

COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

IMAN   
CHILCOTT   
FOSS   
STOLTZ   
KANENWISHER 

Members Present.....Commissioner J.R. Iman, Commissioner Greg Chilcott,  
Commissioner Suzy Foss, Commissioner Ron Stoltz and Commissioner Matt Kanenwisher

Date.....November 14, 2011

► Minutes: Glenda Wiles

► The Board met at 1:30 p.m. for a discussion and possible decision on developing the Public Information Request Policy for Ravalli County. Present at this meeting was Deputy County Attorney Howard Recht, I.T. Director Joe Frohlich, Clerk & Recorder Regina Plettenberg, RC Watchdog Maggie Wright, Ravalli Republic Reporter Whitney Bermes and Citizens Bill Menager and Skip Rosenthal,

Commissioner Kanenwisher prepared a draft Policy and addressed a possible ‘umbrella’ policy for offices headed by Elected Officials. Included in the public policy draft are documents dealing with the daily business of the county which includes: recorded documents; minutes; public correspondence; video or audio recordings; claims for payment etc. He also addressed the time to compile the information that which might interfere with the regular workflow of the office; requests that are ambiguous or require clarification from the requester; requests that may violate privacy concern of employees. Other items within the draft include staff responsibilities, response time for the information being given to the citizens, custodian for the records and fees for copies, CD/DVD’s.

Commissioner Iman suggested IT Director Joe Frohlich, Clerk & Recorder Regina Plettenberg and Civil Counsel weigh in on this draft policy. Regina stated this is similar to what her office uses as a policy. Both Joe and Regina agreed PDF’s are good documents to provide to the citizens as it does not allow document manipulation as a word document might. Currently her office has two computers that can be utilized by the public and if necessary she can add a third computer. There are fees for copies but they are reasonable fees.

Commissioner Chilcott asked Civil Counsel about charging hourly rates of an employee as well as the materials fee. Howard stated an hourly rate is usually measured on the tenth of an hour based upon the loaded salaries of the employees.

Howard indicated the 'Freedom of Information Act' is a federal request for records. The local government's response for records request is found under 2-6-102 MCA. Some records can be provided electronically; therefore this policy should address electronic copies. The Commissioners ultimately make the decisions of the performance of the MCA requirements.

Public Comment:

Katrina Mendry lives in Hamilton and she is glad to have this issue addressed. Her concern addresses Commission meeting minutes as they have now been removed from the web. The web indicates the information will be given to the person within 10 days and that is not what has happened in the past.

Maggie Wright asked about the records custodian being the Elected Official. Maggie also noted the calendar of today noted this was a policy rather than a draft.

Skip Rosenthal (previous Human Resource Director) felt the best public record to give a citizen is a PDF.

Discussion included the web site being changed to a state web site and certain information such as correspondence and minutes not being posted on the web for public access. Howard noted a document is not a completed document until it is finalized by the responsible party, and the document format is not dictated by the law. Discussion included the possibility of posting the archived Commission calendars so citizens can find issues within the minutes. Howard addressed issues of concern which are information that might compromise public safety or security and employee privacy rights.

Howard stated he believes the Commissioners are on the right track but what is missing is staff training in regard to understanding the policy.

Commissioner Kanenwisher stated he will forward this draft policy on to the County Attorney with the questions asked here today. The Board concurred.

► The Board met at 2:55 p.m. to discuss electronic monitoring and make a possible decision on a Memorandum of Understanding for GPS and Alcohol Monitoring Services with the Office of the Court Administrator. Commissioner Stoltz was not present for this meeting. Commissioner Chilcott addressed a recent invoice for \$812.98 for electronic monitoring of a juvenile that turned 18 after arrest but before sentencing. After some research, Commissioner Chilcott finds the bill legitimate. There is a state grant available for electronic monitoring and it was suggested Commissioner Chilcott visit with Deputy Chief Probation Officer Clint Arneson about the grant. **Commissioner Chilcott made a motion to pay this \$812.98 with guidance from the Chief Financial Officer on what line item to take this money from. Commissioner Kanenwisher seconded the motion and all voted "aye".**