



PUBLIC MEETING

June 2, 2020
MINUTES

The Lewis and Clark County Commissioners Public Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 2, 2020, at 9:00 AM in Commission Chambers Room 330.

Roll Call

Chair Susan Good Geise called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Andy Hunthausen and Commissioner Jim McCormick were present. Others attending all or a portion of the meeting included Roger Baltz, Misty Edwards, Nancy Everson, Nicho Hash, Reese Martin, Drenda Niemann, Kevin Wright, Dr. Gary Mihelish, Curt Chisholm, and Nadine McCarty, Recording Secretary.

Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone recited the pledge.

Consent Action Items

- a. Public Meeting Minutes for February 6; May 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, and 21, 2020. (Nadine McCarty)
- b. Resolution 2020-24 Request for Prosecutorial Assistance. (Leo Gallagher)

Roger Baltz reported on the consent action items 2 a-b and recommended approval.

No public comment was received.

A motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Hunthausen and seconded by Commissioner McCormick. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

Consideration to Approve Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Project Charter. (Drenda Niemann)

Drenda Niemann, Public Health Officer, presented the project charter named Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Systems Improvement. The process is supported by the Montana Healthcare Foundation. She added the local emergency room data shows individuals experiencing behavioral health crisis access care at the highest most expensive level. Crisis occur because care was not provided at an earlier stage of the illness. There is no routine screening, early diagnosis or treatment. The charter is the written agreement between community partners to work together to map the current behavioral health system and identify gaps in areas of needed improvement. The leadership team will collaboratively design a new system and work alongside the local advisory council to implement identified changes resulting in a more comprehensive and affective behavioral health system. It outlines

financial commitment for each of the partners and the funds will help to sustain the necessary systems improvement work beyond the grant funds provided by the Montana Healthcare Foundation. Lewis and Clark County has already dedicated \$10,000 cash match to the grant that will be paying for the newly hired Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Specialist and meets the charter's financial commitment for this year. Staff recommends approval of the charter.

Ms. Niemann gave an overview of the charter partners that include: Lewis and Clark County Commission, Lewis and Clark Public Health Officer; Lewis and Clark County Sheriff, St. Peter's Health Chief Executive Director, PureView Health Center Chief Executive Officer, and Shodair Hospital Chief Executive Officer. The partners have been meeting monthly since January, with the primary effort being the written charter. Some data has been reviewed and the charter outlines a timeline to be used to move the effort forward. A staff person has been hired to facilitate the process.

Commissioner Hunthausen stated there are many other stakeholders in the community, however, getting the core group together for the foundational work for a place to launch from is significant for the health system going forward. This will be incremental and not solve all of the problems. Many more needs than there are resources will remain, but many involved are making progress.

PUBLIC COMMENT -

Dr. Gary Mihelish, stated as a family member being involved in the mental illness treatment system since 1984, he has shared his discomfort with a broken system. He thinks the plan is excellent and appreciated if adopted and implemented. Dr. Mihelish gave a history of mental illness care in Lewis and Clark County that included: in 1996 NAMMI Montana brought Sergeant Sam Cochran from Memphis Police Department to speak on crisis intervention treatment for law enforcement; in 2000 he came back to speak again; in 2006 the addictive and mental disorders division donated \$8,000 for community members to go to Memphis for training to implement Crisis Intervention Team training in the community. The goal of crisis intervention team training is to divert people from incarceration that suffer from mental illness and addiction. The training has been extremely successful in the community. In 2014 Dan Abreu from the Policy Research Associates held a strategic intercept mapping process, during the process gaps in the system were identified with nothing being done with the recommendations. Dr. Mihelish gave an overview of The Stepping Up Initiative developed by the National Association of Counties and does not know if anything has been done from that initiative to be affective in the community. The Supreme Court of Montana selected Lewis and Clark County to be one of five pilot counties in the state to develop a pretrial services program and divert people from incarceration. It had been successful in reducing the population in the jail, but one of the goals was to divert people with mental illness and addiction and is not sure how successful that has been. He added NAMMI Helena supported the jail levy with \$10,000 and he personally gave \$5,000 to support the levy under the delusion it would divert those with mental illness and addiction away from the detention center and into treatment. In his estimation that part of it has not been successful. The current situation is: there has not been a totally functional Crisis Response Team for 6-7 months and the Journey Home has been closed for the same amount of time. He sees a lot of process and not many solutions. He hopes everyone gets behind the program, supports it, and that this time something happens.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hunthausen to approve the project charter and seconded by Commissioner McCormick.

Commissioner Hunthausen gave an overview of the work the County has done over the last few years. He added reform does not happen overnight as systems have to be changed and as a result the Criminal Justice Community Council was formed, sent people to the Department of Justice programming in Denver, Colorado to begin the process of how to build a new institution, jail or change the system. They laid out a five-year process of which the County has followed. The change is in process, when the remodeled jail opens there will be space for therapeutic response, for medically assisted treatment, for segregation of those with mental health needs from the general population and

for working with those people. He added much progress has also been made to the Stepping Up Initiative. This last year the county committed almost \$2 million to behavioral health issues, with \$100,000 committed to the data system, additional money this year to complete the project. Many good things have happened and yes there is more progress to be made.

Commissioner McCormick stated several years ago healthcare facilities in the area had units available for people in crisis and that became unsustainable, resulting in reduced or stopped services. Across the country the facility available for people in crisis has become jail. Lewis and Clark County recognized the void. In this community providers, associations, interested individuals, professionals have come together to provide these services, with government providing the seed capital along with others in the community through individual contributions, both monetarily and time.

Commissioner Good Geise stated with the remodel of the detention facility the hope is more providers will be more willing to come to the facility. There is a serious shortage of affective providers in Lewis and Clark County and the country. She added collecting data has been an expensive challenge and just last week there was a contract before the Commission on integrating all of the data from different law enforcement agencies. They continue to have issues with communication between them, with some agencies not wanting to participate. The County cannot make them participate.

Roger Baltz, Chief Administrative Officer, stated total spending is utilized through a combination of general fund, grant, and taxpayer approved levy monies for many of these programs and services. Including the Human Services Task Force funds that are used the total amount is about \$2 million.

Commissioner Good Geise stated there has been public comment, a motion, a second, discussion and asked for a vote. The motion Passed 3-0.

Contract Between Lewis and Clark County and LaQuinta Inn. (Reese Martin)

Roger Baltz, Chief Administrative Officer, stated staff is recommending that the contract with La Quinta Inn be withdrawn at this time. If necessary it can be brought forward at another time. The Commissioners had no questions or comments.

No public comment was received.

Commissioner Good Geise stated seeing no public comment the Commission will withdraw the agenda item at this time.

Contract Between Lewis and Clark County and Rocky Mountain Development Council. (Nancy Everson)

Roger Baltz, Chief Administrative Officer, stated with apologies from himself and staff, the contract with Rocky Mountain Development Council is not ready to bring forward to the Commission. Staff recommends tabling the item to June 11, 2020 to allow for needed revisions.

No public comment was received.

A motion was made by Commissioner McCormick to table the item to June 11, 2020 and seconded by Commissioner Hunthausen. The motion Passed on a 3-0 vote.

Designation of Lewis and Clark County Earmarked Alcohol Tax Money. (Tabled 5-26-20) (Misty Edwards)

Misty Edwards, Finance Coordinator, presented the designation of the earmarked alcohol tax that was presented to the Commission last Tuesday, May 26, 2020.

Commissioner McCormick asked if any further input was received from the three presenters and Ms. Edwards noted she heard nothing further after the meeting last week. Just prior they heard from Boyd Andrew, Intermountain, and Instar Community Services.

Commissioner Good Geise clarified that last week two agencies were on the agenda and Instar Community Services presented under public comment.

Ms. Edward stated staff recommends for FY21 to continue a 50/50 split between Boyd Andrew and Intermountain Services and direct staff to work on a Request for Proposal (RFP) process whereby new state approved agencies can apply for the funding.

No public comment was received.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hunthausen to adopt the staff recommendation to split the alcohol tax dollars 50/50 between Boyd Andrew and Intermountain Services and direct staff to prepare a process over the next 12 months in order to run an RFP process. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCormick.

Commissioner Hunthausen noted previously there was only one approved provider, over time there became two approved providers with Boyd Andrew serving adults and Intermountain serving youth. Now there are five or six approved programs in the community, making it difficult for the Commission to make those determinations. A developed process to evaluate by merit and criteria the proposals received from the community would be beneficial to determine the distribution of the funds and where they would do the most good for the community.

Commissioner Good Geise asked for a vote after seeing no further discussion. 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 9:53 am.

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Susan Good Geise, Chair
Andy Hunthausen, Vice Chair
Jim McCormick, Member

ATTEST:


Paulette DeHart, Clerk of the Board