

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA  
Held in October 2025**

The Board of Pondera County Commissioners met daily in informal session and in scheduled meetings on October 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2025.

**OCTOBER 1, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:**

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Commissioner Tom Kuka, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, DES Coordinator Ali Broesder, Public – Paul Anderberg, McKenzie Graye

MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Drishinski attended the Conrad Chamber luncheon on Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup> and presented information about the Pondera Center's financial issues. Commissioners attended a public hearing about the toxic waste water dumping outside of Valier, MT, held by the EPA, on Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Conrad High School. Commissioners also attended MACO meetings in Great Falls, MT.

ENCROACHMENT AGREEMENT REQUESTED BY ZAYO/FRONT RANGE PIPELINE

Commissioner Kuka moved to approve an Encroachment Agreement for Zayo/Front Range Pipeline on Midway East Road for fiber optic cable. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

CONTRACT RENEWAL WITH LYNX ALARM SYSTEM

Commissioner Drishinski moved to approve a contract with Lynx for an alarm system for Pondera County, schools, Conrad city offices and county buildings. The total annual amount is \$5,995.00. Commissioner Kuka seconded. Motion carried.

CONTRACT WITH NORTHLAND & COMPANIES

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded to approve a contract with Northland & Companies for the Revcord system that records 9-1-1 lines and radios. The total annual amount is 5,462.12, which will be paid from the 9-1-1 fund. Motion carried.

DATE, TIME AND PLACE SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING OF PROPOSED OFFICE CLOSINGS ON THE DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING AND THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Commissioner Drishinski moved to set Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the County Commissioners office as the date, time and place for a public hearing on the proposal to close the county offices on the day after Thanksgiving and the day after Christmas. Commissioner Kuka seconded. Motion carried.

EXPENDITURES IN EXCESS OF \$1,500-APPROVED

Commissioner Drishinski moved to approve the purchase of a 2024 Lamar 14-foot dump trailer for Pondera County Road/Bridge Department in the amount of \$11,500.00, from Equipment Connections. Commissioner Kuka seconded. Motion carried.

for this purchase will come out of the Public Safety Capital Improvement. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

**OCTOBER 8, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:**

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Commissioner Tom Kuka, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Public – Paul Anderberg

**MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING**

Commissioner Drishinski attended a Council on Aging board meeting regarding the Conrad Senior Center issues.

**AIRPORT LAND LEASE AGREEMENT WITH PONDERA GOLF COURSE**

Commissioner Drishinski moved the approval of the Pondera Golf Course lease, renewal for \$2,000.00 per year, plus water shares cost. Commissioner Kuka seconded. Motion carried.

**CORPORATION SERVICE COMPANY (CSC) MOU**

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded the approval of a MOU with Corporation Service Company (CSC). The purpose of this MOU is to allow electronic recording documents from CSC in the Clerk and Recorder's office. Motion carried.

**ENCROACHMENT AGREEMENT REQUESTED BY NORTHWESTERN ENERGY**

Commissioner Kuka moved to approve an Encroachment Agreement for NorthWestern Energy on Blazen Road for gas main line. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

**INVITATION TO BID ON FARM LEASE FOR 42 ACRES AT VALIER AIRPORT**

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Kuka seconded to advertise an Invitation To Bid for 42.18 acres by the Valier Airport. The invitation will be advertised starting October 8th and the bid opening will begin 10:15 am October 22<sup>nd</sup> in the Pondera County Commissioner's office. Motion carried.

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED CONRAD TV FUNDING**

Commissioner Drishinski moved to set Wednesday, October 29, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the County Commissioners office as the date, time and place for a public hearing on the proposal to increase funding for the Conrad TV District. Commissioner Kuka seconded. Motion carried.

**EXPENDITURES IN EXCESS OF \$1,500-APPROVED**

Commissioner Kuka moved to approve the purchase of a 2001 Chevy 3500 pickup with box and hoist for Pondera County Road/Bridge Department in the amount of \$11,000.00, from Dan Walsh in Butte, Montana. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

**OCTOBER 15, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:**

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Deputy Clerk &

SEPTEMBER COMMISSION MINUTES APPROVED

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Morren seconded to approve the September 2025 Minutes of the Commission. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S SECURITIES REPORT – SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

**STIP** \$6,002,000.00 @ 4.4413929%

**STOCKMAN BANK BALANCES \$9,424,803.03**

**STOCKMAN BANK –Collateral Report**

3133GDCV0	\$ 992,185.05	FHLMC Pool	1.50%	05/01/2036
38384JWF7	\$1,521,460.54	GNM24030 TD	4.50%	05/20/2051
3132D56U1	\$1,621,699.92	FHLMC Pool #S	1.50%	01/01/2036
3130AF4W4	\$ 865,000.00	FED HOME LN	4.10%	10/24/2033
3142GS7M4	\$ 989,576.85	FHLMC Pool #R	5.50%	10/01/2054
3140XJTX1	\$ 385,432.26	FNMA POOL #F	1.50%	04/01/2036
31418D5C2	\$ 129,254.88	FNMA POOL #	2.00%	10/01/2036
31418EUT5	\$2,346,718.00	FNMA POOL #	5.00%	07/01/2038
3140NVW45	\$2,000,000.00	FNMA POOL #B	4.99%	08/01/2029
3140M2CQ3	\$1,375,438.37	FNMA POOL #B	2.00%	11/01/2051
3140J8LC5	\$1,257,184.59	FNMA ARM PO	6.57%	03/01/2048

**RAYMOND JAMES**

07371AYT4	\$250,000.00	2.05%	Due 02/24/2027(CD)
795451AN3	\$250,000.00	1.05%	Due 08/18/2026 (CD)
3130AWC24	\$250,000.00	4.00%	Due 06/09/2028
3133ETUN5	\$250,000.00	4.45%	Due 02/25/2030 Callable 02/25/2026

**INDEPENDENCE BANK**

CDARS 1030487326	02/04/27	4.11445%	\$ 500,000.00
CDARS 1030598284	02/11/27	3.63338%	\$ 250,000.00
CDARS 1029621582	09/03/26	3.39197%	\$ 250,000.00
CDARS 1029835442	10/14/27	2.59612%	\$ 500,000.00
CDARS 1031761944	08/27/26	4.29662%	\$1,000,000.00
CDARS 1027778727	09/10/26	4.08565%	\$ 500,000.00

**BUCHANAN CAPITAL**

FHLB	3130AQKB8	12/26/25	1.375%	\$250,000.00
DISCOVER BANK	254673U46	10/05/26	4.29%	\$250,000.00
FIRST FOUNDATION	32026UT22	07/14/26	4.64%	\$250,000.00
BARCLAYS BANK DEL	06740KSV0	02/27/26	4.10%	\$250,000.00
Schwab-American Co	02519ABT3	04/02/26	5.19%	\$250,000.00
Schwab-Synchrony	87165E3T2	11/03/26	5.09%	\$250,000.00
Schwab-First Prem	33610RUZ4	11/10/26	5.09%	\$250,000.00
INTERNTNL BANK OF	45906AEC7	01/26/27	4.09%	\$250,000.00
SAUK VALLEY BANK	804375EA7	01/29/27	4.14%	\$250,000.00
MERRICK BANK	59013K3W4	01/31/28	4.25%	\$250,000.00
MORGAN STANLEY B	61690DX29	03/20/28	4.15%	\$250,000.00
FORBRIGHT BANK	34520LBK8	08/11/28	4.20%	\$250,000.00
OPTUM BANK	68405VDC0	04/30/29	4.00%	\$250,000.00

Bartsch, and DES Coordinator Ali Broesder. The purpose of the hearing was to gather public input regarding the closure of county offices on the day after Thanksgiving Day, November 28<sup>th</sup>, and Friday, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The hearing was advertised in the Independent Observer and The Valerian on October 8 and 15, 2025.

There were no comments received from the public.

The Commissioners discussed prior history of closure and that it was not an additional holiday for employees. Employees would have to use vacation time or compensatory time to have the day off.

The hearing adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

**OCTOBER 22, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:**

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Commissioner Tom Kuka, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, DES Coordinator Ali Broesder

RESOLUTION ON DESIGNATING COUNTY OFFICE HOURS – HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA  
RESOLUTION #6 – 2025/26

DESIGNATING COUNTY OFFICE HOURS – HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

WHEREAS, Section 7-4-102, MCA, grants the Board of County Commissioners the power and authority to set office hours of the County offices (by formal resolution after a public hearing and if consented to by any affected elected county officer); and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Pondera County Commissioners to provide its employees availability for additional time off when a holiday fall on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday; and

WHEREAS a public hearing on this resolution was conducted on Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the Pondera County Commissioners office. Notice of the hearing was posted in the Independent Observer and The Valerian on October 8 and 15, 2025, and no elected county officer nor any members of the public objected to the proposed office hours;

WHEREAS, employees will need to use compensatory time accrued and/or vacation hours to receive pay for the hours normally worked. Employees wishing to work during the affected hours and/or employees who do not have vacation and/or compensatory hours to apply to the benefit hours may work the hours.

WHEREAS, each County office will have an employee or elected official on call with phone numbers posted on all courthouse doors in the event a member of the public needs to conduct business on that day;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Pondera County Board of Commissioners that the Pondera County offices will be closed to walk in traffic and open by appointment:

All day, Friday, November 28, 2025 (day after Thanksgiving Day);

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren  
Jim Morren, Chair

/s/ Thomas A Kuka  
Thomas A Kuka, Member

ATTEST:

/s/ Zane Drishinski  
Zane Drishinski, Member

/s/ Kody L Farkell  
Kody L Farkell, Clerk and Recorder

GRANT WRITING SERVICES CONTRACT

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Kuka seconded a Scope of Services with Stahly Engineering and Associates Inc. This proposal includes the grant writing services to apply for a Montana Coal Endowment Program (MCEP) Planning Grant which aids with the development of a Preliminary Engineering Report for the replacement of the Front Street Bridge in Pondera County. The fee for the grant application is estimated at \$1,500. Motion carried.

LAND PURCHASE FOR CONRAD AIRPORT

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Kuka seconded the land purchase for the Conrad Airport from Ray & Kimberly Bouma. The real property is vacant land with a total of 6.3 acres and is being sold for \$49,557.00. 90% of the cost will be paid through FAA funds and Pondera County is responsible for 10% of the total cost. Motion carried.

CONTRACT WITH WESTTEL FOR SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded the contract with Westtel for 9-1-1 services for a five (5) year term, for the amount of \$14,800.00 per year. Motion carried.

CONTRACT WITH EXACOM FOR SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded the contract with Exacom for recording radio calls for a five (5) year term in the amount of \$14,096.24 for the first year, covers installation and 1<sup>st</sup> year subscription. Annual subscription renewal for years 2 through 5 will be \$7,596.24 per year. Motion carried.

EASEMENT WITH BOKMA FARMS INC

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Kuka seconded to approve an easement with Bokma Farms Inc for a perpetual and non-exclusive easement to use the north 90 feet of the road commonly known as Airport Loop Road for residential, agricultural and commercial purposes. Motion carried.

EXPENDITURES IN EXCESS OF \$1,500-APPROVED

Commissioner Kuka moved to approve the purchase of a two (2) 2024 Rotary Cutter Mowers from Tilleman Equipment for Pondera County Road/Bridge Department in the amount of \$31,250.00 per mower. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

BIDS FOR 42.18 ACRES LOCATED AT VALIER AIRPORT

Three sealed bids were received for the lease of 42.18 acres located by the Valier Airport.

Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Public – Paul Anderberg, Bob Hjelm (Conrad TV District)

PUBLIC HEARING CONDUCTED ON THE CONRAD TV DISTRICT

The notice of the hearing was published in The Independent-Observer and The Pioneer Press in the October 15 and 22, 2025 issues.

Commissioner Morren called the hearing to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Pondera County Courthouse. Morren stated the intent of the hearing is to hear public input on funding increase for the Conrad TV District. There was public comment but no written comments. The current budget for the TV District is \$6,500 per year, or \$4.00 per household from property taxes. Conrad TV Board member, Bob Hjelm commented on increased expenses the District has seen over the years. Conrad TV District is requesting rate increase of \$10.00 to \$15.00 per household from property taxes.

The hearing was closed at 10:16 a.m.

MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMISSION’S JURISDICTION OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Drishinski commented about being on KSEN Radio Station, talking about the Senior Center and Surrey, and promoting a chili cook-off fund raiser, Sunday November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

CONRAD AIRPORT HANGAR LEASE APPROVED

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Morren seconded to approve the Conrad Airport Hangar Lease with Colby Johnson and David Ratzburg for Hangar #4 (1071 square feet) in the amount of \$135.00 per month, effective January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2031. Motion carried.

RENEWAL OF INMATE EXCESS MEDICAL INSURANCE

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Morren seconded to renew the Inmate Excess Medical Insurance with Correctional Risk Services, Inc. at the rate of \$1.16 per inmate per day for medical coverage, mental/nervous disorder treatment, substance abuse treatment, pregnancy, and AIDS/ARD/HIV treatment. Effective dates of coverage: November 1, 2025 to October 31, 2026. Motion carried.

APPROVED THE JUNK VEHICLE PROGRAM GRANT

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Morren seconded on the approval of the grant for the Junk Vehicle Program. The program will pay \$12,598.60 to the County for the removal of junk vehicles. Motion carried.

STOKES MINOR SUBDIVISION PRELIMINARY REVIEW-APPROVED

BEFORE THE  
PONDERA COUNTY COMMISSION  
PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION  
FOR PRELIMINARY PLAT REVIEW FOR  
THE STOKES MINOR SUBDIVISION

PURSUANT to the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act, Section 76-3-101 through 76-3-614, Montana Code Annotated, and the County Subdivision Regulations (CSR’S), the County reviews the proposed preliminary plat submittal for this 1-lot minor subdivision.

Riley Stokes, represented by Morris Land Surveys, is proposing a 1-lot minor subdivision of 24.05 acres approximately 1-3/4 miles to the north of Conrad, MT. The property is just west of the Conrad I-15 interchange, with US Highway 91 running along the west boundary of the proposed Parcel B. The preliminary plat application explains that the subject property, Tract 1 of Certificate of Survey No. 858 was created by way of an Agriculture Exempt Division 76-3-207(1)(c), and the purpose of the subdivision application and Minor Subdivision Plat is listed on the plat: to remove an Agricultural Restriction from an existing Tract of Record being created and illustrated as PARCEL B on that Certificate of Survey filed as Document Number 315998.

There are no proposed utility easements depicted in the preliminary plat, as all utilities are in place and on-site. The application states that "dry" utilities such as telephone and cable will come from the adjoining highway ROW. Existing easements are listed as overhead utility line maintenance and a right-of way easement for access to Parcel A of Certificate of Survey 315998 through Parcel B of Certificate of Survey 315998 (Parcel B being the subject property of this report). Existing easement information is in Section 12 of the submittal.

The owner has gained County sanitation pre-approval for this site; there is an existing house/shop on the proposed Parcel, as depicted in Section 06 of the application "25009B\_TOPO\_7-11-2025.pdf", and in Figure 2 below.

Included in the application, Section 31, is a letter dated August 14, 2025, and signed by the landowner Riley Stokes to confirm that the intent of this application is to remove the agricultural restrictions (covenants) on the existing parcel.

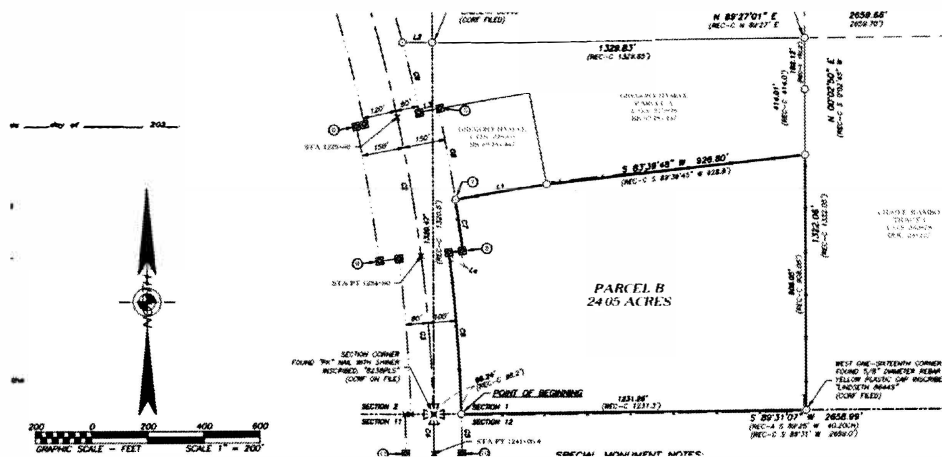


Figure 1 - Preliminary Plat screenshot of Parcel B and adjoining highway.



Project Characteristics

Size	Parcel B = 24.05 acres.
Present Land Use	Agricultural
Access	Highway 91 access. No new road construction being proposed within subdivision.
Utilities	No new utility easements shown on the preliminary plat. Existing power and access easements listed.
Water / Sewer	County permitted cistern and septic/drainfield.
Adjacent land uses	Residential and agricultural.
Zoning	None
Annexation	No
Covenants	No
Special Improvement District	None reported
Comments Received	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None received.</li> </ul>

**SUBDIVISION ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

The subdivision administrator report is based on the subdivision application materials as provided by the applicant's agent and in accordance with the County Subdivision Regulations (CSR'S).

- Compliance with the CSR'S Subdivision Regulations and 76-3-608(3)(b)(ii), MCA

The application has been reviewed according to Section III-A-1 (Fist Minor Subdivision) of the CSR'S. The application complies with the CSR's. The final plat application will be reviewed by the Subdivision Administrator prior to approval to ensure it complies with conditions of preliminary plat approval and the Montana Uniform Standards for Final Subdivision Plats.

- Compliance with applicable zoning regulations

No zoning exists for the subject parcel.

**Compliance with Subdivision and Platting Act & CSR Criteria**

The following information was provided in Section 25 of the application, "Summary of Probable Impacts"

1. Effects on Agriculture

- a. According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service Web Soil Survey, there are three predominant soil types on this parcel, Hilton clay loam, 15 to 60 percent slopes, Lonna-Floweree silt loams, 2 to 8 percent

- c. This parcel is bounded to the West by US Highway 89, and potential agricultural lands are bounded to the North by a historic railway and the East by Interstate Highway 15. An irrigation pivot exists to the South, yet it is unlikely that the removal of the agricultural covenant will have an impact on the existing farmlands.
- d. It is expected that some level of agricultural activity (grazing, haying) may continue on the subject properties. Potential nuisances are anticipated to be minimal.
- e. It is not expected that this subdivision will have a noticeable impact on the value of nearby agricultural lands. No additional lots are being created and the rural character of the parcel will be in harmony with surrounding development.
- f. Due to the small scale of this subdivision, it is not expected that higher mill levies would burden agricultural properties.

## 2. Effects on Agricultural Water User Facilities

- a. There are no Agricultural Water User Facilities within the subdivision. It is not expected that nearby sites would be any more susceptible to vandalism as a result of this subdivision.
- b. It is not expected that this subdivision would be adversely impacted by any agricultural water user facilities or have an adverse impact on nearby facilities of the same type.

## 3. Effects on Local Services

- a. The proposed subdivision will consist of a single existing parcel intended for residential use. It is anticipated that outbuildings incidental to the residential use of the lot will also be constructed.
- b. No additional public services are expected as a result of this subdivision.
  - i. Additional costs to public infrastructure such as roads and bridges, or public services such as law enforcement, emergency services, and parks are not anticipated due to the low density of this subdivision and the presence of existing services in the area.
  - ii. Any additional costs would be borne by all taxpayers within the County's jurisdiction. There are no special taxing districts proposed for this subdivision or currently in place.
  - iii. It is not anticipated that legal or other constraints would impact the ability of providers to supply additional services.
  - iv. The Town of Conrad is the only nearby municipality that may be impacted by this subdivision. Impacts are anticipated to be minimal given the negligible population increase. Municipal services will not be offered to this subdivision.
- c. This subdivision is a low-density rural subdivision located adjacent to an existing State highway and utility services. No extension of facilities is expected.
- d. Present tax revenues received from the land are as follows:
  - i. Pondera County: \$64.17
  - ii. Municipality: N/A
  - iii. School District: \$75.92
- e. It is anticipated that the taxable revenue from the developed parcel will be

- a. No historic, paleontological, archaeological, or cultural site, structures, or objects have been identified that may be affected by this proposed subdivision. Correspondence from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office has been included with this Application.
- b. An intermittent drainage runs through the parcel and several surface water pools were mapped during the field survey. The existing development is located on high ground, and wastewater treatment has been designed to be in compliance with County regulations, as outlined in the preliminary Certificate of Subdivision Approval. Groundwaters will be protected through appropriate local permitting and securing necessary water appropriation documents. Soils, slopes, and vegetation are not expected to be adversely impacted by this subdivision. Stormwater impacts are expected to be negligible given anticipated impervious surface area, and the project is exempt from stormwater review by Rule. There are no notable historical and archaeological features on nearby properties.
  - i. No streams will be altered by this subdivision and there are no lakes in the area. Contamination from new wastewater sources is expected to be negligible given modern treatment processes.
  - ii. Groundwater supplies are unlikely to be contaminated by this subdivision. Groundwater depletion is offset by the use of water cisterns.
  - iii. A building site currently exists, and no internal subdivision roads are anticipated to be installed.
  - iv. It is anticipated that minimal additional vegetation will be removed or covered and filled areas will be reseeded to prevent erosion.
  - v. There are no significant historical, visual, or open space features at this location that will be impacted by this subdivision.
  - vi. Natural hazards this subdivision could be subject to are not unique to this specific lot. High winds and grassland fires are typical hazards in this area, as well as rare seismic events. Moderate slopes minimize the possibility of rock, snow, or landslides.
- c. This proposal is consistent with nearby development. Low density development, minimal additional roadways, and modern underground utilities are expected to reduce visual impacts.

#### 5. Effects on Wildlife

- a. This subdivision will have a minimal impact on wildlife in the area. This is a low-density development in a low-density area.
- b. Pets and human activity within this proposed subdivision are likely only to disturb small non-game animals. While larger wildlife has been spotted in this area, no known dens exist on the subject parcel.

#### 6. Effects on Wildlife Habitat

- a. According the US Department of the Interior's List of threatened or endangered species that may occur in the proposed project location, no critical wildlife habitats have been identified within this subdivision. The possibility of migratory birds nesting in this area exists, but is not unique to this property. Emergent wetlands through this parcel are subject to the jurisdiction of the Pondera County Conservation District.

- a. Site inspections of the subdivision did not indicate the presence of the following health or safety hazards; natural hazards, lack of water, drainage problems, heavy traffic, dilapidated structures or irrigation ditches. There are overhead utility lines extending north-south along the western side of the parcel.
  - b. This is a low density residential and agricultural subdivision within a low density residential and agricultural area, and the following conditions are not located in the vicinity of the subdivision; airports, dilapidated structures, irrigation ditches, and adjacent industrial or mining uses. Overhead power lines are located along the west side of the parcel paralleling the State Highway and pose a fire risk in the event they are damaged by earthquake, fire, or high wind. There is a railway located approximately one-quarter mile to the north and east passing through adjacent properties, along with a switch located due north. There are no railway crossings affecting this property.
  - c. Properties adjacent to the subdivision consist of a blend of residential and agricultural uses. The additional residence is in harmony with surrounding uses and no apparent sources of conflict exist.
  - d. This subdivision is proposed within a lightly developed area, and it is unlikely the establishment of an additional residence lots would create public health or safety hazards.
8. Compliance with Survey Requirements, Local Subdivision Regulations, and Review Procedures
- a. This subdivision application has been prepared to ensure compliance with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act, Uniform Standards for Monumentation, and the Pondera County Subdivision Regulations. This project is intended to comply with all applicable regulations.
  - b. The Applicant is not responsible for the administration of Pondera County's Subdivision Review procedure, yet this subdivision has been submitted in accordance with County Regulations and State Statute.
9. Provisions for Easements for the Location and Installation of any Planned Utilities
- a. Power and telecommunications are available directly from the adjacent right-of-way and currently supplied to the property.
  - b. Northwestern Energy is responsible for the majority of the energy infrastructure in the area. Given the proximity of existing overhead utilities, electrical has been provided by overhead lines with a buried line connecting from the utility pole to the house; other buried utilities are expected to remain buried.
  - c. No street lighting is proposed.
  - d. The preliminary plat has not been submitted to affected utilities for review.
  - e. Utilities exist and are connected.
  - f. No additional easements are planned for this subdivision.
  - g. No additional easements are planned for this subdivision.

Sewer, Water, and Stormwater, and Solid Waste

- The proposed parcel will be served by individual water and wastewater treatment systems; these utilities will be private. New construction requiring water, sewer, or stormwater facilities will be permitted by the Pondera County Health

negligible.

#### Addressing

- The site address, according to the MT Cadastral tax parcel website, is
  - 1782 US HWY 91 N, Conrad, MT 59425-9223
- The final plat submittal must comply with the requirements of the USPS. [CSR VI-I]

#### Utilities

- There are no new access or utility easements being proposed.

#### 1. Impact on the Natural Environment

The CSR' do not require environmental assessments for Minor Subdivision submittals. However, effects on Historic or Natural Environment are discussed in Section 25, Summary of Probable Impacts of the application and in this report.

#### 2. Impacts on Wildlife and Habitat

The CSR' do not require environmental assessments for Minor Subdivision submittals. However, impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat are discussed in Section 25, Summary of Probable Impacts of the application and in this report.

#### 3. Impact on Public Health and Safety

Section 25, Summary of Probable Impact summarizes that site inspections of the subdivision performed by the landowner representative did not indicate the presence of health or safety hazards, natural hazards, lack of water, drainage problems, heavy traffic, dilapidated structures, or irrigation ditches. Section 25 Summary of Probably impacts also notes the following:

- There are overhead utility lines extending north-south along the western side of the parcel. There are no airports or industrial or mining uses.
- The overhead power lines pose a fire risk in the event they are damaged by earthquake, fire, or high wind.
- There is a railway located approximately ¼ mile to the north and east, passing through adjacent properties, along with a switch located due north. There are no railway crossings affecting the subject property.
- Adjacent properties are a blend of residential and agricultural uses, in harmony with the proposed parcel.
- This subdivision is proposed within a lightly developed area, and it is unlikely the establishment of an additional residential lot would create public health or safety hazards.

#### 4. Compliance with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act, including but not limited to 76-3-608(3)(b)

#### Compliance with survey requirements

The preliminary plat complies with the CSR preliminary plat requirements.

The final plat must comply with the Uniform Standards for Final Subdivision Plats and will be reviewed by the County Examining Land Surveyor.

- Commission Meeting publicly noticed: 10/14/2025
  - Commission Meeting (Scheduled) 10/29/2025
5. County Growth Policy

- Due to the proposed subdivision being minor, the Governing Body has elected not to have a Planning Board Meeting for this submittal.
- A one-lot low-impact division such as the one being proposed fits the surrounding non-urban development pattern in the surrounding area.

Prerequisites to Approval (§ III-A-5(a) of the CSR'S), including but not limited to 76-3-608(3)(c) and (d).

The governing body may not approve or conditionally approve a subdivision application and preliminary plat unless the proposed subdivision:

- i. Provides easements for the location and installation of any planned utilities, both on and off site.
  - All existing utility locations are listed and addressed within the preliminary plat application.
  - On-site utilities are private and do not require easements.
- ii. Provides legal and physical access to each parcel within the subdivision and the notation of that access on the applicable plat and any instrument transferring the parcel.
  - Legal and physical access from Highway 91.
  - Application Section 11 provides existing access plans and permitting information.
  - The County Attorney's office will be provided a copy of the final plat application, including a Title Company platting certificate or preliminary insurance policy upon submittal of the final plat application.
- iii. Assures that all required public or private improvements will be installed before final plat approval, or that their installation after final plat approval would be guaranteed as provided by Section II-B-4 of the CSR'S.
  - Subject Parcel B has been given County Sanitarian pre-approval for on-site water, sewer, and storm facilities. County permit will be recorded upon approval and filing of the final plat.
- iv. Assures that the requirements of 76-3-504(1)(j), MCA, regarding the disclosure and disposition of water rights as set forth in Section VI-O of the CSR'S have been considered and will be accomplished before the final plat is submitted.
  - This subdivision does not create lots averaging less than five acres in size, and the disposition of water rights is not required.
  - The parcel uses water cistern (no well), and there is no change on drainage or water irrigation facilities.
- v. Assures that the requirements of 76-3-504(1)(k) regarding watercourse and irrigation easements as set forth in Section VI-N of the CSR'S have been considered and will be accomplished before the final plat is submitted.
  - There are no existing or planned irrigation water courses within the subject area.
- vi. For a proposed subdivision that will create one or more parcels containing 20 acres or more, the subdivider shall demonstrate in the preliminary plat application that there is an adequate water source and at least one area for a septic system and a replacement drain field for each lot. This information shall be submitted to the local reviewing

When considering a proposed subdivision application and requiring conditions/mitigation, the Commission shall consult with the subdivider and shall give due weight and consideration to the expressed preference of the subdivider.

Suggested Conditions of Approval.

1. The final plat and plans shall be in substantial compliance with the preliminary plat and plans reviewed and approved by the governing body, except as modified by these conditions. *[CSR II-B]*
2. The final plat and supplements shall comply with the Uniform Standards for Final Subdivision Plats and shall be reviewed by the County Examining Land Surveyor and Subdivision Administrator prior to final approval. *[CSR II-B-1, MCA 76-3-402 and MCA 76-3-611]*
3. Prior to filing of the final plat, the subdivider shall provide proof that all real property taxes and special assessments assessed and levied on the property are paid for the current tax year; including any past delinquencies. *[MCA 76-3-611(1)(b)]*
  - a. *Please note that this condition is met by the County Treasurer's signed certification to the above upon the face of the final plat and is required before the final plat can be filed [ARM 24.183.1107(3)(a)].*
4. Prior to final plat application, the subdivider shall secure the County Health Department permit, and said permit will be recorded and referenced on the final plat at filing. *[CSR VI-J&K]*
5. Upon approving or conditionally approving a subdivision application and preliminary plat, the Commission will provide the applicant with a dated and signed statement of approval. This approval shall be in force for thirty-six (36) months from the date of the written decision. The board of county commissioners may, at its discretion and at the written request of the applicant, extend its approval of the preliminary plat. *[CSR'S III-A-5(f)]*

A party, as defined by 76-3-625 M.C.A., who is aggrieved by a decision of the Commission may, within thirty (30) days after this decision, appeal to the PONDERA COUNTY District Court.

DATED this 29<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2025.

Pondera County Commissioners

/s/ Jim Morren

Chair

ATTEST: /s/ Kody L Farkell

RESOLUTION ON SETTING MILEAGE ALLOWANCE, LODGING, AND PER  
DIEM REIMBURSEMENT RATES

PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA

RESOLUTION #7 - 2025/26

WHEREAS the mileage rate for state and local government employees has been established for calendar year 2025 by the Internal Revenue Service as 70 cents per mile for the first 1,000 miles of travel within each month and the rate for mileage over 1,000 miles per month at 67 cents per mile (3 cents less per mile, per 2-18-503(b), Montana Code Annotated)

WHEREAS with the passage of HB 13 the State of Montana has adjusted the lodging and per diem rates for state and local government employees as follows:

In-state lodging reimbursement rate is \$110.00 plus tax for all communities except for Big Sky/ West Yellowstone/Gardiner (Gallatin and Park Counties), Helena (Lewis & Clark County), Missoula (Missoula County), and Kalispell/Whitefish (Flathead County), which communities are considered high cost areas.

<u>Per Diem Rates</u>	<u>In-State</u>	<u>Out-of-State</u>
Morning Meal	\$ 11.20	\$ 16.00
Mid-Day Meal	\$ 13.30	\$ 19.00
Evening Meal	\$ 19.61	\$ 28.00
Totals	\$ 44.11	\$ 63.00

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Pondera County that the mileage allotment allowed to Pondera County employees during calendar year 2025 shall be 70 cents per mile (up to and including 1,000 miles) and 67 cents per miles (over 1,000 miles) during each calendar month; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Pondera County that the in-state lodging reimbursement and per diem rates shall be

In-state lodging reimbursement rate is \$110.00 plus tax for all communities except for Big Sky/ West Yellowstone/Gardiner (Gallatin and Park Counties), Helena (Lewis & Clark County), Missoula (Missoula County), and Kalispell/Whitefish (Flathead County), which communities are considered high cost areas.

<u>Per Diem Rates</u>	<u>In-State</u>	<u>Out-of-State</u>
Morning Meal	\$ 11.20	\$ 16.00
Mid-Day Meal	\$ 13.30	\$ 19.00
Evening Meal	\$ 19.61	\$ 28.00
Totals	\$ 44.11	\$ 63.00

Adopted this 29th day of October, 2025 as moved by Commissioner Drishinski, seconded by Commissioner Morren, and passed on a 2-0 vote of the board. Effective July 1, 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren

Absent

Jim Morren, Chairman

Thomas A Kuka, Member

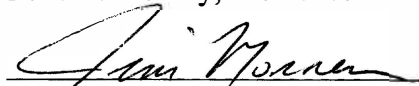
CLAIMS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT

<u>FUND</u>	Fund Description	
1000	GENERAL	55,970.90
2110	ROAD	33,163.72
2130	BRIDGE	119.46
2140	WEED	770.32
2170	AIRPORT	483.51
2230	AMBULANCE	182.23
2235	COUNTY HOSPITAL	16,353.98
2290	EXTENSION SERVICE	6,959.41
2300	PUBLIC SAFETY (LAW ENFORCEMENT)	21,606.06
2390	DRUG FORFEITURE	125.10
2401	BRADY LIGHTS MAINTENANCE	359.89
2811	DUI PREVENTION	300.00
2830	JUNK VEHICLE	1,000.00
2850	911 EMERGENCY	8,041.83
2860	LAND USE PLANNING	220.00
2866	NORTHERN TRANSIT INTERLOCAL	83.06
2958	EP (DES) GRANTS	384.27
2962	LOR FOUNDATION GRANT	2,283.02
2963	ORAL HEALTH SERVICES GRANT	2,094.77
2965	INNOVATION BEH HEALTH	2,439.13
2971	WIC GRANT	49.82
2973	MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH	106.25
2976	IMMUNIZATION ACTION GRANT	106.01
2978	CHRONIC DISEASE GRANT	323.94
2980	HEALTH CARE FOUND. GRANT	2,083.00
4012	GENERAL FUND CAPITAL IMP	19171.25
4013	ROAD/BRIDGE EQUIP PURCHSE	22,500.00
TOTAL CLAIMS		\$197,280.93
TOTAL PAYROLL		\$386,361.89
TOTAL CLAIMS AND PAYROLL FUNDS		\$583,642.82

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. on October 31, 2025

Pondera County, Montana.

  
 Jim Morren, Chairman

ATTEST:

