



**PUBLIC MEETING**  
December 15, 2015  
MINUTES

The Lewis and Clark County Commissioners Public Meeting was held on Tuesday, December 15, 2015, at 9:00 AM in Commission Chambers Room 330.

**Roll Call**

Chairman Andy Hunthausen called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Susan Good Geise and Commissioner Mike Murray were present. Others attending all or a portion of the meeting included Eric Bryson, Michele Peterson-Cook, Kevin Hamilton, Nancy Everson, Cathy Burwell, Dean Bingham, Tom Hoffman, Jay Reardon, Tim Harris, Robert Filipovich, Jeff Wadekamper, Sharon Haugen, Rick Hayes, Jack Walsh, Al Knauber, and Nichole Nisbet, Recording Secretary.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Everyone recited the pledge.

**Consent Action Items**

- a. Resolution 2015-163 Declaring County Property Surplus Property. (tabled 12/10/15) (Amy Reeves)

Eric Bryson reported on the consent action item 2a and recommended approval.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Murray and seconded by Commissioner Good Geise. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

**Resolution 2015-161 Approving the Tax Benefits Application of Pioneer Aerostructures, LLC for Qualifying Improvements (Structure and Equipment Purchases) to Property Located at 2365 Skyway Drive in the City of Helena, Montana. (Nancy Everson)**

Nancy Everson, Finance Officer, presented the resolution approving the tax benefits application of Pioneer Aerostructures, LLC for qualifying improvements to the property located at 2365 Skyway Drive in the City of Helena. The tax benefits application is for the increase in taxable value caused by the construction of its new facility and purchase of new machinery and equipment for its manufacturing operations to be assessed for tax years 2016-2025. The value of equipment to be purchased is estimated at 3.3 million. It is estimated that over 50 jobs will be created over the next fifteen years. The Department of Revenue estimates the taxable value at over \$125,000 over ten years.

**PUBLIC COMMENT-**

Jeff Wadekamper, Director of Helena Airport, stated his support for the tax abatement through the addition of local jobs and revenue for the airport. He noted use of land at the airport that is not suitable for airway travel is being used for taxable revenue in this case.

Cathy Burwell, President/CEO of the Chamber of Commerce, stated her support for the tax abatement. She noted economic success and job creation as part of the benefits of having this business locally.

Jay Reardon, 1135 Avian Road, stated his opposition to the tax abatement due to the fact that the company is profitable and doing well and feels this tax abatement is at the expense of the tax payers. He noted concern that there is no evidence that jobs will be created or that the business will not relocate.

Tim Harris, County resident, stated his opposition to the tax abatement and asked to see factual data. He noted that the number of jobs to be created and salaries within the company have decreased or fluctuated each time it is questioned. He asked for conditions to be applied before granting of the tax abatement and stated he felt there is no follow up to see the status of the abatement in the following years.

Rick Hayes, 504 Dearborn, stated his support for the tax abatement due to their track record being a wise investment for the County. He noted new revenue figures that coincide with job creation.

Daniel Bingham, CEO of Helena College, stated his support for the tax abatement and noted the successful partnership the college has. He noted a human capital gain as a benefit to the abatement.

Jack Walsh, Helena resident, stated his support for the tax abatement due to the creation of jobs. He also noted that the building industry will grow with the addition of jobs due to relocation or families building new homes.

Robert Filipovich, 927 8th Ave, stated he did not feel that you know the success of a tax abatement. He noted the number of jobs created as stated throughout the applicant's application or the Big Sky Economic grant paperwork differs. He noted the wage rate for this industry is not available and feels those should be obtained.

Tom Hoffman, the applicant, stated the tax base in Montana is not attractive compared to neighboring states and noted the company has ties to Helena and chooses to be here.

Commissioner Murray asked Mr. Hoffman if he is comfortable with the number of ten jobs being created in ten years.

Tom Hoffman stated yes.

Nancy Everson stated the qualifications that apply for a tax abatement request. She noted that the value of the abatement is determined every year in conjunction with the Department of Revenue.

Sharon Haugen, Director of Community Development for the City of Helena, stated there has been less than one tax abatement a year.

Upon no further testimony or comment, Commissioner Hunthausen stated the public comment is now closed.

Commissioner Murray noted that the County is limited to economic development offerings and the tax abatement is one tool the County has to increase jobs in the County.

Commissioner Geise noted the applicant's track record and further noted that job creation in the private sector is essential for future growth and diversification.

Commissioner Hunthausen noted this is new revenue and will impact our college, jobs and infrastructure as a long term benefit to our community.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Good Geise and seconded by Commissioner Murray. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

**Resolution 2015-164 Amending The Final Operating Budget And Appropriation Authority For The Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2015 And Ending June 30, 2016. (Nancy Everson)**

Nancy Everson, Finance Director, presented the resolution amending the final operating budget and appropriation authority for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016. The Historic Preservation office is requesting authority for an additional permanent part-time position. This position is

estimated to cost approximately \$3,800 per year and will be funded in FY2016 by the transfer of funds from the operating budget to the personnel budget for this purpose.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Murray and seconded by Commissioner Good Geise. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

**Board Appointments. (Eric Bryson)**

Eric Bryson presented the board appointments and recommended the appointment of Meghan Rabbitt to the Lewis and Clark County DUI Task Force to complete the 2-year term that expires on 12/31/17 and the reappointment of Colleen Smith to the Lewis and Clark County DUI Task Force to a 2-year term that expires on 12/31/17.

No public comment was received.

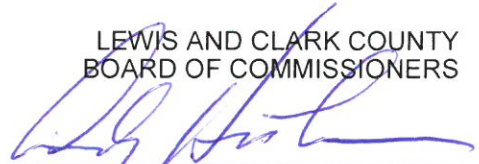
A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Murray and seconded by Commissioner Good Geise. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

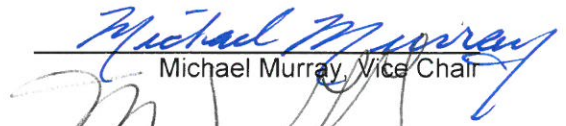
**Public comment on any public matter within the jurisdiction of the Commission that is not on the agenda above.**

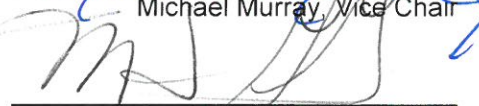
**Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:01 am.

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andy Hunthausen, Chairman

  
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Michael Murray, Vice Chair

  
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Susan Good Geise, Member

ATTEST:

  
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Paulette DeHart, Clerk of the Board