REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA
Held in June 2024

The Board of Pondera County Commissioners met daily in informal session and in scheduled meetings on June 5, 12, 19, and 26, 2024.

JUNE 5, 2024 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:
PRESENT: Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Commissioner Jim Morren, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Public- Paul Anderberg

HAYING AGREEMENTS-APPROVED
Commissioner Kuka moved to approve the following Yearly Right-of-Way Forage Removal Agreement/Applications:

Kelly Rauscher	Arod Lakes Rd from Brady, 5 miles west*
Zane Drishinski	Old Shelby highway from Ledger Rd north to Bullhead Rd both sides, S Camp Rd from Old Shelby Hwy to Pioneer Rd both sides, Bench Rd 2 miles north from S Camp Rd both sides, Pioneer Rd from S Camp to Depot Rd both sides, Depot Rd from Pioneer Rd to Old Shelby Hwy both sides, Fowler from Bench Rd to Old Shelby Hwy both sides*
Brad and Nancy Bruner	Price Rd S from Midway Rd to Berland Hoop Rd, both sides*
Ronald & Darlene Denney	Pondera Coulee Rd, from Price Rd to Moulton School Rd; North Price Rd from Sollid Rd to Hwy 366*
Wylie Gustafson	Price Rd ½ mile S of Sollid Rd to Midway Rd; Furlough Rd from Sollid Rd 1 mile south, Price Rd from ½ mile south of Sollid Rd to Midway Rd*
Ray & Kevin Moritz	Hovde Rd N & S Sides; Prospector Rd both sides; Primrose Rd both Sides; Pondera Coulee Rd both sides; Kelly Rd both sides*
Tyler Arnold	Conrad Airport*

Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE COALITION
Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Kuka seconded the payment of $4,938.00 for membership dues for the Natural Resource Coalition. Motion carried.

EXPENDITURES IN EXCESS OF $1,500-APPROVED
Commissioner Kuka moved to approve the purchase of a 2024 RAM 1500 from Billion DCJR for Pondera County Sheriff Department in the amount of $42,074.00. The funds for this purchase will come out of the Public Safety Capital Improvement. Bids came in from Billion DCJR, Van Motors (2024 Silverado Crew Cab for $58,376.00), and Courtesy Ford (2024 F150 Super Crew for $48,549.00). Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

ROAD AGREEMENT WITH MT RENEWABLES/CALUMET REFINERY
Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded to send a road agreement to MT Renewable/Calumet. Motion carried.

JUNE 12, 2024 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:
PRESENT: Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Commissioner

1201	Commissioner voted to clear it from tax roll	123.96	1026800

Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

MAY COMMISSION MINUTES APPROVED

Commissioner Drishinski moved and Commissioner Kuka seconded to approve the May 2024 Minutes of the Commission. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION ON AUTHORIZING BUDGET AMENDMENTS TO PONDERA COUNTY BUDGET

PONDERA COUNTY MONTANA
RESOLUTION #40 – 2023/24
AUTHORIZING BUDGET AMENDMENTS TO
PONDERA COUNTY BUDGET

WHEREAS the Montana Code Annotated, Section 7-6-4006(4), grants the Board of County Commissioners the power and authority to amend the budget during the fiscal year by conducting public hearings at regularly scheduled meetings; and

WHEREAS Pondera County Commissioners approved the appropriations budget for the Pondera County during its regular budget approval process and correction in revenues and expenditures budget have been identified; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Pondera County that the budget be corrected as follows:

Revenue	Description	Prior Amount	New Amount
2980-331148	Grant Revenue	$0	$75,000
2918-334019	Grant Revenue	$0	$ 8,500
2840-334002	Spec Co Grant	$1,852	$ 7,500
2840-334013	DOT Grant	$7,500	$ 1,786

Expenditure	Description	Prior Amount	New Amount
2980-448-440104-398	Contract Services	$0	$75,000
2918-201-420150-110	Salaries	$0	$ 6,545
2918-201-420150-140	Benefits	$0	$ 1,955
2840-313-431113-220	Operating Supplies	$1,852	$ 1,786

Adopted this 12th day of June, 2024 as moved by Commissioner Kuka, seconded by Commissioner Drishinski, and passed on a 3-0 vote of the board. Effective on passage and approval.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren
Jim Morren, Chair

/s/ Thomas A Kuka
Thomas A Kuka, Member

ATTEST: */s/ Kody L Farkell*
Kody L Farkell, Clerk and Recorder

/s/ Zane Drishinski
Zane Drishinski, Member

Commissioner Morren called the hearing to order at 10:00 am.
The notice of the hearing was published in The Independent-Observer and The Valierian in the May 30 and June 5, 2024 issues.

Pursuant to 7-4-2503(4), Montana Code Annotated, county governments are required to appoint a county compensation board to prepare a compensation schedule for the elected county officials for the succeeding fiscal year. Also, in accordance with 7-4-2503(4), the Clerk and Recorder prepared and presented a worksheet showing salary comparisons to other counties as well as the City of Conrad and the Clerk of the Conrad School District and other demographics of the counties. The Board reviewed the worksheet. The National cost-of-living adjustment for the fiscal 2025 year is 4.1%.

There was review of the proposed options for cost-of-living increases in elected officials' salaries for the 2024-25 fiscal year. There was discussion on the possible expenditures for the upcoming year. The cost of insurance for property, workers compensation, as well as employee health insurance are continuing to increase. The courthouse boiler project has been completed and did not require any taxpayer funds; it was all paid by COVID-19 funds. The Conrad Airport is getting a new runway in order to stay in compliance with the FAA. There is 90% match available from the FAA and the Commissioners are exploring grant and/or loan options for the County's 10% match. The cost of fuel and vehicle/equipment replacements are anticipated to remain higher than past years. However, all departments have been able to remain within their budgets and overall cash within the county funds is in a decent position.

Commissioners proposed considering longevity pay for elected officials, with the exception of Sheriff, who already receives longevity per Montana Code. More counties around the state are finding this as a successful avenue of encouraging more qualified candidates to consider running for, and remaining in, public office.

After some discussion, Dan Majerus moved and Robert Skorupa seconded to recommend an increase of up to 4.5% for elected officials and to allow for the consideration of longevity for election officials who do not receive longevity as required by Montana Code Motion carried.

The hearing closed at 10:30 am

JUNE 18, 2024 FEDERAL PRIMARY ELECTION CANVASS:
PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Tom Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell

CANVASS OF THE JUNE 4, 2024 FEDERAL PRIMARY ELECTION
Commissioner and Canvass Board member Zane Drishinski moved to approve the canvass of the June 4, 2024 Federal Primary Election conducted by Commissioner Morren, Commissioner Kuka, and Commissioner Drishinski; and to direct the Clerk and Recorder to enter the official results in the records of the County. Kuka seconded. Motion carried.

JUNE 19, 2024 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:
PRESENT: Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Commissioner Jim Morren, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Public- Paul Anderberg

DUI TASK FORCE PLAN APPROVED
Commissioner Kuka moved to approve the fiscal year 2024-25 DUI Task Force plan. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION ON AUTHORIZING FORGIVENESS OF REPAYMENT OF INTERFUND LOAN

PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA
RESOLUTION #41 – 2023/24
AUTHORIZING FORGIVENESS OF REPAYMENT OF INTERFUND LOAN

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has, from time to time, determined it to be in the best interests of the County to authorize loans from one fund to another at a reasonable rate of interest; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that the interfund loan (for FY2023/24 funds) from the General Fund to the Port Authority Fund, authorized under Resolution #21 – 2023/24, be forgiven under the terms of the January 17, 2024 Loan Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Pondera County that the Clerk and Recorder effect the forgiveness of repayment of the above-described loan, in the amount of $12,962.50, principal, and all interest that would have accrued; treating the same as a transfer from the General Fund to the Port Authority Fund.

Adopted this 19th day of June, 2024, as moved by Commissioner Kuka, seconded by Commissioner Drishinski, and passed on a 3-0 vote of the board. Effective on passage and approval.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren
Jim Morren, Chairman

/s/ Thomas A Kuka
Thomas A Kuka, Member

Attest: */s/ Kody L Farkell*
Kody L. Farkell, Clerk & Recorder

/s/ Zane Drishinski
Zane Drishinski, Member

JUNE 26, 2024 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:
PRESENT: Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Jim Morren, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch

ENCROACHMENT AGREEMENT REQUESTED BY KENNETH E WHEELER JR
Commissioner Kuka moved to approve an Encroachment Agreement for Kenneth E Wheeler Jr on Kingston Mine Road. Commissioner Morren seconded. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION ON AUTHORIZING BUDGET AMENDMENTS TO PONDERA COUNTY BUDGET

PONDERA COUNTY MONTANA
RESOLUTION #42 – 2023/24
AUTHORIZING BUDGET AMENDMENTS TO

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Pondera County that the budget be corrected as follows:

Revenue	Description	Prior Amount	New Amount
2981-331021	Grant Revenue	$0	$20,000

Expenditure	Description	Prior Amount	New Amount
2981-448-440010-398	Contract Services	$0	$20,000

Adopted this 26th day of June, 2024 as moved by Commissioner Kuka, seconded by Commissioner Morren, and passed on a 3-0 vote of the board. Effective on passage and approval.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren
Jim Morren, Chair

/s/ Thomas A Kuka
Thomas A Kuka, Member

ATTEST: */s/ Kody Farkell*
Kody L Farkell, Clerk and Recorder

absent
Zane Drishinski, Member

RESOLUTION #43 – INTENT TO DISSOLVE NORTHERN MONTANA JOINT REFUSE DISPOSAL DISTRICT

Commission Kuka moved and Commissioner Morren seconded to table Resolution #43, intent to dissolve Northern Montana Joint Refuse Disposal District. Motion carried.

AGGREGATE TESTING PERMIT WITH DNRC

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner seconded to extend the testing window for the aggregate testing permit that was submitted July 6, 2023 and approved October 3, 2023. The extension will be from June 18, 2024 through November 1, 2024. Motion carried.

CLAIMS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT

Fund	Fund Description	
1000	GENERAL	40,658.82
2110	ROAD	17,945.49
2130	BRIDGE	659.49
2131	MDT BRIDGE RAPID PROJECT	279.00
2140	WEED	2,026.24
2150	PREDATORY ANIMAL CONTROL	5,183.00
2170	AIRPORT	508.15
2220	LIBRARY	175,000.00
2230	AMBULANCE	205.85
2280	SENIOR CITIZENS	15,000.00
2290	EXTENSION SERVICE	6,459.46
2300	PUBLIC SAFETY (LAW ENFORCEMENT)	20,622.40
2401	BRADY LIGHTS MAINTENANCE	309.94

2963	ORAL HEALTH SERVICES GRANT	106.25
2964	ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH	665.25
2971	WIC GRANT	134.82
2973	MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH	12.55
2976	IMMUNIZATION ACTION GRANT	344.12
2978	CHRONIC DISEASE GRANT	259.31
2996	LATCF	114,990.53
4009	PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL IMP	10,172.27
4012	GENERAL FUND CAPITAL IMP	9900.00
4013	ROAD/BRIDGE EQUIP PURCHSE	3,100.00
7920	REFUND FUND	14,421.42

TOTAL CLAIMS	458,532.54
TOTAL PAYROLL	$ 333,139.60
TOTAL CLAIMS AND PAYROLL FUNDS	$ 791,672.14

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. on June 28, 2024

Pondera County, Montana.

Jim Morren, Chairman

ATTEST:

Kody L Farkell, Clerk & Recorder

COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER SEAL PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA