COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

FOSS SF

CHILCOTT

IMAN JR

STOLTZ

BURROWS JB

Members Present.....Commissioner Suzy Foss, Commissioner Greg Chilcott, Commissioner Ron Stoltz and Commissioner Jeff Burrows

Date.....November 8, 2012

►Minutes: Glenda Wiles

►The Board met at 9:05 a.m. to make a decision on adopting the Bitterroot Valley Natural Resource Use Policy. Numerous citizens were present. Commissioner Burrows stated he received a phone call from Nancy Osaw who opposes the draft policy the Commissioners have been working on, but she supports the opposing Natural Resource Policy recently drafted by another group of citizens. Nancy also advised Commissioner Burrows that she does not support coordination.

Public comment was called for.

Jim Olsen stated he read both policies and the one up for adoption appears to be reactionary. He feels the public depends on issues such as safe roads which are a higher priority than this document. He has worked with the Sheriff's Office and County Attorney in terms of mental health issues and found that was a good way to implement necessary policies for the good of the county. He has also sat down with loggers and other extractors of natural resources in our valley and he knows it is possible to gain consensus with all parties. While some issues took a year to work out and they still did not agree philosophically, but there is common ground because everyone loves the outdoors. Jim stated when the Commissioners want to gain consensus in regard to the timber resources, then he is ready to help with that issue.

Russ Lawrence stated he has been involved in this issue since it was placed on the Commissioners agenda. The document started by a group of citizens and that is now being worked on by the Commissioners is really not a county policy, but a plan for the National Forest. The Commissioners have simply changed the word 'plan' to 'policy'. Russ said if there are trucking issues, have the trucks tarp the load, if there is an issue of wood fuel for the purposes of economic development, that should be a natural resource policy, and certainly not in the level of detail of this proposed plan. He sees this document as a management plan for the Bitterroot National Forrest, which he notes they already have a plan. If the Forest Service decides to put together another plan they will utilize experts and the other 300 million citizens in the U.S.,

which will include the local Commissioners having a seat at the table. Russ felt this proposed document is an over reach and will waste tax payer dollars.

Nancy Ballance stated some people feel the county should not have a place at the table when policies are developed within the community. She noted when other natural resource agencies were put into effect, they made it clear that the county has a special role in coordinating with the federal agencies and the counties are expected to play a special role in that coordination. Nancy feels the County and its residents are experts in custom, resources etc., and yes the county works differently than federal agencies.

Kelsey Milner opposes this proposed policy and coordination the Commissioners want to invoke. He agrees with Jim Olsen's statement that a consensus effort is important. He feels coordination is county supremacy and a assault on public lands and in his opinion this policy deals with the organization of coordination instead of the importance of resources.

Keith Kubista urges the Commissioners to adopt this policy. Numerous citizens and the Commissioners have been working on the policy in public meetings for many months. He agrees the policy has details which he feels are good. The current policy is not working, we are choking on the smoke and losing our natural resources. He feels coordination is vital to the community.

Patrice Promack feels the public process did not begin until it showed up on the Commissioners agenda. The meetings held by this group of people were not public meetings until they were calendared by the Commissioners.

Suzanna McDougal does not meet in bars which is where some of the meetings were held. Those meetings were not announced so she had no way to participate. She asked the Commissioners to hold off on their decision today, and to let them work as a community on this.

Vito Cilberti worked for BLM for over 20 years as a hydrologist and soils analysts. Some people say we lack the expertise to develop this draft policy. They also say we work from bars but that is not true. He considers this document a balanced approach to what will happen with the resources in the Bitterroot Valley. He stated it is unfortunate the logging truck appears on the cover of the policy because that is not what this is all about.

Pam Erickson stated the Commissioners need to develop this policy, not an adhoc committee. She does not know or feel comfortable with these people. She feels natural resources are a complicated issue and we need experts to help develop the policy.

William Menager stated he supports the policy.

Public Comment was now closed.

Board deliberations:

Commissioner Foss stated the citizen group did reach out and the Commissioner meetings have been well advertized. She also feels the citizens that worked on the policy do have expertise in these issues.

Commissioner Stoltz made a motion to adopt the policy. Commissioner Foss seconded the motion.

Commissioner Burrows noted the Commissioners can come back for further reviews on the policy and make changes if and when it becomes necessary.

Commissioner Chilcott agreed the policy can be amended as needed. He also stated the coordination issue is an attempt to enhance the local policies in our jurisdiction, and it is important to review those policies and regulations the Federal Government imposes upon our county. He does not believe in county supremacy; rather coordination is simply a way to work on the important issues shared by all agencies within the county. He noted the NEPA process allows local government input and the Commissioners need this policy as a negotiation tool in order to come to the table with the other agencies. He stated the citizens did not develop this policy in a bar, those comments are just an attempt to invalidate the process thus far. Thoe meetings were grass roots efforts by members of this community, all done at a public place. He appreciates the efforts of those at the grass roots level. The Commissioners took the draft of those citizens, then in public meetings have gone through it page by page. A lot of 'word smithing' has been done through this public process. A good example of local input that is necessary is the wilderness dams that are the valley's lifeblood, and the federal government comes in and denies us access with anything but a mule team. At that time, County Government nor its citizens had any input into that decision. He noted the first draft that came to the Commissioners was 45 pages, and it has been reduced to 29 pages by the Commissioners and members of the public. **All voted "aye". (4-0)**

►The Board met at 9:50 a.m. to make an appointment to the Farm and Ranch Board. **Commissioner Stoltz made a motion to appoint Jay Meyer with term ending Dec 31, 2015. Commissioner Burrows seconded the motion and all voted "aye". (3-0) Commissioner Foss was not present.**