County Commission  WS Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2022

ANACONDA-DEER LODGE COUNTY
COMMISSION WORK SESSION MEETING
6:00 P.M. TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2022
COURTHOUSE COURTROOM

Present: District 1 Commissioner Terry Vermeire, District 3 Commissioner Kevin Hart (Vice-Chair), District 4 Commissioner Paul Smith, District 5 Commissioner Mike Huotte, CEO Bill Everett, and County Attorney Krakowka and Clerk of Commission, Lori Sturm

Excused Absence: District 2 Commissioner Steve Gates,

Members of the Press: Patrick Williams, Anaconda Leader

**Presentation – Historic Resources Board Semiannual Report**

**Mary Lynn McKenna** – Fortunately in February we had Terry LaValley join, and we now have a full board. One of our active projects has been the “Speaker Series”. Attendance to these talks have been around 40 people per session. Topics covered have been: Rural Schools, The Fish Hatchery, Neighborhood Grocery Stores, Ancestry Searches, Anaconda Championship Sports teams, and Irish Heritage. We have several speakers lined up and hope to continue the series. We have a lot of ideas and there is a lot of history in Anaconda to share. Thanked the Leader for all their help. The board has about 26 tasks that are being looked at that go along with the historic preservation plan. We are placing them in priority lists according to what board members consider important. Several businesses have come to us throughout the year to discuss signage. We have provided options and different ideas about what would be appropriate for different buildings. We sponsored historic preservation month and sponsored an essay contest and hope to continue this as an annual program. The board is having a booth for Smeltermen’s day and will be displaying photos of the past Smeltermen’s days. We hope to find someone to identify some of the individuals in the photos.

**United States Department of Justice Environmental Protection Agency, Region VIII, and the State of Montana, in the matter of Anaconda Smelter Superfund Site, Amendment to Agreement and Covenant Not to Sue**

**Mike Grayson** – In 1994 the county received a bunch of real estate from ARCO. Part of the deal reached was for the golf course, the east yards, mill creek property, red sands, and the Golf Course itself. The fear was that in taking all this land, was that there would be superfund liability. For protection the county entered into an agreement with EPA, The Department of Justice and included the Old Works Golf Board. The 1994 agreement essentially protected the county against liability from owning that land if we didn’t do anything to exacerbate the existing conditions. That has been in effect for 28 years. Several businesses like the Forge Hotel got our protection extended to them. We renegotiated the agreement because there are a lot of things that have changed. The law itself changed dramatically, CERCLA the Superfund law changed with a bunch of amendments (the Brownsfield amendments). This took away the need
to have agreements with the EPA on superfund sites. There was a prospective purchaser program put in place that automatically protects, if you do your due diligence, do a phase I, environmental and keep a file. Then if EPA comes back . . . you can show a file to show that you did your due diligence. There is nothing signed by the agency, there is no paper saying you are protected. We wanted to keep an aspect going like the 1994 agreement. Introduced some individuals present who were all involved with the agreement that was negotiated. The agreement is lengthy, and complex. In essence it continues with the program where the county still has a fair bit of the land from 1994, and if we sell it to a third party, we will be transferring title. Once the deed is transferred, we want to have protection for the new owner. The other program the EPA is putting in place applies not to just the first-time transfer from the county, but there is also “Ready for Reuse Program”. Where they look at parts of the Superfund site and saying clean-up is done, this is ready for development and ready for reuse. This is a parallel track program that is going on to facilitate development. Once we get the first developments done and people notice, this creates momentum. The old agreement is obsolete. Pointed out the agreement has 2 typos on pages 25 and 31; also, a signature line is missing for the Old Works Board president. Those will be fixed in the final draft for next week’s meeting.

- **CEO Everett** – This has been a long process. Everyone has done a great job. Grateful to be moving to a new phase. Also, grateful that we are developing the East Yards.
- **County Attorney Krakowka** – This seems to be an appropriate amendment to the agreement.

**Place on Agenda**

**Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Personnel Policy Manual**

**Heather Edwards, Executive Assistant** – It was decided that we needed to make some adjustments to the Personnel Policy Manual. The first thing looked at was in trying to recruit employment for A-DLC, we had some issues with hiring people outside the state, outside the city. We brought forward the option to supply these employees with a small monthly stipend to allow these employees to find a place in Anaconda to use towards rent, to use towards a moving expense or something similar. Our housing is difficult in Anaconda. It would be nice if the CEO/County had the discretion to allot a monthly stipend. The second thing looked at was to extend the education and training area. Currently we allow for training, but there is also an interest in helping some of our departments in providing for educational needs. The County Attorney has taken advantage of some that with some of his employees. Unfortunately, the county has not put money towards those employees, they have done this on their own. Training was paid by the county, but we wanted to focus on education I have talked with payroll and addressed issues with workers compensation, sick leave, and retirement. There is not a lot of information for retirement, we request the employee to contact the specific retirement organization they are with.

- **CEO Everett** – To reiterate the employee/employer relationship has changed dramatically. A small incentive to help an employee with moving expenses to help them relocate, especially with our housing situation. Part of the relocation may involve
staying in a motel for a few months. It is a small token on our part and believes it is appreciated and helpful. It is a step in the right direction. As far as paying and advancing an employee’s education to a certain level, it is in everyone’s best interest. This provides better relations between employees and employer.

Place on Agenda

Request to Call for Bids 2022 Police Package-SUV Pickup – 4 Wheel Drive/All-Wheel – 4 Door, Minimum Standard Equipment

**CEO Everett** – The specs are for all-wheel 4-wheel drive pickups for multiple reasons. First is the endurability. The little SUVs are just being torn apart. The second purpose is that with the trucks, we can reuse them after they hit hundred-thousand-mile mark. We put them into the road department, cemetery, or Park department. We also picked up 4 new vehicles yesterday from the Missoula Sheriff’s department. Chief Sather arranged this. They are beautiful vehicles, all 4-wheel drive and under a hundred thousand miles and fully equipped. We got 4 vehicles for a total cost of under $20,000.00. That will help update some of our older stock with the condition being every new vehicle brought in, they have 7 days to dispose of one of the old vehicles.

- **Commissioner Vermeire** – Questioned that the CEO referenced truck’s the bid references SUV.
- **Commissioner Hart** – Off topic but asked for an update about the accident on park and main.
- **CEO Everett** – Last week we totaled a brand-new truck. It is not the officer’s fault. The officers had a green light, a lady ran the red light. The trucks are heavy duty and able to handle the impact. The cops are doing alright but may miss a couple of weeks. The woman had no issues.

Place on Agenda

Service Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding Between Anaconda-Deer Lodge County and the Hearst Free Library Board of Trustees

**CEO Everett** – Our insurance carrier is MMIA (Montana Municipal Insurance Agency). Basically, it is a coop of all the cities throughout the state of Montana. To get the library covered by the insurance they wanted an agreement that pertains to some specific language and understanding with the local library. The agreement ads no new regulations on the library or grants them any more authority.

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Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Program Subcontractor Agreement  
Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Health Department

CEO Everett – This is another one of the grants/contracts with the state of Montana. As far as the specifics of this and the next items, Leigh Ann Holmes will be here next week.

Place on Agenda

Task Order Number 23-07-7-11-114-0 to the Master Contract Effective July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2026 between the State of Montana, Department of Public Health and Human Services and Deer Lodge County (Disease Intervention Specialists and Congregate Living Coordinators)

Place on Agenda

Task Order Number 23-07-1-01-1111-0 to the Master Contract Effective July 1, 2029 to June 30, 2026 between the State of Montana, Department of Public Health and Human Services and Deer Lodge County (Deer Lodge County Public Health Crisis Workforce Supplemental Funding)

Place on Agenda

Montana Department of Commerce Main Street Program Contract #MT-MMS-PL-22-005

Sue Konicek – I write some of the grants and work at the Copper Village Museum and Art Center. The grant associated with the contract was applied for in the Copper Village Museum and Art Center’s effort to renovate and revitalize the 2nd floor of the Museum and Art Center, so that it can be used as a performing art space for the community. To embark on the project, we need to work with an architectural firm to create a PAR (performance and accountability report).

Place on Agenda

Anaconda-Deer Lodge County/Housing Authority of the City of Anaconda - CDBG Planning Grant Application for Housing Site Redevelopment Plan

Kaitlin Leary, Anaconda Housing Authority – We would like to partner with the County to use one of the 2 open CDBG planning grants to look at some redevelopment activities at Cedar Park. The housing authority has been running at about 10-15 percent vacancy on the larger unit rentals. We think it is a good time to look at how to address this and to save affordable housing options in Anaconda. Maybe even provide better work force housing options. We are proposing a planning grant to look at that information. We do not want to see current tenants being misplaced. There could be a relocation plan if needed. We are not sure if this is focusing on
major rehabilitation or total redevelopment. We will be looking at least a portion of the
property at Cedar Park.

- **CEO Everett** – I am a huge fan of looking at the alternatives to the current Cedar Park
  Housing. I do not know which direction this will go. Public Housing is a need, but we
  need housing for today’s lifestyles. We have a Jack Nicklaus Golf Course and the only
  housing on the course is public housing. Curious to see the plan and what comes out of
  this. Appreciate your help and effort.

Place on Agenda

Deer Lodge County 4H Leaders Council Request for a Donation to Help Cover the Costs of our
Deer Lodge County 4-H members’ and Open Class fees in the amount of $4,000 for the
participation of the 2022 Fair and other 4-H sponsored Activities.

**Paula Arneson** – The MSU Extension agent Kayleen Kidwell could not be here tonight. Provided
an update on the 4H projects. There are programs such as leathercraft, arts and crafts,
baking/cooking, animals/horses. This year we were able to send 4 Deer-Lodge County kids to
Rec. Lab in Hobson where they worked in team building, leadership, and stem activities. The
$4000.00 will help to pay for costs such as books, travel and maybe getting the shooting sports
program running.

- **CEO Everett** – Anaconda was a member of the Tri-County fair. There was an accident
  involving a death at the fair several years ago in the demolition derby, we were then
  involved in a lawsuit. We are a huge fan of the 4H. This was an avenue that was derived
to still fund our kids for 4H and they would be able to participate. This is basically a
grant for our 4H kids . . . what they do with it . . . is their choice. This transaction
distances us from the Tri-County fair.

- **County Attorney Krakowka** – Glad the county is still able to support these 4H programs.
  It teaches these young adults some important life skills.

- **Commissioner Hart** – I also feel it is important for us to utilize this money to help the
  4H, so they could enter whatever fair or use the money as they deem necessary. At
  that time all the Commissioners expressed the same feeling, and I don’t believe that has
  changed. Very much in support of this.

Place on Agenda

Request for Reappointment to the A-DLC Planning Board by Colleen Riley. (Letter Attached)

Place on Agenda

Request for Reappointment to the A-DLC Airport Board by Randy Johnson. (Letter Attached) –

Place on Agenda
Special Event Permit – Smelter City Recreation Complex – Smelter City Scamper, August 8, 2022 (Pending Certificate of Insurance)

Place on Agenda

Miscellaneous -

Commissioner Kevin Hart: I was asked to bring up if the County will recognize Juneteenth as a holiday for county employees.
Commissioner Steve Gates: Absent
Commissioner Paul Smith: No Miscellaneous.
Commissioner Terry Vermeire: No Miscellaneous.
Commissioner Mike Huotte: Reported that he would be out of town next Tuesday.
CE0 Everett – Reported on Gross Lodging Tax Revenue. The hotel is here because of the Economic Development Package that was put together. The county has done a great job of reinvesting. We receive the property tax; we create a lot of jobs which is nice. It has also brought people to town to visit. The Gross Lodging Revenue tax is 4% of the gross lodging revenue that goes into the fund. In 2018, $61,000 was generated, in 2019 $63,000, in 2020 $66,000. It has been very consistent. Now in 2021 $137,535, in 2022 it should probably be $200,000. It is another one of those derivatives that is happening. All this is possible due to the Economic Development fund. It is an important tool of the superfund negotiations. Get businesses interested and show them we are a viable community.
County Attorney Krakowka – No Miscellaneous.

PUBLIC COMMENT - No Comments given.

Meeting Dates

Commissioner Huotte - Read the meeting date and times.

CEO Everett – At the Mill Creek TIFID meeting today it was voted to pay off the debt of 1.3-million-dollar bond. That basically makes our county debt free. All the new infrastructure and out county is basically debt free. The wastewater treatment plant 5-million-dollar upgrade is paid off, (funded by superfund) is paid off, the streetlights, new road and water are paid. This is monumental for our county. A lot of people were involved in this concept.

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

[Signatures]

Lori Sturm
Clerk of Commission

Mike Huotte
Commission Chair