

Lincoln County Port Authority
Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2025 @ 3:30 PM
LCPA Conference Room: 216 W 9th St. Libby, MT

The Lincoln County Port Authority Board convened for a regularly scheduled meeting on April 21, 2025. The meeting was called to order- present were:

Jerry Bennett, Brent Teske, Tony Petrusha, Chris Bache, Jennifer Brown, Rocky Shauer, Mike Meyers, Dan Torgison, Curt Jones, Noel Duram, Ray Stout and Bill Bjorkland.

1. **Approval of Minutes: March 17, 2025:** Motion by Brent Teske to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2025, meeting minutes; seconded by Tony Petrusha. Tony questioned the lack of reference to foundation dividends funding the recreation manager's salary. Brent clarified the minutes note the agreement between the Park District and NRDP, which includes the salary. No changes were made. Motion passed.
2. **Approval of Special Meeting Minutes – April 14, 2025:** Motion by Brent Teske to approve the April 14, 2025, special meeting minutes; seconded by Tony Petrusha. No further discussion. Motion passed.
3. **Approval of Financials:** Jerry Bennett reported approximately \$1.8 million in checking and savings, with \$309,000 remaining to be reimbursed to the Port Authority for the revolving loan fund. Motion to approve financials as submitted by Tony Petrusha; seconded by Chris Bache. No discussion. Motion passed.
4. **Old Business**
 - a. **Family Health and Wellness Easement/Libby Creek Easement:** No action taken at this time due to other ongoing issues.
 - b. **Commercial Appraisal:** An appraisal for 120 acres of commercial land is expected by May 1, 2025.
 - c. **Fishpond Park Upgrades:** The nature trail around the fishpond will be constructed using the contaminated dirt, which will be sealed. Jerry Bennett requested a sketch of the plan.
 - d. **MOU – Park District and LCPA:** The MOU was not timely for this meeting. Tony Petrusha will send the draft to legal counsel and the board for review, with discussion planned for next month's meeting.
 - e. **ABDW Logistics Railcar Storage Agreement:** Pricing proposal: \$150/day for dock switching fees and \$5/day for parking cars at the port.
 - f. **Vehicle Pool:** The Port has acquired an additional pickup and is still seeking a third vehicle.

- g. **Washington, D.C. Update:** Jerry reported a successful trip. Meetings were held with the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, Deputy Secretary of the Interior, Senator Sheehy, Representative Zinke, and others. Bruce Vincent has continued follow-up communication with officials in D.C.

5. **Director Updates**

- a. **Shared Stewardship:** Kate Stephens was out of the office. This item will be carried over to next month's agenda.

6. **New Business**

- a. **Swim Pond Funds:** Tony Petrusa provided an update on the swim pond project, explaining that the original plan was for the Park District to cover the cost of materials and a portion of labor, with the majority of labor to be performed in-kind by the county road crew during their off-season. The project received a grant totaling \$67,000, intended to cover design work and materials. To date, approximately \$60,000 has been spent. Without in-kind labor from the county, it is estimated that \$65,000 will be needed to complete the project, bringing the total shortfall to roughly \$30,000. Covering this gap solely through Park District funds would significantly strain their minimal annual operating budget.

Tony states the pond needs to be opened this summer and Adam Noble is reaching out to the original funders and potential donors to gauge interest in contributing additional support. To help address the funding gap, Tony requested that the county consider providing a \$10,000 contribution to assist the Park District.

Brent Teske voiced his support for the project, noting it would be a benefit to the county. Jerry Bennett stated that he would prefer to review the upcoming fiscal year's budget before making a financial commitment. Chris Bache added that he had been asked to provide a quote for project work, but he is awaiting more specific details—particularly regarding the extent of dirt moving—before he can generate an accurate estimate.

- b. **MOU with County:** The Lincoln Country Port Authority needs an MOU with the county to engage in forestry activities on park and county property as well as handling online burn permits and grant administration. The draft will go to legal and then to the county commissioners. Tony recommended minor verbiage changes; in the "Purpose" section, it should read timber instead of lumber, and in section I, it should read carried instead of carries. Group consensus agreed to a 5-year term. Brent will make edits and consult Kate for clarification on the compliance and project monitoring language in section II.
- c. **Foundation:** Jerry expressed interest in reviewing next year's budget before making funding commitments. This will be addressed as Old Business at the next meeting.

7. **Open for Public Comment:**

- **Noel Duram** questioned the board's structure that was reformed in 2018 to consist of 3 commissioners and 2 others as well as financial discrepancies, noting the Port's fund decreased from \$2.6 million (2/29/24) to \$2.1 million (2/28/25). Jerry noted the difference aligns with the amount paid for the revolving loan fund. Noel also asked for clarification regarding the Family Health and Wellness easement, it was confirmed to be residential use only.

- **Rocky Shauer** inquired about RV storage at the Port. Jerry Bennett responded that the current rate is \$50 per month and advised Rocky to contact Kate Stephens directly to make arrangements for securing storage space. Rocky also suggested repairs to 5th Street near the walking trail using labor by the county and available materials the Port may have. However, it was noted those materials have trace contamination and must be sealed if used.

8. **Adjourn:** 4:06pm

Next Meeting: May 19, 2025

LINCOLN COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY BOARD


Jerry Bennett, Chairman

ATTEST: 
Jennifer Brown