

COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

KANENWISHER

FOSS 

CHILCOTT 

IMAN 

STOLTZ 

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

Date.....March 28, 2012

► Minutes: Glenda Wiles

► Commissioners Iman and Stoltz attended a Mine Safety Training with Road Personnel throughout the day at the First Interstate Bank Facility.

► The Board met at 9:05 a.m. to have a discussion and make a decision on the increase in salary request for the I.T. Director. Present at this meeting was I.T. Director Joe Frohlich and Human Resource Director Robert Jenni. Discussion included comparisons of other counties for salaries and mill levy values, financial restraints of Ravalli County, criteria of relative rates of pay for the balance of Ravalli County, the specific set of skill levels for this director position, duties outside of the system administrator (I.T. Director) which includes all departments within the county. **Commissioner Chilcott made a motion to increase the I.T. Director's salary to \$57,500 annually plus benefits effective this pay period. Commissioner Foss seconded the motion. Discussion: Included how the pay periods and dates would work for the cut off payroll. Commissioner Chilcott amended his motion making the raise effective April 1st. Commissioner Foss seconded the amended motion. All voted "aye". (4-0)**

► The Board met at 10:30 a.m. for a discussion and decision on the issue of continuing the MRL (Montana Rail Link) Bitterroot Line through the grant application process. Present was Ravalli County Economic Development Authority Director Julie Foster. Commissioner Chilcott gave an update on the matching funds for the Tiger Grant IV application noting the City of Hamilton has pledged \$10,000 but the Town of Stevensville has not met their pledge of \$35,000 but they plan to make that determination on or about April 26th. It was also noted one of the shippers has now reduced product service by 10 cars which reduces their match monies by \$12,000, but another shipper has increased his match by \$6,000. It appears the shortfall for the match would be approximately \$43,000 even after the county made their pledge on March 15th.

Discussion included the likelihood of receiving the grant, the difference between the match 'shortfall' monies as the application process continues, utilizing the match monies in order to meet the shortfall for services versus utilizing match monies in order for MRL to make a profit.

Commissioner Chilcott stated two Commission members as well as Julie Foster are meeting with MRL tomorrow. It was agreed the conversation with MRL will be that the county is not asking them to operate at a loss, but the match monies should be utilized in order to continue the service and in order to cut the loss to zero, all the while in understanding MRL is a private business and the tax dollars cannot subsidize their private profit.

Public Comment:

Bitterroot Star Publisher Michael Howell asked when MRL expressed expectation of receiving a check from the county. It was noted that expectation was expressed to the Commissioners last week.

KPAX Reporter Dennis Bragg asked what final point the county will either continue or discontinue with their match and application process. Commissioner Kanenwisher indicated for him it will be the original amount of monies discussed and being used for the shortfall within the grant process.

Ravalli Republic Editor Perry Bauckus, KPAX News Reporter Dennis Bragg and KECI News Reporter Kevin Makki asked questions about the dates for Tiger Grant application, vendors receiving their shipping deliveries from MRL as well as any deadlines that MRL is driven by, tax benefits to the county by the businesses housed here that receive some of their product by rail link.

Michael Howell noted his understanding was the businesses in Stevensville anticipate utilizing trucks to receive their products (with an anticipated increase of 1% in their shipping cost), and they do not anticipate any loss of employees. He also asked if the decision made by the Commissioners on March 15th was now a 'moot point' due to MRL asking for the check up front.

The Commissioners indicated their intentions from the March 15th meeting have changed somewhat and another meeting will be set for their decision after meeting with MRL and seeing what the Town of Stevensville offers as match dollars.