

Bear Lake County Commissioners' Meeting
May 13, 2024
Commissioners' Chambers – Paris, Idaho

The Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners met in its regular meeting at 9 a.m. Monday, May 13, 2024, 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, County Superintendent Todd Boehme, Deputy Clerk Paul Christiansen and various members of the public.

County Attorney Adam McKenzie, Sheriff Bart Heslington, Treasurer Tricia Poulsen and Building Inspector Wayne Davidson were excused due to other obligations.

APPROVE AGENDA – ACTION ITEM

Commissioner Payne said that Roy Bunderson, who was scheduled to speak to the Board at 1:30 p.m., had asked to cancel his appearance.

Clerk Amy Bishop asked that the issue of "Bancorp Vehicle Leases" be added to the agenda under General Business/Action Items. The manager at Bancorp had retired and, due to this occasion, the lease renewal contracts only recently had been provided to the county. Because the renewals were imminent and were merely continuations of existing vehicle leases, there would be no controversy, she said.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to accept the agenda for the May 13, 2024, regular meeting of the Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners with the removal of Roy Bunderson's scheduled appearance and with the addition of "Bancorp Vehicle Leases" to the General Business/Action Items section of the agenda. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

TREASURER TRICIA POULSEN

County Treasurer Tricia Poulsen was not able to attend the May 13 meeting. There were no tax or fee cancellations set to come before the Board, Clerk Amy Bishop said. Cami Shultis, who serves as deputy treasurer, would appear before the Board later in the meeting for the scheduled tax deed hearing, she said.

ASSESSOR JANNELLE JENSEN

Bear Lake County Assessor Jannelle Jensen reported the Motor Vehicle Department had taken in \$135,433.76 in the month of April, while the Assessor's Office took in \$5,135.00 through Idaho Parks and Recreation transactions.

Jensen said her office has started the assessment drive for 2024, and thus far it has been going well. However, the office had paused that drive at the time of the meeting while it waited for an essential update from the Idaho State Tax Commission that was required before further assessment efforts could take place.

The tax assessments will be noticeably different in 2024, largely due to legislation that was passed in 2023. Additionally, and as reported during the Board's April meeting, the county was low on improvements. This will lead to an increase in 2024 property values. While the market has slowed, there has not been a noticeable decrease in what properties are selling for in Bear Lake County, Jensen said.

The county's new mapping program is in its infant stages, and Naaman Dolence, who serves as the mapper for Bear Lake County, has begun working with that new system, Jensen said. A viewer map has not been made available for other county offices' use because the assessor still is waiting for some information to be removed from the old GeoMedia geographic information system (GIS) and added to the new Esri mapping system. The state has been able to assist with Bear Lake County's transition to the new system, which has been welcome, she said. Before the county's adoption of the Esri system, the state could not offer any help because its system was not compatible with the county's former GeoMedia system.

Commissioner Jensen asked if the county assessor currently has to sign off on plat maps before they are approved and recorded. Assessor Jannelle Jensen said that Bear Lake County does not currently require that stipulation; however, some Idaho counties do require that. She said that by requiring the assessor to approve and sign the plat maps – specifically the preliminary plats – before recording, potential problems could be mitigated and resolved before final approval and recording.

Clerk Amy Bishop suggested the Board schedule a meeting with herself, Assessor Jannelle Jensen and Bear Lake County Planning and Zoning Administrator Mitch Poulsen to discuss this issue and collaborate. After that, those officials can come to the Board with a recommendation.

The Board encouraged Bishop to include County Attorney Adam McKenzie in these discussions as well.

Bear Lake County resident Bill Stock suggested the county mandate subdivisions require a survey be conducted prior to all preliminary plat approvals and recordings.

SHERIFF BART HESLINGTON

Sheriff Bart Heslington was not able to attend the May 13 meeting. He provided a written report to the Board prior to the meeting.

CLERK AMY BISHOP

Clerk Amy Bishop reported that later in the week she would send budgetary sheets to each of the county's individual departments so they could begin preparation for the Fiscal Year 2025 budget period.

The Bear Lake County Clerk's Office was prepared for the Primary Election scheduled for May 21 and

had been assisting in-office absentee voters. Mail Ballots had been sent to registered voters living within the county's mail ballot precincts, she said.

Bishop reminded the Board that, due to ongoing construction, voters in Montpelier Precinct No. 1 – who usually vote at the Allred Center – will vote at the Bear Lake County Fire Station, located north of the Bear Lake County Fairgrounds.

The Bear Lake County Courts held a jury trial the week prior to the meeting, Bishop said, and another was scheduled to begin May 13. These trials, in addition to their regular duties, have kept the court office employees very busy, she said.

PROSECUTOR ADAM MCKENZIE

Bear Lake County Prosecutor and Attorney Adam McKenzie was unable to attend the May 13 meeting.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Commissioner Payne said he had spoken to county citizen DeMar Romrell about the Poverty Flat area, located east of Bear Lake, that was in need of gravel because what had been there in the past had dissipated over time. Commissioner Payne said he planned to speak to County Superintendent Todd Boehme about this issue later in the meeting.

The United States Forest Service and the Idaho Transportation Department are working together to implement a fence alongside the roadway near the mouth of Montpelier Canyon as a means of keeping range cattle off the roadway, Commissioner Payne said. This project may be put into effect in the fall, and the county has been asked to consider contributing some of its Range Land funds to this need.

Commissioner Payne said he had contacted the office of Gary Billman, a senior resource specialist with the Idaho Department of Lands, to schedule a meeting for discussion about the original high-water mark and the actual high-water mark of Bear Lake and, in turn, to discuss land use on the east side of the lake. Commissioner Payne reported he had left a message for Billman but has yet to hear back.

At the last two four-county meetings, those in attendance discussed the possibility of combining emergency dispatch centers for service across the four counties, he said. Bear Lake County Sheriff Bart Heslington will be invited to the next four-county meeting and will offer his insight into both the positive and negative effects that could result from that change. In relation, Commissioner Payne said, the Bear Lake County Ambulance Service is concerned that the combination of these dispatch centers could negatively impact the personal engagement with the dispatchers and could do away with the existing reliance the service has on the local dispatch team.

The Bear Lake County Airport has elected to begin imposing a tie-up fee for planes that are not being used regularly. The fee for a single-engine aircraft will be \$100 per month, while a twin-engine aircraft will entail a \$150 fee per month. Commissioner Payne said nearby airports in surrounding areas already are imposing similar fees to help mitigate the accrual of more airplanes that just are being anchored. The Bear Lake County Airport is growing exponentially and is waiting for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide updates on future grant opportunities, Commissioner Payne said. The

current airport grant funding the county is working with will be used to implement an additional taxi lane. This will allow for the installation of more hangars and will provide a lane to taxi from the hangars to the runway.

The FAA has approved all south-facing hangar entrances as a way to help mitigate the problem associated with snow accumulation, Commissioner Payne said. Danny McClendon, who sits on the airport board, has reportedly been working with Rep. Mike Simpson to determine the possibility of getting the federal powers that be to move so this effort can be started and, hopefully, finished this year. If this initiative is approved in June, it will become difficult within the Bear Lake County area to get a bid request advertised and to get bids returned before the fall, Commissioner Payne said.

In relation to snow accumulation at the airport, Commissioner Payne said the airport's new snowplow had been ordered and is set for delivery sometime in June. It will be available to be used for the airport's snow removal needs in winter 2024-25.

Commissioner Payne reported he had attended a District V elected officials meeting on April 11 in Blackfoot, and those who attended had toured the Spudnik Equipment building, which supplies Idaho Farmers with implements used for agricultural and potato-harvesting needs. The meeting also featured guest speakers, including Cherisse Brown from Idaho State University, Commissioner Payne said. Brown spoke about the importance of emotional intelligence within the workplace and within positions of leadership.

Commissioner Olsen reported, since the commissioners' last meeting, he had attended a meeting of the District VI Juvenile Detention Center Board. In that meeting, that body had discussed the budget for its next fiscal year and the impact of room population. Bear Lake County has fewer participants than other participating counties.

The juvenile detention center hosts wellness projects and classes for their staff, and at these events speakers address different areas of concern – often regarding the toll the job can take on employees' mental health. Seth Scott, who serves as the District VI Juvenile Detention Center director, has invited Bear Lake County to send members of its ambulance service to participate in these wellness projects, Commissioner Olsen said.

He said he will work with Scott to get the best information about future wellness events and to determine the best way to relay that information to Bear Lake County's emergency medical service personnel. Additionally, Commissioner Olsen said, this service may be beneficial for those emergency personnel in other departments, such as law enforcement and fire.

At a recent meeting of the Montpelier Gold Course Board, that body had inquired if it had any bylaws with the county, Commissioner Olsen said. The members also were curious why the golf course has a seven-member board while other, similar governing entities are only required to have five members. Additionally, he said, because the Montpelier Golf Course is located on state lands, the golf board had inquired if there was an existing memorandum of understanding (MOU) between itself and the county or between the county and the state.

Clerk Amy Bishop said she was not aware of any existing MOU regarding the golf course between the

city and the state. However, she said, there could be an agreement between the City of Montpelier and the state. Originally, there was an MOU between the city and the county but neither entity has been able to locate a signed copy of the agreement. Because of this, the Board likely needs to re-ratify the MOU, she said.

Commissioner Jensen instructed Bishop to add this ratification to a future meeting agenda.

Construction on the Bear Lake County Fair dairy barn was scheduled to begin in the next two weeks, Commissioner Olsen said. In addition to that project, the largescale electrical upgrade at the fairgrounds is nearing completion.

Construction on the Bear Lake Senior Center already has started, and Bear Lake Memorial Hospital has started work on its new Garden City clinic across the Idaho/Utah border, he said.

Molly Beseris with the Four County Alliance of Southeast Idaho has scheduled a meeting to be held at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 16. During that meeting, broadband implementation in southeast Idaho will be discussed. Additionally, Beseris sent Commissioner Olsen some information regarding short-term rentals. That material contained a lot of things that could be adapted for the county's use, he said.

Commissioner Olsen said he had spoken with Michael Zurn with Lync Development regarding the request the company had made at the Board's February meeting. The issue, which involves a deeded county easement located on North Beach Road, is something Lync hopes to work through by implementing a land trade with Bear Lake County that will better suit both parties' needs, he said.

There has been a lot of interest in this potential agreement from county and state departments, and those departments are concerned what uses could be implemented in that area, Commissioner Olsen said. The Idaho State Department of Agriculture and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation both have expressed a desire to implement a boat check station somewhere on North Beach Road as a means to help combat the spread of invasive species to Bear Lake. Additionally, the Bear Lake County Sheriff's Office has made it known that an impound lot would be useful as a location to tow improperly parked vehicles from North Beach.

Additionally, Commissioner Olsen said, the land trade could provide a place for the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Department to hold a pile of cinders to be used during winter road maintenance. If power was routed to the area, a loader plug-in area could be useful. These improvements would better benefit the south end of Bear Lake County and would make Road and Bridge more efficient in its duties in that area, he said.

Commissioner Olsen reminded the Board that In October, at its regular meeting, the Board had spoken to Tim and Glen Transtrum, representatives of the Bear Lake Cattle Association, about the spread of unsupervised cattle from the Jacobs Canyon area onto Highway 89 during the nighttime hours and ways they hoped to mitigate this issue. The Transtrums had conveyed their plan to make a place for the cattle to be contained as they came down the canyon and thus keep them from wandering onto the highway.

Commissioner Olsen said this effort will have to be done in conjunction with work the county does on the roadway in Jacobs Canyon, and he expressed the need to get County Superintendent Todd Boehme

to get that work scheduled so the project can be implemented.

Commissioner Olsen said he planned to attend a meeting of Southeastern Idaho Public Health on May 23.

WAYNE DAVIDSON – BUILDING INSPECTOR REPORT

Bear Lake County Building Inspector Wayne Davidson was not in attendance at the May 13 meeting.

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

Two sets of meeting minutes – for the Board’s regular meeting held on Monday, April 8, 2024, and a special meeting held on Monday, April 22 – were before the Board for approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to approve the minutes for the Board’s April 8, 2024, regular meeting and its April 22, 2024, special meeting. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.

OPEN PUBLIC SURPLUS AUCTION BIDS

Clerk Amy Bishop said the Board was set to open public surplus auction bids for a 2004 Ford Explorer, which formerly had been used by the Bear Lake County Extension Office, and for a 1984 Ford Water Truck previously used by the Bear Lake County Fair Board.

Bishop reported that, prior to the May 13 meeting, one of the submitted bids accidentally had been opened by a member of the Clerk’s Office staff because the envelope had not been labeled as a sealed bid. Upon finding a bid was contained, the envelope had been shut and its contents had remained unviewed, she said. All other bids had been sealed and identified on the outside.

Shane Geary submitted a bid of \$2,000 for the water truck. Additionally, James Pratt submitted a bid of \$1,052 for the water truck.

Concerning the Ford Explorer, Prat submitted a bid of \$532. Additionally, Tyson Boehme submitted a bid of \$555.55.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to award the 1984 Ford water truck to Shane Geary’s highest bid of \$2,000 and to award the 2004 Ford Explorer to Tyson Boehme’s highest bid of \$555.55. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

NOMINATION FOR DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH

Clerk Amy Bishop reported Maggie Mann, the director of Southeastern Idaho Public Health (SIPH), had provided the commissioners with a letter informing them that Vaughn Rasmussen's term on the District Board of Health will expire June 30. Mann's letter provided the Board with options to either re-appoint Rasmussen to serve in the position – a duty he has helmed for 11 years – or to nominate a new individual for the role.

Any nomination made by the commissioners must be confirmed by the majority vote of participating counties at the SIPH annual budget hearing, scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on May 23 in the SIPH Pocatello office, Mann's letter read.

The Board also had received a letter from Rasmussen in which he expressed his desire to continue serving in this capacity, Bishop said.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to nominate Vaughn Rasmussen to continue serving as Bear Lake County's representative on the Southeastern Idaho Public Health Board. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EMERITUS

Commissioner Payne said the Bear Lake County Historical Society had some board positions that were in need of updates and some changes were recommended. The historical society board had suggested Sherry Brown be appointed as a new board member. Additionally, that body asked that Gene Knutti, Joseph McKay Crane, Ann Massey and David Crane be reappointed to their positions on the historical society board, he said.

DeeAnn Stephens, who has served on that board for many years, has asked to be released from her position and will no longer serve in that capacity. The Bear Lake Historical Society now asked that Stephens be acknowledged through the granting of emeritus status, Commissioner Payne said.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to appoint Sherry Brown; to reappoint David Crane, Ann Massey, Gene Knutti and Joseph McKay Crane; and to recognize DeeAnn Stephens as emeritus to the Bear Lake County Historical Society Board. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

UPDATE FOR LYNC DEVELOPMENT PROPERTY ON NORTH BEACH ROAD

Although Commissioner Olsen briefly had spoken about the potential for a land trade agreement between the county and Lync Development in order to solve an issue in relation to a deeded easement – consisting of 5.4 acres – on North Beach Road, Michael Zurn and Pat Burns, who are both with the developer, were in attendance at the May 13 meeting.

Commissioner Olsen said there was an opportunity to trade the easement that had been deeded to Bear Lake County in exchange for a 5.4-acre fenced lot that could then be better used for county purposes. In

exchange, Lync Development would receive the easement and would have better access to its own property. The fenced property could possibly be used as a location to store cinders, salt and – if power was routed to the location – a loader to be better utilized by Bear Lake County Road and Bridge during the winter months.

Commissioner Payne said he believed the easement shares a border with property owned by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW). Because of this, and because of the potential impact this trade could have on the neighboring federal land, the process likely will require a public hearing concerning any improvements on that land, he said.

Commissioner Olsen said he does not believe the existing deeded easement is of any benefit to the county, whereas both the county and Lync Development will likely benefit from a trade. In this case, the county would gain some useable land and Lync Development would gain property access uninhibited by the easement.

Zurn said Lync Development is willing to work with the county to ensure everyone is satisfied. If the county chooses to use that area for storage of snow removal and road maintenance equipment, he asked if the Board would be interested in having a covered area implemented to protect the cinder piles.

Before a decision can be made, Commissioner Payne said, related ordinances will have to be examined, as some easements do not permit building.

The Board directed Clerk Amy Bishop to communicate with Lync Development and County Attorney Adam McKenzie to determine what uses are allowed and what land trade options are available.

ADA COUNTY AUTOPSY CONTRACT

Bear Lake County Coroner Chad Walker had informed Clerk Amy Bishop that the professional he had used to conduct autopsies had retired. Because no one can currently help with this duty, Walker has checked into replacement options. The best option Walker has found is to contract with the Ada County Coroner's Office, who upon approval will conduct any future autopsies for Bear Lake County, Bishop said.

Commissioner Olsen added that discussion on and movement forward for the implementation of the Bannock County Forensics Lab – which previously had been proposed in Bannock County and would potentially have been utilized by Bear Lake County – had now been stopped. It is not believed that the facility will move forward, he said.

Commissioner Jensen asked if County Attorney Adam McKenzie had looked over the details of this contract with Ada County. Bishop said McKenzie had received the contract but had provided no comment or feedback about it to her.

Commissioner Payne encouraged Bishop to communicate with McKenzie and ask him to specifically examine the contract area that dealt with insurance, workers' comp and general liability insurance.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the Agreement for Pathology Services Between Bear Lake County and Ada County, subject to review by the Bear Lake County Attorney. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

SCHEDULE SPECIAL MEETING FOR SHAW ZONING APPEAL, HOGE REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION ON REZONE, AND BRIDGE BID OPENING

The commissioners discussed an agenda item addressing the scheduling of a special meeting to address a zoning appeal that had been submitted by the Shaw family of Bennington; to address a reconsideration request on a rezoning application that had been submitted by Tiffany Hoge and denied by the Board at its April regular meeting; and to open project work bids submitted for the Paris Bridge Project.

Clerk Amy Bishop said County Attorney Adam McKenzie – whose services would be required at the pending meeting – would be most available on Thursday, May 23. Commissioner Olsen reported he was scheduled to attend a meeting of Southeastern Idaho Public Health that morning and would not be able to attend a special commissioners meeting if scheduled that day.

Bishop said the items to be added to that meeting agenda were time sensitive and need to be addressed by the Board as soon as possible.

After some discussion, the commissioners decided the morning of May 22 would work best for their schedules, as all three commissioners could then attend the special meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to schedule a special meeting for 9 a.m. on May 22, 2024, subject to the Bear Lake County Attorney's availability. If the attorney is not available that date, the meeting will take place at 9 a.m. on May 24, 2024. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

The Board broke from its discussion of General Business / Action Items in order to keep on schedule with a pending tax deed public hearing.

PENDING ISSUE OF TAX DEED HEARING

Chief Deputy Treasurer Cami Shultis appeared before the Board to present nine properties for tax deed. These nine properties included five sets of mineral rights, two landlocked parcels and two lots located in Montpelier.

Concerning the five sets of mineral rights, Shultis said the owners are aware of the tax deed process and have no interest in keeping the lots or the associated rights. Because of this, the owners have said they want the county to take the rights back.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to go into public hearing. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote. Commissioner Olsen, Aye. Commissioner Jensen, Aye. Commissioner Payne, Aye.

The Board entered the public hearing at 10:17 a.m.

Shultis said the properties being considered for tax deed included Bear Lake County Parcel Nos. 05487.03, 05487.02, 022255.00, 02279.05, 002796.05, 04801.03, 04787.01, 04787.01, 04312.02, 04042.01, 05860.06, 00902.00 and 00903.00.

Clerk Amy Bishop said that following the completion of an affidavit of compliance, the county will typically take possession of the property and then offer said property to the service owner.

No public comment was offered.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to leave the public hearing. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

The board re-entered its regular meeting at 10:20 a.m.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to proceed to tax deed with Bear Lake County Parcel Nos. 05487.03, 05487.02, 022255.00, 02279.05, 002796.05, 04801.03, 04787.01, 04787.01, 04312.02, 04042.01, 05860.06, 00902.00 and 00903.00. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

BRADY LONG WITH BEAR LAKE WATCH – INVASIVE SPECIES CHECK STATION ON NORTH BEACH ROAD

Brady Long – a citizen who lives on Bear Lake’s east shore and who volunteers with the Bear Lake Watch – and Andy Stokes, manager of the Bear Lake State Park, came before the Board to discuss the possibility of implementing an invasive species check station on North Beach Road. The installation of such a station would be one more way of keeping the lake’s waters and the local ecosystem safe, and the State Parks branch of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation has been, and continues to be, a key part of that discussion, Long said.

Stokes said there currently is heightened awareness concerning invasive species – specifically quagga mussels in the Snake River and milfoil aquatic plants in Bear Lake – in Southeast Idaho. The Bear Lake State Park is interested in participating in the effort to fight all invasive species that impact the lake and doing whatever it can to ensure those efforts continue going forward, he said.

In the past, a boat check station was located just off Highway 89 at the Bear Lake State Park Office in St. Charles. However, Stokes said, that did not serve as an ideal location for lake-bound traffic to pull off the highway and participate in inspections. When learning about the potential for a land trade along North Beach Road between Bear Lake County and Lync Development – an idea that had been originally discussed at the Board’s February meeting and had been further discussed earlier in the May 13 meeting – Stokes saw the potential for a boat check location on North Beach Road. This could allow the state park employees to conduct inspections on boats that had somehow missed other check stations in surrounding areas, such as those found nearby in Evanston, Wyo.; Laketown, Utah; and in Logan Canyon, Stokes said.

Stokes reported Bear Lake State Park has five full-time staff members and will add 14-16 seasonal staff members in the summer months. He said he had been in contact with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture and is interested in working with that agency, as well as with Bear Lake County, to implement a boat wash station in a location separate from the lake – an idea with which Commissioner Olsen expressed agreement.

Professors from Utah State University recently had published a research report on Bear Lake and had found the lake, in recent years, had seen a 300-percent increase in visitation numbers – and that number is projected to continue growing for years to come, Long said. Because of this, it is important for those in leadership positions to consider not only the issues that are central today but also those that will become issues in the future, he said.

Long asked the commissioners to consider what will happen to Bear Lake on their watch and encouraged them to move forward with the development of a boat check station designed to combat invasive species and the negative impacts they bring to the local natural resource.

GENERAL BUSINESS / ACTION ITEMS (CONTINUED)

VEHICLE LEASE RENEWALS

Before the Board were three vehicle lease contracts between Bear Lake County and The Bancorp Bank, National Association. Whereas it had been thought the contracts were drawn up for five-year lease agreements, they actually had been written as one-year renewable lease contracts, Clerk Amy Bishop said. Because of this, the Board needed to renew the existing leases associated with the three 2022 Toyota RAV4 vehicles utilized by the Bear Lake County Assessor's Office, the Bear Lake Senior Center and the Bear Lake County Probation Officer, respectively.

Commissioner Payne said he believed leasing vehicles rather than buying had been very economically beneficial to the county.

The annual payment for each of the individually leased vehicles is contracted at \$3,345.95, or a total annual payment to Bancorp of \$10,037.85.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the renewable one-year lease contracts between Bear Lake County and The Bancorp Bank, National Association, for the three 2022 Toyota RAV4 vehicles. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

P&Z DISCUSS REVIEWING COUNTY RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Bear Lake County Planning and Zoning Administrator Mitch Poulsen said, at times, some standards set by that body can be incongruent with the county right-of-way standards. He asked to discuss this with the Board in order to recommend the county alter the former rights-of-way to be in line with the materials provided by P&Z.

This discrepancy first came to P&Z's attention a few months ago when a variance request was submitted, and another similar request will be coming in the near future. Poulsen said he foresees this is

an issue that will continue until the county addresses it, adding that if a variance does not conflict with public interest, he did not believe the Board will be out of line to award a variance.

The Bear Lake County Planning & Zoning Board recommended the county commissioners amend the Bennington Township plat and all unincorporated platted communities in the county that need adjustments to their rights-of-way in order to bring them into conformity with county standards, Poulsen said.

In Bennington, this right-of-way issue affects property owners Rozanna and Scott Shaw. The Board plans to examine this particular case. However, because the Shaws are affected, other landowners in Bennington will be impacted by this matter, he said.

Commissioner Olsen – who lives in Bennington and is familiar with the issue affecting the Shaw property – said the Bennington Township is platted with 132-foot rights-of-way, but the widest he has measured is 99 feet, with most measuring between 80 and 90 feet. The fences on either side of the Shaw property are beyond where the Shaws wish to build their home. Commissioner Olsen said he was in favor of reducing these rights-of-way.

Having a survey conducted for the entirety of Bennington may not be required to change the rights-of-way, Clerk Amy Bishop said, but it may not be a bad idea to have this service performed in order to make sure all surveyed area lines up appropriately.

Commissioner Jensen asked if Bennington's Maple Canyon Road currently is in the right location. County Superintendent Todd Boehme said he feels that particular road likely needs to be moved. The current survey that was produced by Bald Mountain Estates leaves room to make changes. However, Boehme said, if the county now begins giving up space with the Bennington rights-of-way, this could inhibit things going forward.

RECOMMENDATION FOR REZONE – JEF HIRSCHI

The Planning and Zoning Board recommended the Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners approve the rezoning application submitted by Jeff Hirschi that requests the rezone of a 15-acre parcel to Rural Community zoning, Poulsen said. Some landowners adjacent to this property have expressed unhappiness with the rezoning of this piece and its separation into smaller plots.

Commissioner Olsen said he took issue with the way these types of small subdivisions implement approaches. He said he would like to see only two approaches installed, with a frontage road put in place in order to keep the number of approaches minimal.

There is a provision that speaks to that issue, Poulsen said. However, he added, that provision is rather vague and does not specifically state that subdivisions have to include a frontage road.

One provision allows a cul-de-sac to be a max of 500 feet long. That can be a difficult standard for some larger subdivisions to meet, he said. Poulsen said he will examine the county ordinances and determine some clarification on the frontage road stipulation.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to approve the Jeff Hirschi Rezone application for 15 acres to be rezoned to Rural Community zoning. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

The Board of County Commissioners adjourned for a short recess at 10:47 a.m.

The Board reconvened its regular meeting at 10:57 a.m.

TODD BOEHME – COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

County Superintendent Todd Boehme reported that material to be used for filling wet potholes had been purchased after discovering a lot of potholes that had previously been patched were in need of another application. That issue stems from the cold winter weather forcing the material out of the holes. Additionally, he said, the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge crews are working to patch roadways in preparation for summer chip sealing projects – specifically in the Ovid, Liberty and Sharon areas of the county.

Boehme said he has continued to work on the requests of the Bear Lake West Homeowners Associations and has provided information to the county's chosen engineering firm, Keller Associates, so the determination of how best to implement stop signs, road improvements and a guardrail can be examined by professionals. The Bear Lake West HOA has provided Boehme with a list of stop sign requests, and he said the number of sign locations listed on the request is high and concerning. Nevertheless, the superintendent will provide this information to Keller Associates so it can evaluate the needs, and he plans to include Sheriff Bart Heslington in those conversations because the situations cannot be resolved if there are not enough law enforcement officers to conduct the necessary patrols.

A meeting with PacifiCorp and Keller Associates will be held on Wednesday, May 15, to discuss moving forward with the Camp Stewart Bridge project, he said.

The 5 County Coalition has no major projects scheduled in the coming year within Bear Lake County, he said, but there will be some traffic studies of Montpelier streets near the Oregon-California Trail Center and Bear Lake High School. These traffic studies are designed to examine the need for Idaho Transportation Department stop lights in those areas. The City of Montpelier already has erected crossing signs with flashing lights at those locations, but more efforts may be necessary, Boehme said.

Additionally, a canvas study of the area near the intersection of North Beach Road and Highway 89 has been planned by ITD. However, Boehme said, these studies are conducted in the middle of the week, between Tuesday and Thursday, and that likely will not provide ITD with a true picture of the common scenarios that affect traffic within Bear Lake County during weekends throughout the summer months.

The Paris Park Bridge is ongoing as the decommission of the Paris Canyon power plant is completed, he said.

Commissioner Jensen advised Boehme that, due to heavy traffic, Nounan Road has begun to show wear in recent months. Boehme reported he had crews in that area regrading the roadway.

Commissioner Payne asked if it is possible to implement a sizeable amount of gravel – perhaps 15 to 20 truckloads – in the roadway of the Poverty Flat area, located east of Bear Lake. There is an old gravel pit in that area that has not been used by Bear Lake County since the 1970s. Boehme said he wants to look into the possibility of the county regaining access to and use of that pit, but for the time being he will make sure crews get that roadway patched after grading has been completed and prior to an agreement for access being established.

Commissioner Olsen reminded Boehme about the Jacobs Canyon cattleguard placement and advised him it needs to be moved when road crews are working in that area. Additionally, Commissioner Olsen said he hopes to see the requirement of subdivisions to include frontage roads and only two approach accesses.

Regarding the installation of stop signs in the Bear Lake West area, Commissioner Olsen wondered if the HOA will share the costs of the signage or if that will fall totally on the county. Boehme will look into where the financial responsibility is.

Commissioner Olsen reported he had been approached by a couple of concerned citizens about the condition of the Mill Canyon gravel pit. Boehme said an update for that roadway and the property itself is planned to take place when work begins on a snowmobile parking lot in that area.

DECLARE TRUCK EXCESS PROPERTY

Boehme said he wanted to declare as county public surplus a single piece of Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Equipment – a 1986 Chevrolet Scottsdale pickup truck with a failing crate engine – that has been in use by his department for many years.

He said he will work with Deputy Clerk Paul Christiansen on the public listing and advertising, if necessary.

TRACKHOE

With the upcoming bridge improvement and replacement project up Paris Canyon, Boehme said he wants to add a trackhoe to the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge fleet. He said he wanted to make the Board aware of his wishes as the county prepares for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2025 budget sessions. Boehme's department does have some funds available for this equipment, and if he does not use any funding to purchase or lease pickups for the crew, one year of trackhoe payments can be paid, he said.

Boehme has been looking at the possibility of purchasing a CAT 320 excavator. When not being used for other projects, the trackhoe will be very useful when used in conjunction with the county gravel crusher. Additionally, he said, the trackhoe would have been helpful to the two Lanark oil road projects that were conducted the past month.

GRADER LEASE RENEWAL

Boehme said his department is in the market to enter into a new lease agreement for a grader, adding that, due to the size of the grader and maintenance issues, he had asked for a re-lease on a new CAT 150

motor grader and to have the problem equipment returned. The Road and Bridge Department has been using one grader that has had some mechanical issues since it first arrived from the factory.

Boehme reported to the Board that he is in the application stages necessary in order to begin work on revamping the fairgrounds approach to the north of the Crane Multiplex.

BILL STOCK – ISSUES w/ P&Z LAND USE ORDINANCE

Bear Lake County Citizen Bill Stock of Fish Haven told the Board he has concerns with the Bear Lake County Planning and Zoning Board and recent actions it has taken. He went on to state the Bear Lake County land-use ordinance – which Stock alleged had not been altered or updated since 2007 – states that zoning change applications have to be given to the planning and zoning administrator. Per the ordinance, Stock said, these zoning applications include two different forms with two different fees.

Stock continued, saying the ordinance requires the applicant submit to the Board of Bear Lake County Commissioners a written letter that requests the rezone. However, Stock – who formerly served as a member of the Bear Lake County Planning and Zoning Board and in the time since has regularly attended that body’s meetings – said he had never seen this requirement met in the past 50 or 60 overlay requests that have gone before P&Z.

Though he said he was not aware who is responsible for checking state statutes and determining their impact on local ordinances and happenings in Bear Lake County, Stock said he felt it is imperative the county do something with its comprehensive plan to ensure it falls in line with the law in place. Furthermore, he said, the Board needs to ensure P&Z follows all requirements set out that impact its business and the actions of applicants.

Bear Lake County Planning and Zoning Administrator Mitch Poulsen said that, over time, the Planning and Zoning Board had discovered matters that impact ordinances and interpretations which previously that body had not fully understood. The duties and work of the Planning and Zoning Board are always evolving and, because of that, are very dynamic, he said.

Poulsen reported he had sent out an email to all county elected officials and had requested their participation in discussions regarding the overlay zone. A state statute requires that cities and counties shall review all existing areas of impact and shall reestablish the areas in conformance with the provisions of Senate Bill No. 1403 – “Relating to Planning and Zoning; Amending Section 67-6509, Idaho Code, to Revise Provisions Regarding Comprehensive Plans; Amending Section 67-6526, Idaho Code, to Revise Provisions Regarding Areas of Impact and Declaring an Emergency and Providing an Effective date.”

Poulsen clarified that any adopted land use ordinance impacts new zoning applications going forward and voids what provisions have been included in past ordinances.

FAIR BOARD – LISA TRANSTRUM – ARENA

Glen Gillies and Lisa Transtrum of the Bear Lake County Fair Board came before the commissioners to speak about the state of the fairgrounds arena and the improvements that are planned. Gillies said the

Fair Board was asking for a pile of sand from the Wardboro gravel pit and some dedicated time from the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Department as it works to repair the arena ground.

The arena ground has turned to firm clay that has mixed with rock and debris, and those conditions present a danger to rodeo competitors and others who use the arena, Gillies said. Kameron and Jessica Whitaker – who took over organization of the demolition derby event that was held in the arena on September 30 – have agreed to haul out the debris that the county has no use for, and Commissioner Olsen has volunteered to operate a motor grader as part of the work to restore the arena, Gillies said.

The Road and Bridge crewmen will help to screen the contents found in the arena during the process. After that, a grader fitted with a 1-percent slope will be used to ensure water runoff is directed toward the pens rather than the center of the arena, Gillies said. The fair board has hired an arena specialist to provide recommendations, and that individual will be present as that body works on the arena restoration, he said.

This restoration is necessary as fair events move forward into the future. If the arena is revamped, this will allow the fair board to book more events and bring in more competitors who will want to utilize what the fair board hopes can be classified as a top-notch arena, Gillies said.

This project will require a purchase of washed sand that can be turned in with the contents of the arena, but this purchase will be made using funds from the fair budget, Gillies said. The finished project is planned to have 10 to 12 inches of good top when completed.

County Superintendent Todd Boehme said the Road and Bridge Department will work with the fair board on this project. He said he will work with Gillies and make sure the fair board's needs are provided for.

Gillies said the fair board also plans to fix up the warmup arena so local youth involved with the 4-H program can hold their events. This also will provide a space for smaller events to be held in June, he said.

These repairs are so vital because, if they are unaddressed, those who use the arena will be at risk, Transtrum said, adding a recent high school rodeo event had to be cancelled because of the conditions found in the arena.

Commissioner Olsen said the demolition derby held last fall had led to many of the arena's issues. Everybody needs to realize that the ingredients of concrete are gravel, sand and water. Because of this, the arena needs to be worked in order to not form those hard and dangerous materials, he said.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to have the Bear Lake County Fair Board work with County Superintendent Todd Boehme for the restoration of the fairgrounds arena. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Stock of Fish Haven said he believes the Bear Lake County Planning and Zoning Board has been

improperly advertising its public hearings for less time than is required by Idaho Code. He has brought this concern to the attention of that board, but the P&Z members and administrator have said their legal counsel has approved the advertising process they follow, which uses the day of first publication as the first day of the mandated advertising period. Stock added that he has consulted his own legal counsel and has been advised that Idaho Code states the required advertising period should start after the first day of publication, not on the day itself.

Michelle Fillion of Fish Haven asked if P&Z's legal counsel is based out of Idaho or Utah. Clerk Amy Bishop told her that P&Z's legal counsel is based in Boise.

MAGGIE MANN – SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO PUBLIC HEALTH – PROPOSAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET

Maggie Mann, who serves as the district director for Southeastern Idaho Public Health (SIPH), came before the Board to discuss the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2025. The SIPH Fiscal Year begins July 1, 2024, and runs through June 30, 2025. On April 11, The SIPH board voted on the proposed budget that was before the Bear Lake Board of County Commissioners, she said.

A budget hearing will be held at 9:30 a.m. on May 23 at the SIPH Pocatello office, Mann said. The Board's chairman can join remotely, attend in person or send a designated proxy to cast a vote for Bear Lake County.

Mann read from House Bill 316, which constituted the repeal of the indigent program; the removal of state aid to health districts; and replaced that former state aid with additional county aid – which is based on total property tax – effective as of March 1, 2022. Additionally, she said, HB316 placed with the county the responsibility to vote on the SIPH Fiscal Year Budget.

The FY2025 Budget is funded primarily through four sources – 1.5 percent from Opioid Drawdown; 24.8 percent from counties; 25.2 percent from fee collection; and 48.5 percent from contracts.

Mann went on to provide the commissioners with a 10-year history of county aid and former state aid that was provided to the public health district. The funding rates stayed fairly constant over that decade, and SIPH is aware that each of its contributors has limited resources. Because of that, SIPH is working to not request an increase, she said, adding that there will be no change for FY2025.

After examining SIPH's FY2025 county funding requests, Commissioner Payne said he was baffled at how Bear Lake County's 2023 property tax values – figured at a total of \$1,956,958,656 – could be so much higher than that of Caribou County, which came in at \$1,678,175,076. The Bayer phosphate mine in Caribou County likely is worth more than all the properties in Bear Lake County, he said, adding that the figures presented in Mann's materials did not seem equitable.

Caribou County is behind on its property assessments, Mann said. The numbers provided in the breakdown of county aid funding came directly from county assessors. The value of the Bayer property is reported by the state, whereas it is a large commercial property, she said.

The current FY2024 pledge from all SIPH counties totals at \$2,370,096 – broken down as the \$1,227,796 that had been pledged in FY2024 and the \$1,142,300 additional county aid that had been shifted from

the state, Mann said. There has been no adjustment for the timing differences between the health district's fiscal year – which begins July 1 and ends June 30 – and the county's own fiscal year, which starts October 1 and ends September 30. The FY2024 contributions will see no change and will again total \$2,370,096.

The county funding requests are broken down by two components – population and assessed market valuation. These two components are not equal, Mann said, as 70 percent is based on county populations, while 30 percent is based on market value. In fact, Bear Lake County's FY2024 contribution of \$129,937 will decrease for FY2025 to \$129,294. The reason for this fall has to do with fluctuations in county population and fluctuations in the market, she said.

Still, Bear Lake County does continue to be valued higher than Caribou County, and Mann said she will work to find out why.

Mann said SIPH is running programs with the opioid settlement funds. SIPH has medication available to help treat opioid use disorder. Additionally, two nurse practitioners are on staff that work to help treat opioid misuse, and a counselor works to help with the behavioral side of that issue. Other funding is used for opioid overdose prevention measures, such as the provision of Naloxone, more commonly known as NARCAN, which is a nasal spray that rapidly reverses opioid overdose. Education efforts also are being made to teach the public how to administer NARCAN, she said.

Local citizen Vaughn Rasmussen, who has been appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to serve as a trustee with the Southeastern Public Health District, reported that the local district is very well-run and that is largely due to the time and effort that Mann puts in.

After some discussion about the May 23 SIPH budget meeting, the commissioners decided Commissioner Olsen will attend and serve as the voting chairman proxy.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to assign and authorize Commissioner Olsen to serve as the proxy for the Bear Lake Board of County Commissioners and to vote at the Southeast Idaho Public Health District budget meeting for Fiscal Year 2025. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. The motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – IDAHO CODE 74-206(1)

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to go into executive session according to IDAHO CODE 74-601(1) (b) to consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or public school student.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olsen.

Roll Call Vote. Commissioner Olsen, Aye. Commissioner Jensen, Aye. Commissioner Payne, Aye.

The Board entered Executive Session at 12:08 p.m.

The Board left Executive Session at 12:35 p.m. A short lunch followed.

The Board reconvened its regular session at 1:00 p.m.

BRANDEE WELLS – BEAR LAKE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

Brandee Wells, with the Bear Lake Soil and Water Conservation District, came before the Board to present her annual report.

Wells said the district finished five grants last year. Additionally, the district received an extension on another, which will bring last year's total finished grants to six. She said this has kept the district very busy but it has been very grateful for the opportunities it has been awarded.

The Soil and Water Conservation District currently is working on three grants that will end this year. Additionally, it will have one grant that will end in 2025 and two others that will end in 2027, Wells said. Between the six projects, the district has worked with 14 different landowners on a large range of ventures – including river bank stabilization, the drilling of wells and animal operations.

The district has chosen to continue its Dyer's Woad collection program in summer 2024. The local landfill branch of the IDAWY Solid Waste District has agreed to provide garbage cans where the weed can be emptied. Last year's program provided gathering bags to 66 youth participants. Of those participants, Wells said 44 brought back bags filled with Dyer's Woad, and this totaled about 250 pounds, on average, gathered by each participant, she said. Each gathering bag will hold about 70 pounds, and the district awards participants about \$10 per bag returned.

Wells said she has seen the district's budget cut, and because of this she has worked to apply for grant funding. She said she hopes the regular budget funding will come back up because she doubts as many grant opportunities will be available in the next year.

STEVE HIRSCHI – ROAD MAINTENANCE ON THOMAS FORK LANE IN GENEVA

Steve Hirschi had asked to speak to the Board about road maintenance on Thomas Fork Lane in Geneva. Hirschi said his family built a home on the west side of Thomas Fork Lane and, after completion, there now is a sign that states there is no county winter maintenance on that roadway. Hirschi stated he felt that, as a taxpayer, that main road needs to be serviced during those months.

Hirschi said he had spoken with Greg Skinner, the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Department supervisor, and Skinner had allegedly told Hirschi that adequate loads of rock and gravel for that roadway would be dispersed. However, Hirschi said, that has never happened. Janet Widmer, whose family helps farm the land in that area, attended the meeting with Hirschi. She echoed his statements regarding the need for winter maintenance on that road.

Commissioner Olsen reminded Hirschi that road always had been dirt. It is a very narrow roadway and no county winter maintenance has ever been conducted on that road. There are a lot of homes in the Bear Lake Valley that do not have county snow removal conducted. This road in particular is considered an unimproved county road – meaning that, yes, it is adopted as a county road but it has not been

brought to county standards. Even in the summer, minimal maintenance takes place on Thomas Fork Lane, he said.

Hirschi said his family was unaware of those conditions before the home was built on Thomas Fork Lane.

Kevin Widmer, a resident of Geneva who also was in attendance with Hirschi, said it seems conditions in that part of the county are not equitable. Some roadways in nearly the same condition as Thomas Fork Lane do receive road maintenance, he said.

County Superintendent Todd Boehme said there is a snow dyke exchange with the property owners on those roads that receive winter maintenance. The county agrees to maintain those roadways in trade for being allowed to place snow dykes on the properties on those roads.

Hirschi asked why it is not an option for the county to gravel and plow Thomas Fork Lane. Boehme said that, years ago, Thomas Fork Lane was a graded roadway. When the elk fence was installed on that roadway, part of the fence was placed in the right-of-way where the county conducted its grading efforts. The placement of the fence prevents the grader from going down that portion of roadway, and the fence will have to be removed before the county can ever grade in that area, he said.

The fence also prevents drainage improvements. Boehme said he cannot find that an encroachment permit ever was granted during construction of that fence.

Hirschi asked how long it will take the county to begin work on that roadway if and when the fence was removed to allow for grading and graveling. Commissioner Jensen said this request will fall behind many other requests made for road improvements, and it will not be a high priority. He encouraged the Hirschi family to get a permit from Boehme that will allow them to bring the road to county standard. At that point, he said, the request can be brought before the board to determine if the county will adopt Thomas Fork Lane as part of regular winter maintenance.

JEFF FREDERICK – BEAR LAKE WEST ONGOING ROAD ISSUES

Jeff Frederick, who serves as vice president of the Bear Lake West Homeowners Association Board of Directors, said he had sent County Superintendent Todd Boehme a list of intersections at which that body believes traffic signs are missing and desperately needed. Frederick reported Boehme will speak with engineering firm Keller Associates, as well as with Sheriff Bart Heslington, about those problem areas and will communicate his findings with BLW.

The pricing estimate from Keller Associates had come in for the engineering costs associated with the Bear Lake West area and the work necessary to the needed improvements, Frederick said. He asked if the county is willing to pay for a portion of that cost.

Commissioner Jensen reminded Frederick that, per the agreement between BLW and the county, the county will help provide manpower and equipment. All other costs are up to the HOA, and he assumes planning and engineering costs will fall to that body. Frederick said he will take this information to the HOA board.

Frederick said one other concern he has is with drainage near the intersection of Lake West Boulevard and Fremont Road. There are several potholes in that area and a problem with drainage near where the pavement ends. He asked for clarification on how the HOA should proceed with addressing this issue, as he was not sure if that board is responsible for culverts that stretch under the roadway. That area is in a bottleneck, and the drainage has begun causing potholing, Frederick said.

The culvert for that location is placed well, Boehme said. However, sediment causes issues and the pond below that area had been there prior to the culvert. It needs to be maintained, but part of the pond is on private property. Because of this, the HOA will be responsible for resolving that issue, he said.

The culvert in the roadways is the county's responsibility, Commissioner Olsen said, but diverting the drainage through private property and all the actions associated will be the responsibility of the HOA.

DECLARE TRUCK EXCESS PROPERTY (CONTINUED)

County Superintendent Todd Boehme had previously spoken to the Board about his desire to declare as county public surplus a single piece of Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Equipment – a 1986 Chevrolet Scottsdale pickup truck with a failing crate engine – that has been in use by his department for many years.

MOTION: Commissioner Olsen made a motion to add the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Department's 1986 pickup truck to the list of county surplus property to be sold. The motion received a second from Commissioner Payne. The motion carried.

COREY LYMAN – PARIS CANYON ROAD CROSSING – CALL FOR BIDS ON STRUCTURE AND REVIEW PROJECT FUNDING

Corey Lyman with the United States Forest Service spoke to the Board about requesting bids for the bridge structures for the Paris Canyon Road crossing. The structure will include a concrete pre-fabricated building, and the county's portion will be 24 feet wide and will have a rim on it. The USFS bridge will be slightly narrower, he said.

The Forest Service will assist with both facets of the project, as their implementation will be beneficial to both entities as each works to do its part for this joint venture. By working together and packaging the two crossings together, Lyman said he hopes to see the total costs fall.

After discussion, the Board decided to set a special meeting for 9 a.m. on May 23, 2023, at which point the project bids will be opened.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to move forward with the bid process for the two Paris Canyon bridge road crossings. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

Lyman said the county's portion of the project falls below the Forest Service boundary and below the USFS campground. He added that he has been able to help secure \$75,000 through funding from the

United States Fish and Wildlife Service in house with the county and an additional \$75,000 through PacifiCorp.

That said, there is about \$136,000 of in-house funding, and an additional \$13,499 that will come in the next month through an agreement. The second crossing on Forest Service land – a total of \$370,000 – will be reimbursable and up for signature in a few weeks, Lyman said. With these figures, the grand total should be enough to complete the project.

Lyman said he and County Superintendent Todd Boehme will take some time in the next few weeks to best determine how to get the project off the ground, adding that he is confident in the relationship that has been forged between the Forest Service and Bear Lake County through past project partnerships.

The project window should tentatively span the end of August through the first few weeks in September. At that point, peak campground use will have passed so as not to inhibit use of that offering. The project will entail a road closure of about three weeks, Lyman said.

MOTION: Commissioner Payne made a motion to set a special meeting to open the Paris Canyon Road Crossing project bids at 9 a.m. on May 23, 2024. The motion received a second from Commissioner Olsen. The motion carried.

BROOKE ALLEN – DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS – FIBER/BROADBAND PLANNING

Brooke Allen, a regional account executive with Direct Communications, congratulated Bear Lake County on recently receiving \$36,000 through the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment Program (BEAD) Regional Coordination and Planning Grant. Because use of those funds has a fairly narrow scope and has been left vague, Allen said he wished to provide information to the county for how those funds can be utilized.

The BEAD Regional Coordination and Planning Grant can be used for planning steps; the establishment of a Broadband Action Team (BAT); educating and involving residents and community members through local efforts; speed testing campaigns; asset mapping; and digital literacy and skills development – something for which Bear Lake County could use its grant funding to hire someone to teach computer classes or hire someone on a temporary basis to spearhead these efforts, Allen said.

Allen said that, essentially, Bear Lake County already is aware of the problem areas throughout the community and where broadband services are not provided or are most needed. Bear Lake County can use some or all of the BEAD funding to form a broadband taskforce which can identify and discuss the focus areas, but this is something the county already has done and already has examined at length, he said.

Areas within Bear Lake County that most need to be addressed include Pegram, Geneva and Nounan, and – at a projected broadband expansion cost of \$100,000 per mile – Pegram likely will fall under the ultra-high-cost arm of the implementation program. The other two legs of Bear Lake’s needs could likely fall under the regular cost area of focus, Allen said.

Finding funding for the Nounan area’s needs will not be an easy task, but there are grants that can help

with this, he said. However, a minimum commitment from the county of 25 percent of the project cost will likely be involved with any of those grants.

The county can use the BEAD Regional Coordination and Planning Grant funds to hire an outside consultant who will come in and reiterate everything the county already knows, but that funding can be better used in the local community through digital literacy and skills projects. However, Allen said, it is important the county remembers it cannot use any of that funding for the procurement of hard assets.

DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS EASEMENT AGREEMENT

Allen said he is researching if there has been an easement agreement established between Direct Communications and Bear Lake County. If one was ever entered into, it was done so a long time ago. Allen said he will find a blank contract agreement and provide it to the Board as an example of what could be established going forward.


The Direct Communications mapping team – which examines fiber deployment within different project areas – plans to provide an updated and current map copy of fiber within Bear Lake County to the Bear Lake County Road and Bridge Department, Allen said.

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

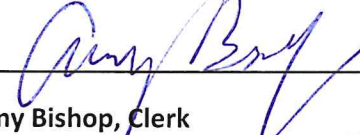
The meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.



Bradley D. Jensen, Chairman



Date Approved

ATTEST: 

Amy Bishop, Clerk



