

**Glacier County Commissioners
Monday, June 21, 2021
Regular Meeting (gotomtg)
Cut Bank, MT**

The Glacier County Board of Commissioners met at a regular scheduled meeting at 9:00 am on Monday, June 21, 2021. Commissioners Mary Jo Bremner, Michael DesRosier and John B. Overcast were present and Austin Parrent taking minutes.

Present at the meeting: Carol Larson, Public; LeAnne Kavanagh, Press; Lisa Sammons, Deputy Clerk of District Court; Bob Olson, Montana 9th Judicial District Court Judge; Twila Pyette, Chief Deputy Clerk of District Court; Laurie Elhard, Public

Present via GoToMeeting: (1) Caller; Brenda Schilling; Gloria; Jim Yeagley; Not Applicable; TM

A. Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m.

B. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner DesRosier motions to approve the agenda for Monday, June 21, 2021;
Commissioner Overcast seconds the motion; agenda approved.

C. Reading of the Minutes: 4/27, 4/29, 5/4, 5/11

Commissioner DesRosier motions to approve the minutes for 4/27, 4/29, 5/4, & 5/11/2021;
Commissioner Overcast seconds the motion; minutes approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

**D. Discussion/Approval: Glacier County Transit Employee Wage Change Request –
Glacier County Commissioners**

This motion was carried out in the previous commissioner meeting held on June 10, 2021 at 9:40 a.m. and the wage change is effective 6/10/2021. The motion had to do with the Glacier County Transit Employee Irma Smrcka increasing her wage to \$15.15 per hour to match other Northern Transit Interlocal Employees.

**Commissioner DesRosier motions to approve the Glacier County Transit Employee wage increase to \$15.15 per hour pending the completion of the paperwork;
Commissioner Overcast seconds the motion; motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS:

E. Discussion/Approval: FY2021-2022 Northern Transit Interlocal \$5,000.00 & Glacier County Transit \$25,000.00 Commitment – Glacier County Commissioners

The Board of County Commissioners discussed paperwork needing to be submitted to the board for review before any item was discussed for approval on an agenda moving forward, especially when the approval involves committing money. There was additional discussion on past audit findings.

Northern Transit Interlocal is a partnership between Toole County Transit, Pondera County Transit, and Glacier County Transit to provide better transportation services for the communities within each county through a joint transit operation. The Northern Transit Interlocal Board votes yearly to approve the coordination plan, which requires two \$2,500.00 semi-annual payments (\$5,000.00 annual total). The other payment of \$25,000.00 is a yearly commitment by Glacier County Transit to help meet the operation cost of Northern Transit Interlocal for FY2021-2022.

Public Comment:

LeAnne Kavanagh, Press, reiterates how important this service is for residents of Glacier County. The three counties involved in Northern Transit Interlocal split the cost and it also receives funding from Kalispell Hospital and Benefis Hospital (Great Falls) to help residents get transportation to those medical facilities. Glacier County Transit serves residents here in Glacier County, but takes them to Shelby which is the central location for Northern Transit Interlocal. From there it then connects Glacier County Residents to routes which go to Kalispell and Great Falls.

Commissioner DesRosier motions to approve FY2021-2022 Northern Transit Interlocal Agreement of \$5,000.00 & the Glacier County Transit Commitment of \$25,000.00; Commissioner Overcast seconds the motion; motion carried.

F. Discussion/Approval: Front Range CASA Funding \$10,000 Request – Kiersta Sullivan, Front Range CASA/GAL, Inc. Executive Director

Michael D. Bruch was not able to present today on behalf of Front Range Court Appointed Special Advocates (C.A.S.A.) and has asked the Glacier County Commissioners to table this agenda item to Thursday, June 24, 2021.

There was a discussion between Bob Olson, Montana 9th Judicial District Court Judge and the Glacier County Commissioners where several years ago he asked the commission at that time to help sustain the drug court since it was struggling to survive. They did so by contributing \$10,000.00 to the drug court budget and did so for several years after that. He states that while it may have saved them at the time that it was requested, it is no longer needed for them to remain operational. If the commissioners needed to find a way to fund the \$10,000.00 request for Front Range C.A.S.A., this could potentially be a funding source.

The Glacier County Commissioners will meet again on Thursday, June 24, 2021 and will make a decision on the \$10,000.00 funding request for Front Range C.A.S.A. at that time.

Public Comment:

There was a question regarding which fiscal year the funding would come from if approved. The response was that this question would be asked and clarified in the meeting on Thursday, June 24, 2021 before the decision of the approval is made.

G. Discussion: Clerk of District Court Vacancy – Mary Jo Bremner, Glacier County Commission Chair

There was discussion amongst the commission about what should happen with the Clerk of District Court vacancy. Twila Pyette, Deputy Clerk of District Court, will fill the position as acting interim Clerk of District Court for a 90-day period which starts on July 1, 2021 after the Clerk of District Court, Janine R. Scott, retires on June 30, 2021. Her retirement letter to the commission can be found in the Thursday, April 29, 2021 meeting minutes. The appointment of Twila Pyette to acting interim Clerk of District Court can be found in the Tuesday, May 11, 2021 minutes.

Public Comment:

Bob Olson, Montana 9th Judicial District Court Judge, gives a brief history on the Clerks of District Court and how they have all had prior experience in the office before being elected to the head position of Clerk of District Court. He has dealt with many jurisdictions within the State of Montana and states that the clerk of district court's office here in Glacier County is one of the best offices in the state that he deals with. He credits this to the depth of experience that the staff holds and how the elected Clerk of District Court is usually a candidate who has had prior years of experience from within the office.

There was a question about whether or not Twila's position would be filled if she took on the acting interim Clerk of District Court position and the response was that both of the two employees currently working in the office would retain their positions while Twila filled in for the Clerk of District Court position. A follow up question involved the interview team that would potentially appoint the permanent Clerk of District Court and if it would include people from the legal offices outside of Glacier County that have to work with the district court office here in Glacier County, such as a judge or county attorney from Toole county or Pondera county. The response by the commission was that it is a possibility but it will need to be brought to the human resource department before they can answer. There was also a question about whether Twila would retain her chief deputy position after the 90-day interim, given that the permanent Clerk of District Court that gets appointed has the ability to assign her own chief deputy. The commissioners stated they would consult with Montana Association of Counties (M.A.C.O.) and the Glacier County Attorney before answering.

There were several questions brought to the commission by Twila Pyette, Deputy Clerk of District Court, about her position as acting interim Clerk of District Court. Questions including:

- If she will be able to hire additional help or if the District Court Office will have to remain with only two people to run the entire office for the entire 90-day interim.
- Will there be an interview process to hire a permanent Clerk of District Court to fulfill the remainder of Janine Scott's term after her 90-day interim period is finished.
- How will the change in title affect her remaining vacation and sick leave before she transitions and after she transitions back once the interim period is over (if that is the case).

- Will she be able to implement changes to the operation/function of the office during her 90-day interim as Clerk of District Court.

LeAnne Kavanagh, Press, had additional public comment in regards to the precedent of an interview process being set up for an elected official position that has been vacated before the remainder of the term has been fulfilled. The Clerk of District Court position has typically been filled by another staff member from within the office who has years of experience and was selected and appointed by the outgoing clerk. This is similar to what has occurred in the past for the Treasurer's office when past Treasurers left their position before the remainder of their term was filled, however, in those cases there was a lack of experience from incoming Treasurers who had been appointed. The only time this precedent was broken was with the County Attorney position in recent years where an interview process was established. The precedent that was set for the District Court Office has always been set and done a certain way which included appointments that had prior experience from within the office.

H. Discussion: Revised Cash Reconciliations – Mary Jo Bremner, Glacier County Commission Chair

The commissioners are signing and approving the revised cash reconciliations from January 2020 through June 2020 to fix an anomaly.

Commissioner DesRosier motions to approve the January 2020, February 2020, March 2020, April 2020, May 2020, and June 2020 revised cash reports; Commissioner Overcast seconds the motion; motion carried.

A vote was held to submit the revised cash reports to the State of Montana with all three commissioners in favor.

Public Comment:

LeAnne Kavanagh, Press, asks if the next fiscal year from July 2020 through June 2021 will also be revised and who is currently working on the revisions. The commissioners respond that they will ask for more information on Fiscal Year 2020-2021's cash reconciliations and see if they need to be revised. They believe the auditors Wipfli LLP and finance consultant Magda Nelson assisted on the revisions.

There was an additional discussion about the auditors meeting with the commissioners before the audit is submitted on June 30, 2021 to the State of Montana.

OTHER BUSINESS:

I. Public Comment

There was a question raised about the necessity of having an interview process for candidates to fill the remainder of the Clerk of District Court's term and whether or not it was optional. Commissioner Bremner states that they do not want to but would like to make sure the process is done properly so that Twila Pyette can know what is happening before her 90-day interim for the Clerk of District Court is done.

There was additional discussion on the time it took to revise the cash reconciliations and how it will affect the current months moving forward.

J. Next Meeting – Tuesday, June 22, 2021 – Browning

Commissioner DesRosier motions to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Overcast seconds the motion; meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.