

Lincoln County Port Authority
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2026 @ 3:30 PM
LCPA Conference Room
216 West 9th Street, Libby, MT

The Lincoln County Port Authority Board met on February 9, 2026, in the LCPA Conference Room, Libby, MT.

1. **Roll Call:** Board members present were Kevin Peck, Chris Bache, Tony Petrusha, Jerry Bennett, with Director Kate Stephens and notetaker Jennifer Brown. Brent Teske and Rob Delmas were absent.
Meeting attendees were Ray Stout, Steve Scheer, and Bryce Peterson. Gage Zobell was present via Zoom.
2. **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:** No public comment was given.
3. **Public Comment on Agenda Items:** Bryce Peterson of Nomad addressed the Industry Way Infrastructure Project and the possibility of adjustments to proposed easements. Because Nomad shares a boundary line in the project area, he emphasized the importance of ensuring alignment with legal access requirements. Mr. Peterson also discussed current work logistics with utilities being installed through the roadway, and drawing on his background in civil construction, he expressed a desire to ensure coordination and collaboration among all parties involved as the project moves forward.
4. **Approval of Minutes, January 12, 2026:** Tony motioned to accept the January 12, 2026, minutes, seconded by Kevin. There were no comments. The motion carried unanimously.
5. **Approval of Minutes, January 22, 2026:** Chris motioned to accept the January 22, 2026, minutes, seconded by Tony. There were no comments. The motion carried unanimously.
6. **Approval of Financials, December:** **January and February financials will be included on the agenda for the next meeting.** Tony requested clarification regarding a line item in the income statement, and Kate explained that it reflected grant funds budgeted versus grant funds received. Kevin moved to accept the December financials, seconded by Chris. With no further comments, the motion passed unanimously.

7. Old Business

a. **Noble Change to Easement Request:** Based on the last meeting, the board asked Gage to provide potential benefits Noble could offer for a fair exchange for a 64 ft easement instead of 32 ft. Chris submitted ideas himself, which Gage reviewed and supported. The Port would grant a 64 ft easement, and Noble would place utilities with no late-comer agreement. The easement would be non-exclusive and become a public easement once transferred to the city. The Port is still required to provide Noble reasonable commercial access to the rail spur. Kevin moved to proceed with the proposal presented by Gage, which Noble agreed to, seconded by Tony. With no further comments, all were in favor. Chris abstained. The motion passed.

b. **Lease Cost Recommendations:** Jerry wants to designate certain property for nonprofit use. Kevin said the Port property should be clearly defined for use; Tony agreed. Jerry noted that it may take some time to make a valuable decision regarding cost and proposed allowing RC Racers to use the land until a decision is made. Kevin recommended renewing the agreement for one year. Kate suggested a use agreement. Kevin moved to establish a one-year use agreement instead of renewing the previous agreement, seconded by Tony. With no further comments, all were in favor. **Remaining land designations will need to be addressed.**

c. **Park Update:**

- i. **Recreation Development Plan:** Tony will continue working on the Recreation Development Plan and the land allocation scheme, including determining areas within and outside the floodplain.
- ii. **Turtle Ponds:** Tony noted that the turtle ponds and easements require minimal repairs. He stated that the haul road on the east side of the creek is a straightforward fix.
- iii. **Ownership:** Discussion was held regarding Port property with county improvements and ownership of those improvements. Kevin stated that MACO is reviewing how definitions in the indemnity agreement may need to be amended and what it dictates counties must do with their MOUs.

d. **ER Assist & Flood Repair Update**

- i. **Emergency Procurement:** Kate noted that due to timelines for procuring services ER Assist needs for FEMA, she requested permission to shorten the bid period for anything related to flood response. There is a provision in the policy that allows this shortened time frame. She requested permission to shorten the bid period for anything related to flood response. Kevin moved to approve to set the bid procurement process to

seven days for flood damage response, seconded by Chris. With no further comments, the motion passed unanimously.

- ii. **Progress:** Kate reported that they continue to find additional and ongoing damage and are working with ER Assist to update the total tally. ER Assist has estimated costs for the Port alone at \$1.3 million, not including the levee, with an additional \$0.5 million for debris removal. On the east side, DEQ is currently in the engineering process to install a temporary levee and will test the area for asbestos. Kate noted that neither the Army Corps of Engineers nor the EPA will provide assistance with the levee. The temporary levee is expected to be completed sometime in March. The Army Corps of Engineers stated that assistance can be requested during an event but cannot be provided before or after the event. Vanessa of ER Assist is working with DEQ for possible funding for the Port.
- iii. **Engineer RFQ:** The sole bid for engineering services for disaster repairs was submitted by Evensen Engineering and Consulting. Chris noted that the rates are in line and that the firm has contracted with Lincoln County. Tony moved to accept the statement of qualifications from Evensen Engineering, seconded by Chris. With no further comments, all were in favor. The motion carried unanimously.

8. **New Business**

- a. **Board Member Applications:** Board member applications were received from two candidates. Kate noted that the timing may not be ideal given current activities, and Kevin agreed. Posting is put on hold, and the candidates will be notified. **Kate will inform Corrina.** Kevin moved to defer the applications, seconded by Chris. With no further comments, all were in favor. The motion carried unanimously.

9. **Director Updates:** Courtney is no longer with the current legal team, and a new attorney will be moving forward with Kate.
Glacier Bank called regarding FEMA and stated that, if the declaration is signed, they could provide a bridge loan.
The Family Health and Wellness agreement has been drafted and returned with changes. Gage will provide a copy once there is a draft he is comfortable with.
The Wood Bank has been a huge success, and advertising will begin soon.
The board agreed to sell the CASE Cat and purchase a skid steer with all attachments for use at the LCPA Wood Bank and on Port property.
The Pine Phlats grant is moving forward with a due date in March.
Rexford bench project is moving forward, and the USFS is looking for funding sources.
Kate asked for and was given permission from the board to begin removing non-woody debris from the creek near the levee.

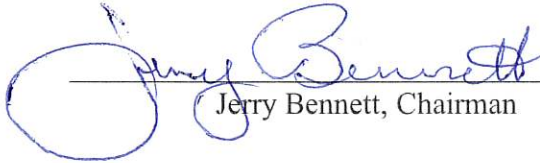
Chris suggested the engineers could work on engineering and permitting at the same time.

Unscheduled Matters: None.

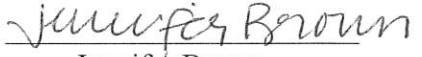
Adjourn: 4:35 p.m.

Next Meeting: To be determined.

LINCOLN COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY BOARD



Jerry Bennett, Chairman

ATTEST: 
Jennifer Brown