

Minutes of Fergus Co. Commissioners Business Meeting
May 17, 2017 – 5:15 p.m.
Fergus County Commissioners
712 W. Main St., Suite 210
Lewistown, MT 59457

Present: Commissioner Carl Seilstad, Commissioner Sandra Youngbauer, Commissioner Ross Butcher, and Clerk & Recorder Rana Wichman. Public present: See attached sign in sheet.

CALL TO ORDER:

Presiding Officer Seilstad called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Presiding Officer Seilstad asked if there were any alterations or corrections to the May 10, 2017 minutes. Hearing none the minutes will stand approved as distributed and they will be on file with the Clerk and Recorder and on the Fergus County Website.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS: None

PUBLIC HEARING: None

BID OPENINGS: None

PERSONNEL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1) Deputy Sheriff
- 2) DES Coordinator
- 3) Road & Bridge Crew Member

ANNOUNCEMENTS / REPORTS: None

DISCUSSION /ACTION ITEMS:

1) A Resolution of Intent of the Board of County Commissioners of Fergus County to Consolidate the Offices of Fergus County Sheriff and Fergus County Coroner: County Attorney Kent Sipe stated the Commissioners are seeking public comment regarding consolidating the Fergus County Sheriff and Fergus County Coroner positions. This issue was raised in 2014 regarding whether there is currently a conflict of interest within the Coroner's office. As Musselshell County Attorney he gave an independent opinion at that time. On August 26, 2016 litigation was filed. Commissioner Seilstad said that at the public hearing people will be given the opportunity to give their opinions. He said currently there are 38 counties within Montana with a combined sheriff and coroner. He also stated that if the consolidation is done it would go into effect January 1, 2019. Levi Talkington with the Lewistown Police Department stated that they have always had a good relationship with the Coroner's office as it now stands. They want it left as is. Rick Vaughn with the Fergus County Sheriff's Department indicated the same feelings for the Sheriff's Department. Vaughn stated he personally would like to see this go before a judge and be decided for the entire State of Montana. Kendra Milfeld with Creel Funeral Home stated that the way it currently stands it is in violation of the Code of

Ethics. It either needs to be consolidated or the Coroner needs to be independent of a funeral home. Commissioner Seilstad asked for dates to consider for the public hearing. Commissioner Youngbauer moved to approve the resolution at hand to have a Public Hearing to Consolidate the Offices of Fergus County Sheriff and Fergus County Coroner on July 10, 2017, at 2:00 p.m., in the basement of the County Complex. Commissioner Butcher seconded. Passed unanimously. Commissioner Seilstad asked what the impact of the public hearing may have on the litigation that has been filed. County Attorney Sipe stated it could impact the continuation of the litigation one way or the other.

APPOINTMENTS: None

PUBLIC INPUT: None

OTHER BUSINESS: May 25 meeting changed to May 24.

NEXT MEETING DATES:

May 24, 2017 Wednesday, 2:00 p.m.	Business Meeting	Fergus Co. Commissioners 712 W. Main St., Suite 210 Lewistown, MT 59457
June 9, 2017 Friday, 2:00 p.m.	Business Meeting	Fergus Co. Commissioners 712 W. Main St., Suite 210 Lewistown, MT 59457
June 21, 2017 Wednesday, 5:15 p.m.	Business Meeting	Fergus Co. Commissioners 712 W. Main St., Suite 210 Lewistown, MT 59457

Reminder: Agenda items are due to the Commissioners 10 days prior to the meeting.

FERGUS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:



Carl Seilstad, Presiding Officer



Sandra Youngbauer, Commissioner



Ross Butcher, Commissioner

Attest:



Rana J. Wichman, Clerk & Recorder

Counties with a Combined Sheriff and Coroner

1. Blaine County
2. Broadwater County
3. Carbon County
4. Carter County
5. Cascade County
6. Chouteau County
7. Custer County
8. Daniels County
9. Fallon County
10. Flathead County
11. Gallatin County
12. Garfield County
13. Glacier County
14. Golden Valley County
15. Granite County
16. Hill County
17. Jefferson County
18. Judith Basin County
19. Lake County
20. Liberty County
21. Madison County
22. McCone County
23. Meagher County
24. Mineral County
25. Missoula County
26. Musselshell County
27. Phillips County
28. Pondera County
29. Ravalli County
30. Roosevelt County
31. Rosebud County
32. Stillwater County
33. Sweet Grass County
34. Teton County
35. Treasure
36. Valley County
37. Wheatland County
38. Yellowstone County

