixon, Member Larry Ledgerwood, Member Jim Nelson, Clerk of the Board McKenzie Lueck, and the public.

The Board started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board reviewed and approved the minutes for the previous meeting.

Chairman Dixon called for public comment. There was none.

Road Supervisor Steve Gormsen gave the Board the weekly maintenance report. Last week, the crew patched potholes, plowed snow, and ran the trucks almost every day between putting sand down and plowing. Steve informed the Board that they did have to plow a little bit on Saturday and Sunday on Iron Springs and the Mountain Road. A grader was able to do some work on Khul Ridge last week. There were a few people hauling gravel out of the Schuster pit. The crew also cleaned culverts and trimmed trees throughout the county. Thomas is working on getting the spray truck ready for spray season. In the shop, they are working on rebuilding pup trailer E159. Ollie is doing sign inspections and repairing damaged signs. Steve informed the Board that they would be working on a guardrail on Bell Plain this week that was damaged and is a safety concern. There was discussion regarding the gravel roads and their current condition, but due to weather the crew hasn't been able to work on them. Commissioner Nelson asked about the seasonal road closures and when they came off and Steve stated that the date is April 1st but if the crew is able to get to them before that and do the repairs needed to re-open them then they'd open them sooner. Chairman Dixon stated that it would be a good idea to update the road closure policy as it is outdated and in need of modification.

Chairman Dixon informed everyone present that there would be noises from the elevator due to a construction project taking place upstairs.

The Board reviewed Resolution 2024-05 which rescinds Resolution 2023-11 which referred to a temporary modification of overtime compensation for dispatchers and deputies. Commissioner Nelson spoke with Cindi Holbert, E911 Coordinator, and she stated that they haven't had to use overtime in the past month and felt that they have enough staffing to return to normal practice, so Commissioner Nelson recommended that they Board rescind the temporary modification effective April 1st. Commissioner Nelson made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-05, and Commissioner Ledgerwood seconded it. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board signed the resolution.

Ashlyn Deatherage, Public Works Business Manager, joined the Board to request funding for a laptop. She stated that in lieu of recent events of not having internet access at the Public Works building, the office staff is having to work remotely, and the laptop would also be useful to have when traveling for trainings. The quote she provided to the Board was for \$1,300. Commissioner

Ledgerwood stated that he thinks it would be a benefit and useful for trainings. There was discussion regarding where this would be funded from and for the initial purchase it would be funded through LATCF, but Ashlyn stated that she has built it into the ERR replacement schedule for the future. Commissioner Ledgerwood made a motion to approve the purchase of a laptop through LATCF and Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Engineer Wege joined the Board to give his weekly update. He stated that last week there was a round table about the route jurisdiction discussion. There is a legislative study group that is determining the criteria of how routes would be determined. Engineer Wege stated that this is currently not looking like it will be funded. Commissioner Nelson stated that WSAC and every other county organization should keep up on this development. Engineer Wege stated that he is working on CRAB certifications. He has completed five of them and has three to go- two are due April 1st and the other is due May 1st. He informed the Board that ads are out for parking lot resurfacing for the Ag Museum. He also reached out to a few businesses that he thought might be interested in the project. He's been coordinating with WSDOT Local Programs regarding the current projects that are ongoing to make sure they are on the right track. Chairman Dixon asked about the conditional use permit for the Appaloosa Project and what the status is. Engineer Wege stated that they are not ready to issue a threshold determination yet.

Martha Lanman, Jack Peasley, and Rachel Anderson joined the Board to discuss the daycare needs of the community. They have formed a committee and have been meeting the last few months to get the daycare project moving forward. Rachel informed the Board that they have reached out to a few resources to help get the project moving forward. Martha stated that they are looking for a Childcare Navigator which would be a person that would help find a place for the facility to be, do all the regulations, and reach out to other childcare facilities to provide insight and knowledge to get our facility running. The decision to create this position was determined after doing a job analysis and realizing that all the committee members were too busy to take this on. Martha stated that she went back and looked at her public health guidelines and she thinks there is funding available through Public Health for this position. She stated that she thinks this position should be a temporary contracted position, because they don't need someone long term but probably for 10-18 months. She provided the Board with a job description and a potential budget for the position. She stated that the committee wants to get the ball rolling on advertising for this position. Commissioner Nelson asked if the committee had spoken with Kelly McKiernan yet, as he had put in a lot of time previously in exploring a childcare facility. Martha stated that they have spoken with Kelly, and he is ready to give it up. The committee wants to advertise this position and see what interest is out there. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that the committee was asking for funding through LATCF to pay for the job advertisement, and if funding was approved through the Public Health District during their next meeting on March 18th, then they would move the expenditure there. This position would be funded through the Public Health District. There was discussion regarding this position being paid hourly with a cap on hours or a flat rate per month. The committee plans on advertising the position locally along with reaching out to individuals that might be interested. Chairman Dixon stated that he agrees with the contract position but thinks it should be a contract with a flat rate instead of paid hourly. There was discussion regarding if this position would be a 1099 position or W2 position. Commissioner Ledgerwood made a motion to approve the funding for advertising the position of

Childcare Navigator, and Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Dixon stated that he was willing to sit down with the committee if they need any assistance and would be happy to facilitate communication between the committee and the Board if there's a need. Chairman Dixon also stated that the county does have money they are willing to provide in order to help with getting a childcare facility up and running for the community.

The Board postponed the jail discussion due to Sheriff Hyer's absence at today's meeting.

Engineer Wege gave the Board an estimate for the sidewalk project at the Ag Museum from 2 Cannon River Construction in the amount of \$20,090.38. He stated that he followed the procurement policy and reached out to three companies on the small works roster, and this was the only response he received back. He informed the Board that the Ag Museum received a Sheperd Foundation grant in the amount of \$25,000 for this project. His recommendation from the Ag Museum Board was to approve this grant to get this project moving forward. Commission Nelson made a motion to approve the estimate, and Commissioner Ledgerwood seconded it. The motioned passed unanimously. Commissioner Ledgerwood asked when the contractor would be able to start the project and Engineer Wege stated that they would be able to start as early as tomorrow.

Councilman John Hirsch asked if there was an update on the Emergency Management position and Commissioner Nelson stated that there was an interested party that he and John met with last week but the Board has not heard back from that individual.

The Board went into executive session regarding contract negotiations with Engineer Wege from 9:35 a.m. until 9:45 a.m. No decisions were made.

The Board went into executive session with Prosecutor Newberg regarding potential litigation from 9:45 a.m. until 10:20 a.m. No decisions were made.

The Board recessed from 10:20 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.

The Board resumed regular session at 10:30 a.m.

Matt Slaybaugh, Co-CEO of the Garfield County Hospital, joined the Board to discuss a letter of support for the hospital. Matt stated that the hospital is in the early phasis of planning for an imaging suite. They are the only hospital in the state with no CT scanner. Matt stated that this has a huge impact on stroke care. The standard of care for a patient exhibiting stroke symptoms is a CT scan to rule out a brain bleed. Because the hospital does not have a CT scanner, they are forced to immediately transfer patients to a facility that does. Matt stressed that one of the main determining variables on the outcome of a stroke patient is the timeliness of treatment, which is currently being postponed due to having to transfer patients. Matt also stated that the hospital runs into difficulties when transferring patients when they don't have a CT scan to determine exactly what something is because other facilities are sometimes at capacity and without knowing what the referral is for, they won't accept the transfer. He also provided the Board with information on the potential return that this new imaging suite would bring to the hospital,

stating that it could also provide the hospital with the final stability they need in order to operate in the 'black'. He stated that all the staff, with one exception, is already trained on operating the CT scanner and they don't need additional staff to provide this service. He informed the Board that the hospital is looking at building this facility in the rose garden area. They plan to move the x-ray machine to this facility as well. He continued that this would move a lot of the patient care services out of the old building and into new facilities that are set up better for patient care. The initial budget estimate for this project is a little over \$3.5 million. They are seeking congressional funding, but to do that successfully they need letters of support from the community. He is asking the Board for letters and/or a resolution of support that he can submit with his grant application. They have submitted for one grant, and have a few others they want to apply to, as well as asking for donations. The money won't come in until spring of 2025 for the congressional funding. The hospital would like to bid the project the first of next year and start construction in the spring or summer of 2025. Commissioner Nelson stated that he likes the idea, and that the Board is trying to put committees in place for economic development, and one of the things people look at before moving here is medical facilities. He added that you can't put a price tag on people's lives. Commissioner Ledgerwood stated that losing one life is too much due to not having the necessary medical facilities. Chairman Dixon stated that he is also in support of the hospital moving forward with this project. Matt stated that March 23rd is the deadline to have the grant application in and they need the letters/resolutions of support to submit with the application. The Board agreed to draft a resolution and letter in support of this project. Matt said they are asking for \$2-2.5 million in federal funding. Commissioner Nelson stated that this was a great project, and he appreciates the hospital moving forward with it.

Commissioner Nelson stated he would not be available for next week's meeting.

The Board went into executive session to discuss contract negotiations from 10:50 a.m. until 11:40 a.m. There were no decisions made.

The Commissioners regular meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m. with the next regular meeting set for Monday, March 11th, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's Chambers at the Garfield County Courthouse.

/s/ McKenzie Lueck
Attest: Clerk of the Board

/s/ Justin Dixon
Chairman, Board of Garfield County Commissioners