

## Prairie County Board of Commissioners Meeting

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026

*Prairie County Court House Court Room*

*217 West Park St Terry, MT 59349*

*www.prairiecounty.org*

Prairie County Board of Commissioners, Todd Devlin, Christine Keltner and Dennis Teske met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. In attendance Administrative Assistant Harry McNall.

9:00 a.m. Call to order, pledge of allegiance. Public Comment.

Shane Eaton explained he is with the Last Best Place Zoning District. In the litigation to the ballot initiative, there were documents saying that zoning regulations are not in place. He spoke about Commissioner Devlin's comments and County Attorneys' comments about the regulations under oath saying they are not in place. Would like to know where the district is concerning the zoning district, how are we supposed to know what is happening?

Barb Smallis has been disappointed with county government and would like an answer for why the county is suing Shane and Tylene Eaton.

Glenda Uland can you condense in a paragraph as to why the county is suing them? The residents of the county are going to pay for this lawsuit.

Clint Grue we live within the zoning district, and my understanding was that it is in place. I sent a letter to be on the zoning board, and have not heard anything, what is happening with it?

Normal Reiley concerning the lawsuit, many want a height limit for turbines within our county.

Joe Lewis would like some clarity about the zoning district; we have some land in the district and would like to know if we need to do something else to get this completed.

Dennis Teske speaking as a citizen described the process of zoning district documents, plans, maps etc. Commented that when he voted as a commissioner for the district, he believed all the zoning regulations were going into place at that time. He also spoke about the MCA concerning creating zoning districts.

Shane Eaton commented that he thought the zoning regulations were in place, and we are not getting information about where things stand concerning this district. He also spoke about the lawsuit and what he understands the lawsuit is about. He also described in detail what he learned about the lawsuit on his end of the lawsuit.

Commissioner Devlin prepared a statement to explain what county responsibilities he has been working on in his absence from meetings. Items included working on spreadsheets for funding the road department, attending Montana Natural Resources Coalition roundtable, economic development meeting, working with sheriff on mill levy for public safety, worked with Department of Interior to secure a new BLM state director, and other responsibilities. (Exhibit A)

Barb Smallis I understand the things you have been doing, but the county concerns should be the first concerns for your position. Address our concerns first, then do other responsibilities.

Dave Hudson thinks the list is to cover for missing your job, looks important on paper but the stuff going on here in the county is more important.

Shane Eaton made a comment about the zoning district and lack of answers from the commissioners.

Mary Elisabeth Grue Thank you Dennis Teske for trying to answer some of our questions, I believe the commissioner Devlin and Keltner are tied by their lawyers.

9:30 a.m. Road Supervisor Todd Henry joined the meeting to discuss road department activities. He gave an update on cattle guard cleaning. Supervisor Henry did secure a pickup with a dump bed through the state surplus as discussed on May 6<sup>th</sup>, commissioners meeting.

There was a discussion on making payroll biweekly, the clerk's office believes they don't have enough staff to process a second payroll. If this is something to consider, we should have an additional payroll clerk. It would take a part time person to do just payroll processing.

Conversation about timing concerning the levy for the road department, it must be 85 days before the election and no later than August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026, with a resolution. Discussed the uses of the levy funds, timing of resolution etc.

10:00 a.m. Commissioner Keltner read the minutes from the May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026, commissioners meeting.

10:11 a.m. Commissioner Teske made a motion to accept the minutes from the May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026, commissioners meeting as corrected, seconded by Commissioner Devlin, "all in favor" motion passed.

10:12 a.m. Reese Pirtz read the Prairie County Republican Central Committee resolution concerning Commissioner Devlin.

10:17 a.m. Commissioner Keltner moved on to agenda items with conversation about courthouse parking lot & fence repair.

The commissioners received a bid from Hardrives out of Billings Montana. Commissioner Teske abstained from the discussion. Commissioner Keltner suggested putting the work out to bid for transparency. Commissioners decided to put it out to bid.

Commissioners with Keiffer Lewis went out and looked at the fence by the courthouse, and Keiffer will fix the fence, he also found he owns the fence.

10:45 a.m. Commissioners reviewed correspondence.

11:00 a.m. Lance Kalfell following up on the wilderness study Area conversation from a previous commissioner meeting. Would like to see a study group put together to make it a wilderness area instead of a study area. The study area has been in place for over 50 years. Lance explained that a study area you can't do anything within. But a wilderness area allows trails,

rules, water development etc. to use the property for grazing and travel. It would be a benefit to the county if this was redesignated as a wilderness area.

11:27 a.m. Commissioners adjourned for lunch.

1:00 p.m. Clerk & Recorder Shari Robertson provided the commissioners with claims to review and sign. There was a discussion on the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration, there needs to be minutes that show who is on the committee, where funds are going etc. This will be put on the next agenda to discuss.

Voided Check numbers # 49594 voucher 1134 and 49535 voucher # 1128

Prairie County Voucher # 1137 \$3,500.00

Prairie County Voucher # 1136 \$8,804.04

Prairie County Voucher # 1134 \$39,549.48

Prairie County Voucher # 1135 \$807.56

1:24 p.m. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to sign RM88 for records that have met their retention dates according to Montana Code 7-5-2132 from clerk & recorder's office, second by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

2:00 p.m. Sheriff Lewis was present to explain the reason for appointing Kelly Fivey through resolution. She is the prosecutor for this case, and Sheriff Lewis has spent 4 years building this case. There is no cost to the county for this appointment. The attorney is a specialist for this type of case.

Commissioner Devlin read Resolution 26-23.

2:12 p.m. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to pass Resolution 26-23 Appointing Special Deputy County Attorney: Kelly Fivey, Assistant Attorney General DC-40-2026-1 for state vs. Coutts case, seconded by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

2:30 p.m. Election Administrator Shari Robertson updated the commission on SB490 injunction from District Court Judge and how it will affect elections. Registration is open till noon Monday June 1st and allows in person registration on election day June 2<sup>nd</sup> starting 7 a.m-8 p.m. You can NOT register to vote at the polls, only at the county courthouse. When voting the person voting must produce a valid ID, (non-expired) in order to verify identity to vote. The polls in Prairie County will be open 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. both in Terry and Fallon, early voting will open at 7 a.m. to 11a.m. at the courthouse for anyone who wants to vote in the morning.

3:00 p.m. Public Comment

Norma Peabody has concerns about the lawn at the cemetery.

3:30 p.m. Senior Center Hail Repair Decision. Commissioner Devlin reached out to Mark Soderquist who put in a bid back in September.

Commissioner Devlin suggested that if the painters quote comes in within \$6000 or less to accept it.

Commissioner Keltner made a motion to accept the bid from Mark Soderquits if it is equal or less than \$6000, seconded by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

4:00 p.m. Fair board to update commissioners on the new fair building. Sharla Sackman explained the meetings the fair board has had concerning the project. She explained the different phases of the project, and they are currently working on public outreach and fundraising. The name of the new building will be called "Badlands Event Center". They started a fundraising campaign for 1 year and currently have received \$212,000 in donations and sponsorships. Also there have been applications put in for grants to help with the project. She went over some of the cost estimates involved in the project. There is a need to send out a request for qualification for an architect.

4:40 p.m. Commissioner Keltner made a motion to allow the fair board to seek request for qualification for an architect, seconded by Commissioner Teske, "all in favor" motion passed.

4:45 p.m. Commissioner Teske made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Devlin, "all in favor" motion passed.

Signed this 27<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026



Todd Devlin, Commissioner Chair

ATTEST:



Shari Robertson, Clerk & Recorder

Work done for Prairie County since my last attended meeting on April 4, 2026

- Prepared spreadsheet for the road department on funding needs for an additional voted levy mill.
- Attended the Montana Natural Resources Coalition two-day meeting in Lewistown as executive director for a roundtable on fiscal year 26-27 priorities.
- Attended an economic development meeting in Wibaux, Montana, the same day as a commissioner meeting.
- Working with the sheriff on an additional voted mill levy for public safety.
- Worked with Senator Daines on the Small PILT Parity Act, now in Senate Appropriations.
- Worked with the Department of Interior on securing a state director for the Bureau of Land Management.
- Worked with MACO to stabilize the market value of wind farms so they can't depreciate them out
- Attended the Western Interstate Region annual conference in Maui, Hawaii.
- I recently hosted the National Association of Counties film crew as they gathered footage for a video highlighting the importance of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program. The NACo team spent sixteen hours filming in Prairie County, capturing how federal lands affect local services and communities. The crew also visited multiple other counties with significant federal land ownership to document the program's nationwide impact.

Note: Many of these activities occurred on days when commissioner meetings were scheduled.

*Todd Devlin 5/20/2026*