

**Bear Lake County Commissioners' Meeting**  
**December 11, 2023**  
**Commissioners' Chambers – Paris, Idaho**

The Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners met in its regular meeting at 9 a.m. Monday, December 11, 2023, in the Commissioners' Chambers in Paris, Idaho. Video access to the meeting was available via Zoom. Members present were Commission Chairman Bradley D. Jensen, Commissioner Rex L. Payne, Commissioner Wynn S. Olsen and Amy Bishop, Clerk of the Board. Also in attendance were County Assessor Jannelle Jensen, Treasurer Tricia Poulsen, County Superintendent Todd Boehme, County Building Inspector Wayne Davidson, Deputy Clerk Paul Christiansen and various members of the public.

County Attorney Adam McKenzie was excused from the meeting due to another obligation.

**APPROVE AGENDA – ACTION ITEM**

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

**ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES**

Bear Lake County Treasurer Tricia Poulsen presented a few tax cancellations for Board approval. These tax cancellations – for parcel Nos. 4253.04, 389, 60090, 3744, 566, 15, 428, 3656, 51401, 2934 and 60016 and totaling \$8,798.54 – were being applied for multiple reasons. Four of the parcel owners had signed up for the Idaho Homeowner's Exemption after the tax bills had already been sent out; one parcel had mistakenly received two Homeowner's Exemptions, and this now required one of those exemptions to be placed back on as a credit; two of the once-taxable parcels in question had been purchased by Idaho Fish and Game and were now considered nontaxable as part of a government entity; one cancellation was due to a roof collapse that had reduced the overall taxable value; and the remaining tax cancellations were due to the misapplication of garbage fees.

Mark Eborn, who owns parcel No. 3744, was scheduled to speak to the Board later in the meeting regarding the misapplied garbage tax that had been mistakenly added to his tax bill the past four years. Poulsen said Eborn had only just noticed it this year.

Properties that signed up for the Homeowner's Exemption after the second Monday in July did not receive the extra Homeowner Tax Reduction (HTR) credit as part of that exemption, Poulsen said. Property owners have until December 31 to sign up, and the assessor can cancel up to that point.

Poulsen said the county taxes were very difficult to balance this year. The effort of balancing, which usually takes just a workday, took a full workweek. Additional Property Tax Relief (ATR) and HTR credits had to be added back in, but Poulsen said she was able to balance after much exertion and had turned the results over to County Clerk Amy Bishop.

The busy tax collection season each year results in Poulsen's office being put to the test. She said her office could use help from a seasonal employee during this time. The Treasurer's Office this year had

planned to use County Mapper Naaman Dolence, but whereas he took over as the only mapper for the county at the end of November he had been unavailable. Going forward, Poulsen's office will utilize the assistance of Department of Motor Vehicles employees Katy Payne and Sammy Hlgley during these busy times. These two individuals will alternate days in the Treasurer's Office and each will work a few hours taking payments from customers and answering phone calls during the tax season.

Poulsen reported her budget would be going over due to an unexpected postage cost. When her office presented its budget to the Board in May, Poulsen thought she had added in enough funding to cover the increased postage costs; however, she did not realize she would have to send out an additional mailer to taxpayers to explain ATR and HTR credits. That unexpected cost had resulted in \$500 more than her budgeted funds dedicated to postage. Poulsen said she will adjust her budget next year to address this year's increase.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the cancellations of taxes, in the total amount of \$8,798.54, that had been presented by Bear Lake County Treasurer Tricia Poulsen. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

County Clerk Amy Bishop said she wanted to make the Board aware of her concern over the transparency reporting all local governmental entities are required to annually submit to the state. Bishop said she feels the State Controller has overstepped a little this year, and the requirements and expectations associated with the transparency reporting seem to only be growing. The State Controller had previously required salary reporting annually, but that has now been moved to a quarterly requirement. This reporting had originally entailed a three-tab spreadsheet; however, when it came time to complete this process this year, Bishop found that spreadsheet now consists of eight individual tabs – more than doubling the amount of work.

Because the county has the necessary staff and software, it is able to figure out required information and supply to the State Controller the required reports; however, Bishop said, she is concerned with the burden being placed on cities and taxing districts. The Idaho Association of County Recorders and Clerks (IAC) had hoped the State Controller's initiative would eliminate some reporting requirements. Unfortunately, Bishop said, those reporting requirements also are still required.

Bishop said she is in favor of transparency and believes local governments need to be held accountable, but perhaps this process has been taken too far. She hopes the IAC can work with the state to work through these issues to get that burden lessened.

The annual Bear Lake County audit, to be conducted by Certified Public Accountant Gary H. Teuscher, is being prepared for and was scheduled to start in the following days, Bishop said.

Bear Lake County Assessor Jannelle Jensen said the Motor Vehicle Department in November had taken in \$118,502.66 through Idaho Transportation Department transactions and \$4,218.50 through Idaho Parks and Recreation transactions.

County Mapper Dale Thornock had retired after many years of service, and Jensen said she wanted to thank him for all his hard work. Bailee Argyle has been appointed to the position of Chief Deputy County Assessor. Naaman Dolence will now be the office's lead mapper, and there is no plan to hire another

mapper to assist. In February, both Dolence and Argyle will begin software training for the new Esri mapping system to be implemented in the office in early 2024. The Esri company will visit the office to offer training as well, Jensen said.

The Assessor's Office was working on its Occupancy Roll. In 2023, 68 new homes had been added in the valley, and Jensen hoped to mail out occupancy assessments before day's end. She was waiting on a single report from the state. House Bill 292 and the tax drive have kept the state busy, so the Bear Lake County Assessor's Office was happy to patiently wait while those issues were worked out.

Commissioner Payne said a citizen who had recently renewed their vehicle registrations had approached him about a situation they were experiencing. That individual was still receiving notices from the State of Idaho reminding them to renew their registrations, despite having already renewed. Jensen said it was possible the state DMV might not have received the notification of renewal from the Bear Lake County DMV before the notices had been mailed out, or the notices might have been in transit at the time of renewal.

Commissioner Payne said he himself had recently found the state does not give the option for registrants to renew trailer plates through the mail for five or 10 years. Instead, he found these types of renewals are only valid for a single year. Jensen said ITD and the state are working to pass legislation to allow individual purchasers to determine when their plate needs to be renewed, most often at a point when the plate itself appears to be worn out. Even now, although they are an old style of plate, it is not uncommon to see local trailers sporting plates with raised numbers, she said.

Sheriff Bart Heslington was unable to attend the meeting but had supplied the Board with a written copy of his report, Bishop said.

## **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Commissioner Payne said he was continuing work with County Attorney Adam McKenzie to work out a memorandum of understanding between the University of Idaho Extension in Bear Lake County and the Montpelier Mobile Food Pantry as a means to designate parking areas for the food bank and its clientele outside the Extension building and at the Bear Lake County Fairgrounds.

On December 21, Commissioner Payne, Sheriff Bart Heslington and McKenzie will take part in a conference call with Sen. Mark Harris, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation and Gov. Brad Little's Office to discuss the ongoing issue of state lands and the public's concerns that have been voiced about the pending MOU between Bear Lake County and the state. That MOU, as it stands, provides for the enforcement of regulations and restrictions in the areas surrounding Bear Lake that fall below the original high-water mark.

The primary issues brought forward by the public include concerns about lateral travel on those lands around Bear Lake and who will be responsible for the cost burden associated with the necessary law enforcement patrols in those areas, Commissioner Payne said. The proposed MOU asks Bear Lake County law officers to conduct these enforcement efforts; however, the majority of the public believes if state land is being patrolled, the state should provide the funding for the efforts. Senator Harris agrees this funding needs to come out of the state's budget, Commissioner Payne said.

He said he plans to suggest during that conference call that the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation consider adding a public access to Bear Lake State Park along the west side of Bear Lake – something that does not currently exist.

Commissioner Jensen said there even could be more accesses added on the east side of Bear Lake as well. Those areas demand a lot of the county's infrastructure and public services, especially during the summertime, he said.

Commissioner Olsen said the Bear Lake Senior Center wants to have a financial audit conducted but has been unable to use local Certified Public Accountant Gary Teuscher because he already does their bookkeeping. Because of this, the center is looking at other options. Unfortunately, he said, the most inexpensive audit option the center has found will cost about \$10,000. Still, completing an audit will help the center in its applications for grant funding in the future. The center also is working to update its building, and its planned remodel is getting closer to being a necessity.

Clerk Amy Bishop suggested the center contact the auditor who works with Caribou County. While it will still be expensive, that individual could likely charge a rate that would fall closer to \$6,000.

Commissioner Olsen said the Bear Lake County Fair Board was scheduled to appear later in the meeting to discuss its electrical update project, and it appeared that project will be more expensive than originally anticipated.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS / ACTION ITEMS**

### **RATIFY CLAIMS**

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to ratify the claims before the Board. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

### **APPROVE MINUTES**

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the minutes for the Board's November 13, 2023, regular and November 17, 2023, special commissioners meetings. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

### **2024 EMPLOYEE HOLIDAYS**

Clerk Amy Bishop said the Board needed to evaluate the list of recognized 2024 county holidays and approve the list. This list included Monday, January 1 as observed New Year's Day; Monday, January 15 as Martin Luther King, Jr./Human Rights Day; Monday, February 19 as President's Day; Monday, May 27 as Memorial Day; Thursday, July 4 as Independence Day; Monday, September 2 as Labor Day; Monday, October 14 as Columbus Day; Friday, November 11 as Veteran's Day; Thursday, November 28 as Thanksgiving Day; Friday, November 29 as Day after Thanksgiving Day; Wednesday, December 25 as Christmas Day, with Dispatch and Officers observing on December 24 and December 25; and Tuesday, December 24 or Thursday, December 26 as Christmas Holiday Second Day.



Additionally, Bishop said, Wednesday, November 27 will serve as Second Thanksgiving Day for the Court office, with one person from the courts taking this as their day off and coming into work Friday, November 29.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to accept the county holiday schedule for 2024. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

#### **2023 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT**

Clerk Amy Bishop said the 2023 Emergency Management Performance Grant provides funding for the county's emergency management professional in a 50-50 match for the county's contribution to the position. The annual contribution of \$11,023.11 is supplied by each entity.

The state's budget period is October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024; however, because the state's fiscal year runs differently than that of Bear Lake County, the state contribution is listed under its 2023 fiscal year while Bear Lake's contribution is listed under its 2024 fiscal year, Bishop said.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the 2023 Emergency Management Performance Grant Subrecipient Agreement. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

#### **2023 STATE HOMELAND SECURITY SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT**

Clerk Amy Bishop said the 2023 State Homeland Security Program funds are awarded for specific uses by each subrecipient. The past several years' funding has been used for generators – one at the Bear Lake Senior Center and one at the Bear Lake County Courthouse – but there are several different categories for which the money can be used, including election security efforts, domestic violence prevention, counter-extremism and cyber security. The state had allocated \$24,748.52 to Bear Lake County's use, she said.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the 2023 State Homeland Security Program Subrecipient Agreement. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

#### **CERTIFICATE OF RESIDENCY**

Two certificates of residency were before the Board for approval, Clerk Amy Bishop said. These included certificates of residency for Riley Hayes and Janalee Transtrum, both verified as citizens of Bear Lake County and students of the College of Southern Idaho. This certification of residency helps to pay a portion of these students' tuition. The county receives some revenue from the Idaho State Liquor Division, and that funding helps to provide for partial payment of tuition, she said.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the certificates of residency for Riley Hayes and Janalee Transtrum. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

## **COURT EMPLOYEE VACATION TIME CARRYOVER REQUEST**

Clerk Amy Bishop reminded the Board that, according to the county policy manual, there is a cap on how much vacation time each employee can roll over from year to year. However, Bishop said Sarah Cottle – an employee within the district court office – has been unable to reduce her accrued vacation time below the 144 hours she is allowed to carry over.

In the past 18 months, Cottle has trained five new employees in the court office due to high turnover while acting as the county jury commissioner and continuing with her her duties for magistrate cases, and this has made it difficult for her to take the vacation time necessary to come below the cap. As it stands, Bishop said, Cottle has 188.2 hours of accrued time, and the clerk now requested the board allow Cottle to carry up to 44.2 hours of vacation time beyond the allotted 144 hours.

With the newer employees now coming up to speed, Cottle expects to be able to use that vacation time in the next year, Bishop said. Additionally – and despite each court employee having different duties – Bishop’s goal in the next year is to work on cross-training in that office as a means to alleviate some of the burden placed on the workers.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to allow Sarah Cottle to carry over up to 44.2 hours of vacation time, above the cap of 144 hours, into the 2024 calendar year. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.**

## **FIRST RESPONDER MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER POLICY**

Clerk Amy Bishop said the topic of the First Responder Mental Health Provider Policy had been discussed briefly during the public comment session of the Board’s regular meeting on November 13. She reminded the Board that within the last 18 months it had approved the employee assistance program, and at that time Shaun Tobler with the Bear Lake Memorial Counseling Services office said he would provide mental health services for first responders as well.

All county employees already are covered for some type of mental health counseling through the county’s insurance and employee assistance program (EAP), but more treatment for county first responders – including law enforcement, dispatchers, search and rescue and ambulance service volunteers – could be needed and will be beneficial, she said.

The county policy requires those individuals that fall under Bear Lake County Sheriff’s Office, Ambulance Service and Search and Rescue to first use the benefits available to them via private insurance and the EAP, but the mental health provider policy through the Bear Lake Memorial Hospital mental health services agreement will then pay for up to three traumatic events each year, with up to 10 mental health visits per event at a cost of \$65 per visit. Anything beyond those ten visits must be paid by the employee themselves, Bishop said.

Bishop said this draft policy had been previously forwarded to County Attorney Adam McKenzie, but no comments had been received yet. Additionally, the draft had been sent to the Idaho Counties Risk Management Program (ICRMP) and it had only suggested a few changes of the verbiage.

The county EAP already allows up to eight visits per event, so it is possible this new policy will not see much use, Bishop said. However, in the event a first responder has to deal with the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), it is unlikely eight visits will fully alleviate that mental health burden.

Many things faced by first responders with the ambulance service can be highly traumatic, Commissioner Payne said. Because that service is nearly completely voluntary, and because those individuals are only paid during ambulance transfers to other facilities, he said the county should support them as much as it is able.

Bishop said she does not anticipate this benefit will be abused. It may not end up being a large cost to the county, but, if approved, the provision would be in place should it be needed.

Commissioner Olsen said this service had been discussed at the most recent Bear Lake Memorial Hospital Board Meeting that he had attended. There has been some concern if Tobler will have enough time to provide that level of care in addition to his other duties. Chief Deputy Clerk Mindy Williamson will clarify if the service will be provided only by Tobler or if other providers with Bear Lake Memorial Mental Health Services will also be included.

Commissioner Payne said he would like to see other providers outside of Bear Lake Memorial Hospital included as well, just as another option for those who utilize the service. Bishop will reach out to the Bear Lake Community Health Center to see if it would like to take part.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the First Responders Mental Health Provider Policy, subject to review by the county attorney, and extend to other local providers an offer to join into the agreement if they will agree to a fee of \$65 per visit, with up to 10 visits per event, including three traumatic events annually. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

#### **CITY OF GEORGETOWN LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT**

Clerk Amy Bishop said the law enforcement contract between the county and the City of Georgetown had not been received from County Attorney Adam McKenzie prior to the meeting, so this action item will need to be tabled until a later date. She reminded the Board this contract had been approved earlier in the year, but because McKenzie serves as attorney for the City of Georgetown and the county, its full approval was subject to another attorney's review. Attorney S. Douglas Wood of Spinner, Wood & Smith, had made some changes and had forwarded the revision to Georgetown for its approval, but nothing had been provided to the county since that time.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to table any action on the City of Georgetown Law Enforcement Contract with the county until a later date. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

#### **ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER CONTRACT – FAIRGROUNDS**

Clerk Amy Bishop said the county had received from Rocky Mountain Power the bid to run three-phase power to the Bear Lake County Fairgrounds and across the property. That bid had come in at \$7,710,

which was less than had been expected by the Bear Lake County Fair Board.

The fair board has been working with local contractor Dennis Bills on the initial project design, and he has supplied an estimated cost of \$76,000 for parts only. While the fair board has indicated there has been some discussion of Bills donating some of his labor, in order to follow the proper procedure the county should bid the whole project – parts and labor – together as a whole, Bishop said.

The fair board has estimated the entire project cost to be about \$150,000. While that board does not have that amount in its current budget, it does have some money available in its fund balance. The fair board also believes it can conduct some more fundraising ventures to help subsidize the needed amount. In order to make the funding work, the commissioners will have to elect to open the budget.

Commissioner Payne said that it is against regulations to begin separate portions of a single project in order to circumvent the bid requirement.

Bishop said there is an option for the commissioners to say they want to take on this project – first approving the contract with Rocky Mountain Power and then discussing later in the meeting the other costs as part of the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Commissioner Payne said the county needs to figure out how it is going to fund the project before the Board approves any of it – including the Rocky Mountain Power Contract. While the Board agrees this project is necessary, the other commissioners agreed its funding has to be determined before any moves are made.

It was decided the Board would continue the discussion on the project later in the meeting.

#### **CATERPILLAR LEASE AGREEMENT – 2023 MOTOR GRADER**

Due to supply chain delays, the county had been waiting several months for the arrival of a newly leased Road and Bridge Department motor grader. The 2023 Caterpillar 150-15AWD motor grader now has been delivered and finally is in the department's possession, Clerk Amy Bishop said. Unfortunately, the lessor – Summit National Bank – can no longer honor the interest rate it had originally quoted at the time of original lease, all due to changes in the market during that lengthy time.

However, she said, Caterpillar Financial has worked with the county and has been able to provide an interest rate – a 6.3 percent annual percentage rate (APR) – close to what originally had been budgeted. Summit's interest rate had increased to between 9 and 10 percent APR, while the original agreement had been close to 5 percent. The rate provided by Caterpillar Financial is the best that could be found right now, and the equipment is desperately needed by the county. Because of that, Bishop urged the Board to move forward with the new agreement.

Commissioner Jensen reiterated that equipment had not been available through any means – either through lease, purchase or rental – at the time that it was needed by the county. This seems like the only option, and he agreed the Board should utilize it.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the 2023 motor grader lease agreement with Caterpillar Financial, subject to review by the county attorney. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.**

#### **WAYNE DAVIDSON – BUILDING INSPECTOR REPORT**

Bear Lake County Building Inspector Wayne Davidson presented his end-of-year report to the Board and provided a breakdown review on permitting figures.

To date, 236 building permits had been issued in 2023 in Bear Lake County. The most common type of structures permitted were new residential starts, with a total of 69 permits issued. Some of these homes have not broken ground due to shortages with materials, contractors and other necessities, Davidson said. He reminded the Board that at its November regular meeting he had been asked to show a total of residential permits issued in previous years and compare them with 2023.

Davidson said he had looked at the permitting numbers between 2019 to 2023 and found that, on average, Bear Lake County has seen between 35 and 45 new starts on residences annually prior to that period. In the past five years, that average has grown.

In 2019, 46 residential permits were issued; in 2020, just 42 residential permits were issued. That number more than doubled in 2021, with 85 permits issued. That number fell slightly in 2022, down to 82 permits, and has continued to drop to the 69 residential permits issued in 2023.

When the information was examined, Davidson said he found it interesting that in 2021 – with social unrest, rioting and COVID-19 spreading throughout the country – the number of new residential starts in Bear Lake County increased so significantly. At that time, most of those homes were all larger residences, measuring more than 5,000 square feet. In 2023, while there had been a few homes that measured about 10,000 square feet, most now measured 5,000 square feet or less.

Likely due to the higher interest rates that are affecting the market, Davidson has seen very few residential starts in Montpelier and the northern areas of Bear Lake County. Those areas typically see full-time residences, while the south side of the valley sees a larger amount of part-time housing.

The new permits issued for building in Fish Haven totaled 82 and included many new residences. Montpelier also saw a high number of permits issued, totaling 52 permits supplied for residential, commercial and other types of buildings. While the number of permits issued for the county had decreased from those in 2021 and 2022, those two years had been exceptional, Davidson said. It is unknown at this time what conditions will be in 2024, he added, but contractors are saying contract bidding for spring already is slowing down.

Commissioner Jensen asked if Davidson knew how many of the new homes started in the county are for full-time residents. Davidson said that nearly all the new starts in Fish Haven will be used as second homes. Conversely, nearly every new start north of Paris will serve as a permanent dwelling. The valley has seen an increase in retirees relocating to the area, and in 2021 and 2022 Montpelier saw significant growth in families and the school system. Additionally, businesses are beginning to grow and new commercial-use builds are popping up as well.

The local economy, in spite of decline over the past several years, seems to be improving now, Davidson said.

#### **KARI URE – EXTENSION OFFICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY – ACTION ITEM**

Kari Ure, who was recently hired as the new University of Idaho Extension Agent for Bear Lake County, told the Board she had in mid-November sent out a survey inquiring what type of classes and programming should be provided by her office to the local populace. This survey only takes a few minutes to complete, she said, and her office hopes to make more local class options available after the assessment identifies the areas on which the office should focus.

That survey is making its way through the community and will finish in mid-January. Already Ure has received good comments and suggestions from individuals who have taken the survey, especially from employees of the Bear Lake School District.

Ure serves as the agent for the University of Idaho Extension in Caribou County as well. Caribou County has its own needs assessment survey being conducted, and at this time its assessment results have not been compared to Bear Lake County's survey to determine if there is any overlap.

Ure, though new to the area and the position, already has organized an exercise class. That offering – which currently meets at 9 a.m. on Monday and Thursday – has garnered a lot of interest, resulting in a lot of additional exercise equipment being ordered and a second class planned. The extension office also plans to purchase a freeze dryer machine so it can begin offering freeze drying classes, she said.

#### **MARK & GAIL EBORN – GARBAGE FEES CANCELLATION / REFUND – ACTION ITEM**

Citizen Mark Eborn, owner of Bear Lake County Parcel No. 3744, said he had noticed on his most recent tax statement that his property had been assigned an address and charged a garbage pickup fee of \$660, despite that parcel only consisting of a pasture and farm ground. County Treasurer Tricia Poulsen had recognized the error and had removed the charge for 2023. Unfortunately, upon a review of past tax statements, Eborn said he had found the error extended back to 2020.

This issue resulted when a garbage can had been delivered to a neighboring property located at 385 Lanark Lane. However, the address and the fee had been inappropriately assigned to Eborn's property, Poulsen said. Eborn had been overpaying without realizing it.

Because of this error, Eborn – the owner of six parcels in the county – had found he had made an overpayment of \$1,860 on his property taxes since 2020. He had been improperly charged a garbage fee of \$615 in 2020; \$615 in 2021; and \$630 in 2022.

Although the county is no longer the administrator of the local landfill, it is the entity that collects all fees and costs on the landfill's behalf, Poulsen said. Because of this, the county does have the authority to resolve this issue.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to accept the cancellation and refund \$1,860 to Mark**



and Gail Eborn. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.

**ASHLEY KRATZBERG – HARDSHIP EXEMPTION – ACTION ITEM**

Ashley Kratzberg came before the Board to request assistance with a hardship exemption on her mother's property taxes associated with a home located at 187 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street in Montpelier. Kratzberg's mother, Theresa Hayes, had passed away and since that time Kratzberg has been trying to settle her affairs. At the time of her death, Hayes was in a delinquent tax status with the county and owed a significant amount in back taxes.

Unbeknownst to Kratzberg, Hayes had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia years before her death. That mental illness had led Hayes to let her home fall into disrepair. She had effectively abandoned the home 11 years before her death, leaving hoarded items and garbage throughout the residence. Kratzberg had effectively inherited these derelict conditions and the responsibility of catching up on her mother's unpaid taxes.

In addition to these extensive financial and emotional responsibilities, Kratzberg herself is disabled due to a 2018 diagnosis of ankylosing spondylitis. She is on a fixed income, has significant medical bills and is physical limited when it comes to repairing and cleaning the home. Additionally, her brother provided to her an attorney's letter saying he wants no part in the ordeal, she said.

Treasurer Tricia Poulsen said the home is not in Kratzberg's name and remains in Hayes' name. In order to take ownership, Kratzberg has to go through the probate court process. Until it is in Kratzberg's name, no hardship exemption can be awarded.

The property already is in a three-year delinquent status and is accruing severe late fees. While Kratzberg is working to make payments, as it stands, she will be unable to catch up. Once probate awards the house to Kratzberg, the Board can opt to wave the penalty and interest fees, and Poulsen can help Kratzberg apply for a property tax reduction (PTR).

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to table this issue until the probate court process has been completed and the home has been put into Kratzberg's name. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

**TODD BOEHME – COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT**

**REQUEST FOR MORATORIUM ON DIGGING IN COUNTY RIGHT-OF-WAY DURING WINTER MONTHS – ACTION ITEM**

County Superintendent Todd Boehme said he wants the Board to put something in place that prohibits any digging in the county right-of-way between November 1 and May 1, unless there is an emergency situation that requires it. Boehme said he understands there are times when waterlines freeze and break, but he hopes to limit proposed plans and expansion projects during the winter months as much as possible.

Commissioner Jensen said this kind of restriction could halt a lot of business in the area, but Boehme

said it will help to mitigate a lot of problems and help preserve county equipment. He suggested a requirement be added to the encroachment permit to make developers responsible for snow removal during any issues.

Commissioner Olsen said County Attorney Adam McKenzie should be included in the discussions on this issue, adding that he is not sure the county can halt everything – including water and power – just because it is wintertime. Unfortunately, with the climate of the area in which Bear Lake County is located, there are no good times to complete some of those projects.

Commissioner Payne suggested an increase to the encroachment permitting fee to help with the necessary actions taken by the county during these winter month projects. The funds, like those already associated with the encroachment permit fee, could be held by the county until it is ensured all the proper steps have been taken – even if the efforts go into the next year.

Boehme said he would discuss his proposal with McKenzie and bring this back to the Board at a later date.

#### **COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Boehme said he had met with representatives from the City of Bloomington and the United States Forest Service to discuss the grooming of the expansion in Bloomington Canyon. The county will work to assist with the leveling of the parking lot expansion in that area. All concerned parties agree that as work progresses, this expansion will become a full winter parking lot – not just a lot for snowmachine trailers and those types of users, he said. Because of its vested interest in the project, Webster State University will help put in some signage and aid with the parking placement.

Boehme said he had been approached by the local hill climbing association to ensure the county still can provide during the early 2024 hill climb events the services that have been offered in the past. The county plans to work with the group to ensure it has its needs addressed, he said.

Commissioner Payne said he had discussed the Stewart Dam Bridge project with County Attorney Adam McKenzie. That project has been going on for four years and the bridge is very narrow. Commissioner Payne said he would like to see some pressure put on Rocky Mountain Power in order to help get that project resolved. If it is unable to finish the project, it may be time for the county to put in its own bridge, he said.

Boehme said the Jericho Loop Bridge project's completion had been delayed again. Commissioner Olsen said, going forward in the future, the county needs to require the bridge aprons be asphalt. He said he hopes to see that on the Paris Park Bridge this year.

Concerning the Paris Park Bridge, Boehme said Corey Lyman with the United States Forest Service had asked for about \$20,000 to be dedicated by the USFS to that project. The county's match for that amount can be made through time, labor and materials so it is not just a requirement of out-of-pocket contributions.

The Board directed Boehme to move forward with the Paris Park Bridge project.

Commissioner Olsen said a couple citizens had approached him about leaving messages on the Road and Bridge Department shop but never receiving a return call. He asked Boehme to make sure that issue is addressed. Commissioner Jensen echoed the importance of all messages being returned, as they could be related to a serious emergency.

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES REPORT**

Emergency Management Coordinator Todd Boehme said he had been servicing the county's generators in an attempt to winterize them. Commissioner Payne asked Boehme to ensure all the generators are not getting impacted by snow coming off of roofs, as that can damage them. He said that perhaps a deflector with a metal rooftop could be put in place to make sure the generators are prepared to avoid snow accumulation this winter.

Any time there is a national or state emergency, there is a formula – utilizing Incident Command System (ICS) for how those types of occurrences are managed, Boehme said. This is covered and detailed in ICS classes. The basic four levels – ICS 100, 200, 700 and 800 – used to be taught in eight-hour courses. Boehme said it would be advantageous to hold those courses locally as a means of getting more people in the area familiar with how those systems work.

### **JEFF FREDERICK – BL WEST HOA REQUEST FOR GUARDRAILS AND STOP SIGNS CONCERN – ACTION ITEM**

Bear Lake West Home Owners Association Vice President and Compliance Officer Jeff Frederick came before the Board to state his concern with some intersections located in the Bear Lake West area. Most of these areas involve county roads, so the HOA itself cannot make any improvements or address the issues without the county's approval.

The intersection of Lake West Boulevard and Fremont Drive is a "T" intersection and has a substantial drop-off of about 40 feet, he said. Each winter, three or four vehicles traveling down that roadway go over that drop, Frederick said, adding that he had attended a meeting on November 22 with Commissioner Olsen, Bear Lake County Superintendent Todd Boehme, Bear Lake West HOA President Richard Barako and Bear Lake West Treasurer Ed Burnside to discuss the feasibility of installing a guardrail, changing the downhill slope on Fremont or some combination of both. Frederick said the Bear Lake West HOA now asked the Board to approve the county engineer to visit the location and determine a solution.

The second area of concern, Frederick said, is located at the intersection of Lake West Boulevard and Clark Avenue – commonly referred to as the triangle. Traffic through this intersection is unhampered with stop signs and flows too quickly both up and down the road. Two solutions discussed November 22 included limiting the roadway to one-way travel or the installation of a roundabout in the intersection. Frederick said this was, again, something the county's engineer could look into.

Frederick's third concern focused on the area of Hickock Drive located to the south of the intersection with Holiday Drive. While that south section of Hickock is designated a county roadway, the area of that road north of the intersection is not, he said. The HOA believes it has implemented the necessary

improvements – both widening and resurfacing of the roadway – and requests its annexation as a county road. If annexed, and when coupled with Smith Hill Road, this would create a second and much-needed egress for Bear Lake West.

The fourth concern Frederick brought before the Board dealt with the gated Elk Hollow subdivision, located in Rich County, Utah, and bordering the Bear Lake West subdivision. Currently, Elk Hollow's primary access is through the Bear Lake West road system, and the high amount of construction traffic that proceeds to Elk Hollow does so through Bear Lake West, in turn placing a burden on the roadways the subdivision has to maintain. Additionally, Frederick said, these contractors and the residents of Elk Hollow fill up the Bear Lake West citizens' dumpsters rather than using their own, he said.

Maps show there are alternative routes to access Elk Hollow from the portion of Highway 89 that is located in Utah.

Frederick said the HOA has additional concerns, including culvert maintenance, drainage ditches, missing signage and asphalt paving of HOA roads.

Commissioner Olsen said that Jake Poulsen will be the new transportation project manager that Keller Associates, Inc. – the engineering firm used by Bear Lake County – will send to the area in the future. Poulsen has to be the one to look over the roads in question in order to determine if they are up to county standards and able to be adopted. The HOA and the Board will have to work with Poulsen and County Superintendent Todd Boehme to determine if the county can provide assistance with these concerns, he said.

Boehme said that Poulsen will be the new transportation project manager, but Jeff Sorensen – although he now is located in Coeur d'Alene – still is assigned by Keller to address projects in the Bear Lake Area. If the Board wants to move forward with looking into these projects, Sorensen has provided an estimate to the county that addresses costs associated with the information-gathering process and the process of bringing roadways up to county standards, Boehme said.

Water drainage is the HOA's responsibility, not the county's, Commissioner Jensen said. Boehme said the county conducted a road restoration a few years ago in order to allow water to follow the natural drainage along the road.

Boehme said he estimates the preliminary engineering research costs associated with the feasibility of a guardrail at the intersection of Lake West Boulevard and Fremont Drive, as well as the inspection and research of the issue at the intersection of Lake West Boulevard and Clark Avenue, should not cost more than \$10,000. That estimate does not include the issues on Hickock Drive, as that concern would be up to the HOA to have engineered, he said.

Bear Lake West HOA President Richard Barako said he was very concerned about the Elk Hollow subdivision issue that Frederick had breached. He said that in the past month he has counted weekly about 40 large construction vehicles using Bear Lake West roadways to access that area of Utah. At the HOA's last meeting, that board had discussed asking Bear Lake County to work with Rich County in order to form some sort of agreement that would provide the county compensation from Rich County. This compensation would help offset Bear Lake County's own costs associated with maintaining the roads,

Barako said.

Fish Haven citizen Ed Izatt said there originally had been an RV park established in the area where the Elk Hollow subdivision now is. That RV park had been a part of Bear Lake West. Whatever agreement had been established for Bear Lake West to sell that area, the use of Bear Lake West roadways probably had carried over.

In the past seven years, the HOA has spent \$90,000 to bring the roadways up to the county's standards. The HOA works with the county the best it can and has established a good relationship with the Board, county superintendent and the road crewmen.

Frederick said the HOA hopes to work with the county on a project to chip and seal the roadways in Bear Lake West – something that will be no small cost.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Devin Boehme, who serves on the Bear Lake Soil and Water Conservation Board and is a resident of Geneva, said he had heard the county had attended a meeting in October to discuss broadband expansion in the Pegram and Geneva areas of Bear Lake County. He said he was curious what came of that meeting.

Commissioner Payne said he had been in attendance, along with Clerk Amy Bishop and Deputy Clerk Paul Christiansen. This expansion is a step-by-step process, and Link Up Idaho – the organization that had held the meeting as a very basic introduction to what broadband expansion will entail throughout the state's underserved and altogether unserved areas – said that funding has to be developed; sites have to be evaluated; and needs should be assessed before any action is taken.

Since that meeting, held October 26, no updates have been received by any county officials, Commissioner Payne said, adding that the county will continue working on these efforts to serve all communities in the area, including Pegram, Geneva and Nounan.

### **ASSESSOR JANNELLE JENSEN – WAGES – ACTION ITEM**

County Assessor Jannelle Jensen reminded the Board that Dale Thornock, who served as mapper for the county for many years, had retired as of November 25. Since that time, the vacant chief deputy assessor position had been filled by Bailee Argyle, and Naaman Dolence had been promoted to lead geographic information systems (GIS) mapper for her office.

Jensen said she does not anticipate a need to fill the vacancy left by Thornock's departure. Because of this, the Bear Lake County Assessor's Office wages dedicated to mapping needs are now low in comparison to the average wage of other Idaho counties. While larger counties often have employees dedicated to specific, singular duties, Bear Lake County's employees – including Dolence – cover multiple duties and workloads.

Jensen presented a spreadsheet to the Board that compiled her research on wages through the Transparent Idaho website. Whereas the figures she had were for the 2023 fiscal year, she had included

a 3 percent wage increase for Fiscal Year 2024. Based on the average of mappers' wages, combined with the 3 percent wage increase for Fiscal Year 2024, Jensen said she believed a fair hourly wage for this position in Bear Lake County is \$28. The lead mapper currently makes a wage of \$24.84 – far below what is adequate, she said.

Commissioner Payne commended Jensen for her dedication to her employees; However, he said he had concerns about adjusting the salary of one employee during the middle of the year without looking at all other county employees' salaries. Under the county's personnel policy, under the section that addresses compensation issues, it is stated county commissioners are responsible for the budget, with salary compensation being a portion of that. While this may be done in the middle of the year, it is generally not something the Board handles outside of the budgetary time, he said.

He said that other Idaho counties, rather than implementing salary increases, had decided to provide employee bonuses. Unfortunately, that became problematic and had inadvertently led to some counties paying their employees twice. This issue is something that needs to be looked at in order to determine if other counties have different rates based on different departments or if they are all based on a base salary figure.

Commissioner Olsen said there are positions in the Road and Bridge Department that have been filled for 20 years. Those individuals make the same amount as someone who just started six months ago. These types of compensation discrepancy issues should be addressed across the board, he added.

If one department raises its salaries, pressure is placed on other departments to follow suit, Commissioner Payne said. That can cause turmoil between elected officials and their employees.

No matter how the county chooses to address these salary issues, the solution has to be fair and equitable, Commissioner Jensen said.

As it stands, Dolence is the lowest paid employee within the Assessor's Office, despite taking on the duties of a lead mapper and being cross-trained between positions and departments, Janelle Jensen said. Compared to other counties' employees, his wage is considerably lower.

Clerk Amy Bishop did clarify that Argyle has been moved to the chief deputy wage rate. Dolence did receive a slight pay increase when he received his certification as a mapper for the county. In the past, no specific wage had been dedicated for the lead mapper because Thornock also had served as chief deputy assessor. This causes a discrepancy that needs to be addressed somehow, she said.

At least for the Assessor's Office, Jensen said, a wage increase and longevity pay would address some concerns and prevent future problems. Without these increases, the Assessor's Office may have to outsource labor and enter into contracts with outside agencies in order to get the work done, because Bear Lake County employees may look for employment somewhere else that can provide them with higher wages.

Among the counties in this part of the state – including Oneida, Franklin and Caribou – Bear Lake County generally pays the highest wages, Bishop said. She has found there are parts of the information posted to Transparent Idaho that are misleading. For instance, she said, longevity seems to be added as a



second position instead of being included in the total wage.

Although revaluation and mapping are separate departments, Jensen said, they work closely together. The revaluation lead pay currently is \$24.76 per hour.

Commissioner Jensen said it may be time for Bear Lake County to put longevity back into employee wages. This can be done at budget time for Fiscal Year 2025, he said. Commissioners Payne and Olsen agreed this might should be done for all county employees.

**MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to raise Naaman Dolence's wage to the \$24.76 per hour and for the Board to continue examining county wages and salaries in general. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.**

## **LUNCH**

**Beginning at 12:14 p.m., the Board took a break for lunch.**

**The Board reconvened its regular meeting at 12:57 p.m.**

## **ARPA & LATCF EXPENDITURES – ACTION ITEM**

Clerk Amy Bishop provided the Board with a breakdown of the projects and needs it had dedicated funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) moneys that had been provided by the federal government. She said she had reviewed past copies of meeting minutes in order to determine any motions made to allocate these funds, and she also was able to account for anything which needed Board follow-up.

The costs of the Extension Office roof replacement had come out of the county capital fund, but whereas there had been ARPA funding dedicated to the project and it had gone unused, \$37,950 can be moved back to the capital fund for replacement of the original amount spent, she said.

The Ambulance Service had initially been allotted \$254,600 to fund its list of needed items. Some of those items had come in above the original estimated, so the county had actually spent \$271,913.45.

The Board had allocated \$6,000 to be used for the veterans' monument located outside the Bear Lake County Courthouse. Additionally, the Board had requested that trees be purchased and placed in that area, she said.

The county had allocated money for all cities to purchase some necessary traffic and speed signage. While not all cities have used that funding, it likely is because some of them might not have been aware that funding was available; however, the cities that had originally made the request have used that funding. Bishop said the Board should either reallocate those funds to another use or someone needs to speak to the cities who have not used the funding.

Commissioner Payne asked Bishop to reach out to the cities to inquire about those funds. Of the incorporated cities that had been awarded that funding for signage, only two cities had taken advantage

of those dedications. He said if those cities choose to not use those funds, they should be be reallocated to other proejcts.

Of the \$120,000 dedicated to the Pictometry aerial imaging program, \$80,735.05 had been used to pay for the initial first flyover costs. Of the \$14,000 allocated for the purchase and installation of panic buttons in the courthouse offices, only \$11,295.43 had been spent because the project had come in under the initial plan, Bishop said.

The Bear Lake Senior Center had spent \$25,000 of the \$45,000 that had been allocated to its needs. The National Oregon/California Trail Center had used \$30,000 of the \$50,000 it had been allocated.

Additionally, in March of 2022, the Board had said it wanted to provide an additional \$20,000 to each of those entities, and that money has not been spent.

The first year of the Bear Lake County Employee Assistance Program (EAP) had used ARPA funding – a total of \$1,650 – for its first year, and those costs will now be part of the annual budget going forward, Bishop said.

To date, the county's largescale communications project has been allocated \$313,815.11 and has used \$218,695.16. The Bear Lake County Sheriff's Office had applied for a grant to assist with the purchase of radios. While that agency had felt it would likely receive funding through that grant, it had not been awarded any. The Sheriff's Office plans to apply for grant funding in the next round, but if any funding is awarded the county could perhaps use some ARPA money to offset the match costs that will be required.

A total of \$10,000 had been allocated for improvements at the shooting range. That project had come in under budget and had only used \$9,588.37, Bishop said.

Additionally, the Board had allocated \$30,000 to be used by the Road and Bridge Department for dust abatement needs. However, Bishop said, that department had received its own recovery money allocation without the Board realizing. The original \$30,000 expenditures had been built into the annual budget with this need in mind, so the Board now has to decide if the roads need additional dust abatement or if that money should be used for other needs in that department.

County Superintendent Todd Boehme said his department could better use those extra funds for other projects and needs.

The Board had previously discussed lost revenue, and it had thought the county would have to account for any lost revenue in order to receive the ARPA funding, Bishop said. Just under \$28,000 had been accounted for, with a major amount stemming from the courts. The Board can opt to deal with accounting in order to pay into the District Court Fund or it can choose to reallocate the money, she said.

Bishop said she would like to see that money reallocated for another purpose. It will be simpler to use that funding for a project rather than account for everything and be required to report it to the federal government, she said.

The county had received \$920,753 through the LATCF and had only spent a small portion of it – about \$12,412 – on the new courthouse phone system and the county’s dedication to the National Association of Counties (NACo) Center for Public Lands. Additionally, the Board has committed \$522,788 for two Road and Bridge trucks, but the county will not pay for those until they are received. However, Bishop said the county does have contract documentation to include in its reporting.

After adding what has been spent and what has been committed, the county still has \$385,552.78 remaining in its unused LATCF funds, she said.

The Bear Lake County Prosecutor’s Office would appear on the agenda later in the meeting to request funding for some of its needs. These include a software package that, at a cost of \$17,150, will help eliminate the need to hire another full-time employee.

All LATCF and ARPA funds have to be allocated in 2024 and spent no later than 2026, she said. Concerning the Bear Lake County Fairgrounds electrical update project recently proposed by the Fair Board, some ARPA and/or LATCF funding would be helpful. That board had budgeted about \$43,000 for capital projects and about \$150,000 total for electrical needs. However, the project likely will cost more than originally planned, Bishop said.

Ed Izatt, president of the Bear Lake County Ambulance Service, said the agency had a 10-item list that included imperatives in need of funding. Firstly, ventilators are estimated at a total cost of \$13,000. Additionally, he said, the ambulance service’s automated external defibrillators (AEDs) are outdated and in need of replacement, at an estimated cost of about \$4,200.

Replacement of two of the agency’s quick-response vehicles is a critical need. Izatt said the state had awarded grant funding to the ambulance service to aid with replacement of the newer of the two vehicles, but the other vehicle does not have enough accrued mileage to qualify for grant funding. The ambulance service still is waiting for the state to provide the funding it has dedicated. Additionally, the agency will still need to contribute about \$20,000 – consisting of equipment costs, signage, radio needs, lights and other inclusions – before that unit can be put into service.

Izatt said the ambulance service is still seeking out replacements for the older unit – which currently serves as the agency’s extrication unit – and it had set aside about \$40,000 to match grant funding, prior to finding the vehicle was ineligible to receive that type of funding. He said the agency is considering putting out more funding in order to secure a particular replacement vehicle. If the ambulance service may be able to find a new rescue close to that amount, he said.

A new ambulance will be needed in about three years, Izatt said, and the agency’s savings fund will take about that long to make up the increases. The next ambulance will likely cost more than \$400,000, so hopefully savings and any funding that can be picked up along the way will get the agency to that point where it can make that necessary purchase. The ambulance service savings account has close to \$300,000 dedicated to the that purpose when the schedule comes in, he said.

Commissioner Jensen suggested the ambulance service look into the option of leasing its needed emergency response vehicles. He suggested Izatt speak with Sheriff Bart Heslington, who works to

secure lessee vehicles for the county's needs.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Payne made a motion to allocate from the county's Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund moneys the \$150,000 for the Bear Lake County Fair Board electrical project and \$17,150 to the Bear Lake County Prosecutor's Office software needs. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Olsen made a motion to allocate \$57,880 from the county's American Rescue Plan Act funds to the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Department. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.

#### **MATT WELLS – GENEVA WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE – ACTION ITEM**

Matt Wells, a citizen of the Geneva area who owns property on Bauman Lane, appeared before the Board to request winter road maintenance to property he owns, adding he had recently moved a house to that property and it is nearing occupation completion. Unfortunately, he said, maintenance on that county roadway – which happens to be dirt – only extends to a point located about a half mile below where the home is located.

Commissioner Olsen said a turnaround for the snowplow is needed, rather than just room that will allow a plow to go offroad into a field when repositioning is necessary. Depending on winter conditions, including the amount of snowfall and the force of the winds, plowing can take between 10 minutes and an hour in that specific area, he said.

Commissioner Jensen reminded Wells that the county prioritizes school routes and other priority routes on days that require plowing.

Commissioner Payne said he believed a sign was posted in that area declaring there would be no winter maintenance on the road, adding a poor precedence is set when someone builds past that indication.

County Superintendent Todd Boehme said he had spoken with Wells about these concerns. Bauman Lane is separated into two different pieces and runs in two different directions. One piece starts at Center Lane and comes out at Highway 89; the other portion heads southbound and turns into Wood Canyon, he said.

If one of these roads is corrected and a new name is applied, it may affect someone who will need to change their residential mailing address. Eventually, he said, this will not be a simple solution. One new home has been built on Bauman Lane, but eventually that area will have multiple new residences populating that area.

Wells has worked to upgrade the road to his property and made several improvements, Boehme said. In turn, the Road and Bridge Department worked to cover soft spots in the road that Wells himself was not able to repair efficiently. Still, this area is no different than the rest of the county, Boehme said, adding that in Bear Lake County the winter snow conditions are always indeterminate.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Olsen made a motion to implement winter road maintenance on Bauman

Lane to the Matt Wells property, with the stipulation that a snowplow turnaround is provided. Within one year, the Board will review with the county superintendent the costs associated with this endeavor in order to determine the feasibility of continuing winter maintenance in that area. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.

#### **GLEN REESE & PATRICK REESE – PLOWING OF SMITH HILL ROAD TO ALLOW FOR FINISHING OF HOME CONSTRUCTION**

Contractor Patrick Reese said he and his brother, Glen Reese, are in the middle of work on the construction of a new home located on Smith Hill Road in Fish Haven. This home is being built for Kip Motta and will be at 993 Smith Hill Road.

As it stands, winter maintenance conducted by Bear Lake County stops approximately 1,200 feet east of the property driveway. Winter maintenance conducted by Bear Lake West stops approximately a mile west of the Motta property, in the area of the intersection of Smith Hill Road and Hickock Drive, Reese said. The contractor said he had hoped Bear Lake County would extend its winter maintenance of Smith Hill Road to the property so that work on the home could continue during the winter and the home can be completed in the spring.

Commissioner Jensen said that only part of Smith Hill Road is designated as county roadway. Because of that, a turnaround will be needed for a plow. The reason no winter maintenance had been present in that area before is because until recently there had been no homes on that roadway. As more homes are added, additional plowing will follow.

Reese said the road is wide but a plow will still need to use the property driveway for its turnaround, as the property is being built on a bend in the roadway. Keeping open more of Smith Hill Road will likely be beneficial to emergency responders as well, as it will shorten response time, he said.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to extend Bear Lake County winter maintenance on Smith Hill Road to the property found at 993 Smith Hill Road in order to allow for continued construction and contractor work. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.**

#### **PROSECUTOR OFFICE RESOURCES – ACTION ITEM**

Commissioner Jensen told Angie Phelps of the Bear Lake County Prosecutor's Office that the Board already had approved the allocation of \$17,150 to be used for that office's software needs, but he requested she better explain the benefits this program will bring.

Phelps said the Prosecutor's Office has traditionally kept paper files. However, as technology has continued to improve and change, that system has become very antiquated. The different types of media and materials which are utilized by that office – including video from law enforcement's body-worn cameras, interview audio, security video, and materials that are digital in nature – are unable to be stored within paper files. The current scanning, copying and storage of these items take up a significant amount of space on the county network, while several other files have to be stored elsewhere, she said.



Additionally, Phelps said, providing case discovery to defense attorneys has become more and more challenging, especially in cases when a large piece of data has to be duplicated and provided. Overall, these issues have made the process much less efficient in Bear Lake County.

PROSECUTORbyKarpel, more commonly known as PbK, is an efficient, time-saving case management software for prosecutors and their staffs, Phelps said. This software is used by multiple offices in Idaho, as well as across the country, and allows these offices to store their case files in a digital cloud, all within one location. This eliminates the amount of time that had formerly been dedicated to creating and maintaining paper files and will help save money spent on physical materials.

The PbK software can automatically provide to victims and witnesses via text and email any notifications about the scheduling of court hearings, and this puts the burden on those individuals to contact the Prosecutor's Office.

The acquisition of the program is broken down into a one-time cost of \$15,800 for the software itself – including installation services and setup training for the two members of the prosecutorial staff – and \$1,350 for annual support. This support cost will have to be worked into the budget each year going forward, Phelps said.

Even though the program runs on cloud-based storage, there will be an option for additional capacity. For each additional two terabytes of cloud storage, the cost is \$500. In September, the Prosecutor's Office had needed to purchase a server expansion for \$2,874, and that also required an additional payment of \$450 dollars for the setup, she said. PbK's storage cost will require much less money in the long run.

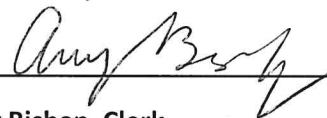
No further action was taken, as the Board already had approved the funding for this Prosecutor Office software.

**MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

  
Bradley D. Jensen, Chairman

1-9-24  
Date Approved

ATTEST:   
Amy Bishop, Clerk

