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## **CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE**

Vice-Chair John Ellis called the August 28, 2023, Business meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the conference room.

**Board members present:** John Ellis; Vice Chair; Donna Pridmore, Secretary/Treasurer; Scott Rumsey Supervisor; Bill Yankee, Supervisor; Mike Kopitzke, Supervisor; being a quorum of the Board.

**Board members absent:** Pete Woll, Chair; Roger Marsonette, Supervisor. Absences are excused.

Also, in attendance were Samantha Tappenbeck, Jessie Walthers and Ginger Kauffman, Flathead CD Staff; Emilie Henry and Casey Lewis, Western Montana Conservation Commission; Camryn Gamble and Katie Lynch-Dombrowski, Big Sky Watershed Corps; Sean Johnson, NRCS.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **Consent Agenda Item 1: Signature Authority**

- Authorization for Samantha Tappenbeck to sign on behalf of Supervisors attending the meeting virtually.

### **Consent Agenda Item 2: Minutes**

- 7/10/2023 310-Permit Meeting Minutes

### **Consent Agenda Item 3: Financial**

Check Detail dated 8/14/2023 – 8/16/2023

1. BCBS \$2,402.68
2. CHS \$125.00
3. Mountain States Leasing – Kalispell \$1884.86
4. Whitefish Lake Institute \$5,000.00

### **Consent Agenda Item 4: Correspondence**

- MACD District Dispatch 8/24/2023

Donna Pridmore motioned “to approve the consent agenda as presented.” Bill Yankee seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one was present to comment on items not on the agenda.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**June 2023 End of Month Report:** Donna Pridmore presented the June 2023 End of Month Report to the Board. She explained that the Money Market Settlement account has been closed, and funds placed into a high yield CD. A notice with interest earned will be sent to the district ten days before the CD matures and will ask the district what we want to do with the CD. Donna Pridmore motioned “to accept the June 2023 End of Month Report.” Mike Kopitzke seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Furniture & Equipment Disposal Request:** Samantha Tappenbeck reviewed the Furniture & Equipment disposal request with the Board. Bill Yankee motioned “to accept the Furniture & Equipment disposal request.” Donna Pridmore seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## **REPORTS**

**Flathead CD Staff:** Samantha Tappenbeck reviewed the staff report with the Board. Attached.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS):** Sean Johnson, NRCS, reviewed his report with the Board. Attached.

**DNRC Conservation Districts Bureau:** Attached.

**Flathead County Planning Board (FCPB):** Mike Kopitzke reported on the agenda included zone changes, PUD’s, septic and well issues, and several subdivisions. He noted that the Peaceful Acres subdivision near Bigfork was tabled. There was discussion regarding the relevance of information presented with the FCPB report. Samantha Tappenbeck stated the conservation district seat on the planning board is intended to represent the interests of natural resources and not just matters regarding permitting on perennial flowing streams. She noted that the Flathead CD has a voting seat which is currently vacant and needs to be filled. The next meeting is September 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Haskill Basin Watershed Council (HBWC):** No report. The next meeting is September 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Flathead River Commission (FRC):** No report.

**Western Montana Conservation Commission (WMCC):** Casey Lewis, WMCC Executive Director reported that as of July 1<sup>st</sup> the Flathead Basin Commission and Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC3) were dissolved and have combined into WMCC, and staff for those entities has also been rolled over. Casey reported on current staffing, and the hiring of new staff. 22 out of 34 commissioners have been appointed or filled and are waiting on the 9 Governor-appointed seats to be filled. Scott Rumsey has been appointed as one of two Conservation District representatives. Casey noted that WMCC has received a large EPA grant and explained how that funding will be used. The next WMCC meeting is expected to be held November 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in Missoula. Emilie Henry, WMCC Program Coordinator, stated that strong partnerships such as with Flathead CD are very important to WMCC. She updated the Board on the details of the synthetic DNA study regarding septic leachate and noted tracers that were launched from homes in Whitefish Lake and Mary Lake Ronan areas were detected in the surface water, demonstrating a direct septic-to-surface water connection.

**Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC):** Katie Lynch-Dombrowski, BSWC member for WMCC and the City of Kalispell stated that MWCC is a partner in the Flathead Rain Garden Initiative. She explained that her term work has involved several areas, including building a rain garden at Glacier High School, site visits to homes where landowners are interested in building rain gardens, rain garden walking tours, creating mailers to over 1900 residents, and education and outreach tabling. Other programs she has been involved with included the Free the Seeds events, the NW MT Fair, Adopt-a-Drain program, Ripple Effect newsletter, and she is currently working on a short school curriculum for stormwater and storm drains. She helped Flathead CD with the Kids Rain Garden workshop, and the Kids Pollinator Day Camp. Along with Flathead CD, WMCC and other partners she was also part of with the Flathead Waters Cleanup event here in the Flathead.

Camryn Gamble, BSWC member for Lake County Conservation District and Flathead Conservation District reported her term work has included teaching 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders about conservation and the Flathead watershed. She participated in the Flathead Waters Cleanup event in Polson, packaged and provided seed for the Pollinator Initiative and is the main point of contact for the Septic Cost Share program. For the Flathead CD she went to Somers Beach and helped to teach 1<sup>st</sup> graders, tabled at the Free the Seeds event, helped with the Seedling sale, Family Forestry Expo, Viking Creek Wetland event, Rolling Rivers Trailer, and the Kids Rain Garden workshop. She added that she also came every Friday to work in the Demonstration Garden.

Samantha Tappenbeck explained that the Big Sky Watershed Program is an AmeriCorps program, and members serve a 10 ½ month term at a host site location. Samantha added that members help support local partner organizations, programs, and events. Jessie Walthers noted that in working with these ladies, she has found them to be very positive, fast learners, that they are very professional in the way they run their programs and have been a real pleasure to work with.

## **MATTERS OF THE BOARD/STAFF**

**Area V Meeting:** Samantha Tappenbeck explained that Granite CD will be hosting the Area V Meeting on Tuesday, September 26, in Philipsburg.

**Joint Application Review:** Samantha Tappenbeck explained that DNRC staff is updating the joint application form and have requested participation in review of the form and instructions. Samantha asked Supervisors to review the forms and submit any comments to her. Comments are due to DNRC by the end of September.

**Supervisor Areas:** Samantha Tappenbeck explained that we need area assignments for our two new FCD Supervisors. Areas were discussed and assigned to Supervisors Mike Kopitzke and Bill Yankee.

**Apparel Order:** Samantha Tappenbeck explained she will be ordering hats and vests; sizes are needed. Samantha noted that apparel remains district property. Name tags and business cards will also be ordered.

The next 310-meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 11, 2023, 7:00 P.M. in person and via ZOOM.

Adjournment: Donna Pridmore motioned "to adjourn." Bill Yankee seconded. Motion carried unanimously. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 P.M.

Submitted By:

Ginger Kauffman  
Administrator

Reviewed By:

Samantha Tappenbeck  
Resource Conservationist

Minutes approved by FCD Board motion made on:

9/25/2023  
(Date)

Pete Woll  
(Signature)

Chair  
(Title – Chair etc.)

## Staff Report: August 2023

Samantha Tappenbeck, Resource Conservationist  
Jessie Walthers, Conservation Program Manager  
Ginger Kauffman, Administrator

### Office and Administration

#### 310

- 2023 total 310's to date = 84
- Processing of 310's
- Scanning of older 310-files continues
- Consultation with DNRC legal counsel, supervisors, and staff on McDonald Creek violation declaratory ruling process
- Coordinated and hosted Declaratory Ruling hearing on August 25<sup>th</sup>

#### Bookkeeping

- Processed daily bookkeeping items: payroll, payroll reports and payments, invoices, credit card receipts, deposits, grant billing/vendor invoices, program payments, and reconciliation of statements.
- Updates to district files made as needed.
- Met with CPA accountant regarding bookkeeping processes and reporting.
- Provided payroll related documents to new Supervisors.
- Compiling documents for Annual Financial Report
- Waiting for 2023/2024 budget documents from Flathead County Finance Office

#### Office Support

- Staff meetings held weekly per staff availability
- Researched local IT Support options following the passing of Dick Buchannon of Byte Savvy Computing Services
- Priced out printer/copier/scanner units from Fishers Technology

#### Big Sky Watershed Corps

- Camryn assisted FCD this month by:
  - Assisting with Flathead Waters Clean-up at the South Basin Event in Polson
  - Continued coordination for Septic Cost Share Program
  - Demonstration Garden workdays 8/4/23 and 8/25/23

### Projects

#### Cow Creek Restoration Project

- Communicated with landowners re: low water levels and issues impacting flow and project success
- Visited project sites with Restoration Ecologist Franz Ingelfinger to review and document issues on the ground
- Meeting with landowners to discuss issues and possible solutions
- Coordinated herbicide application and drafted planting plan and supplies list
- Meeting with MACD to discuss possible application to Ranching for Rivers program

### Trumbull Creek Restoration & Aquifer Protection Project

- No activity this month

### Study of Boat Wake-Driven Erosion on the Flathead River

- Draft final report received from Tetra Tech on 3/9/23; Review and revisions sent back to Tetra Tech on 6/26/23
- Samantha had several discussions with landowners on the lower Flathead River about study findings and current conditions and recreation on the river this season
- Approximately \$9800 remain in project budget

## Programs

### College Scholarships

- No activity this month.

### Conservation Grant Program

- Informed landowners who are ordering seedlings of this year's ordering window and inventory information.

### Education Grant Program

- One inquiry for possible rain garden at Habitat for Humanity Flathead ReStore Location.

### Pollinator Initiative

- Began outreach for fall pollinator seed distribution. Discussed program logistics with Lake County CD, as they will not run the program next year.

### Rain Garden Initiative

- Outreach conducted for September Rain Garden Walking Tour to be held Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>
- Rain Garden tour and information session was held at the Demonstration Garden for Flathead Garden Club members Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>
- One site visit conducted for a program participant in Kalispell; Several additional visits are currently being scheduled

### Seedlings & Native Seed Program

- Fielded inquiries about seedling program, for future orders, and for conservation grant recipients who will be utilizing the seedling program.
- Updated ordering dates and information shared in newsletter, with conservation grant participants, and on FCD webpage
- Discussion was held re: seedling nursery updates and recent changes to ordering process

### Watershed Support Program

- Program funding is currently allocated to support of the Trumbull Creek Restoration & Aquifer Protection Project and the Flathead River Erosion Study

### Youth Camp Sponsorships

- No Youth Camp Sponsorships request were received this month

## MT Biological Weed Control Coordination Project

- Knapweed root weevils distributed to 4 landowners

## Education & Outreach

### Advertisement

- Boosted social media posts about upcoming events

### Education Events

- The Flathead Waters Clean-up Event held Saturday August 12<sup>th</sup>
  - Second location added for South Flathead Basin, with afterparty in Polson.
  - Engaged 123 volunteers to remove 2,066 pounds of trash and improve 66 miles of riverbank and lakeshore.
  - Jessie and Samantha ran the trash weigh station and hosted an outreach table
- Rolling Rivers Trailer subleased to the Blackfoot Challenge for outreach August 9-14

### Demonstration Garden

- Ongoing weeding, demonstration installation, and maintenance
- A compost bin was created and installed by Intern Keanu

### Website

- Posted approved meeting minutes and August 2023 meeting agendas
- Website visited by 1.3K users; Impressions = 48K; Total Clicks = 693

### Social Media

- Facebook: Page followers = 1,020; Post Reach = 3,847
- Instagram: Page followers = 873; Accts Reach = 2,538

### The Local Dirt eNewsletter

- Distributed on 8/7/23 to 813 recipients.

## Partnerships

- Flathead Waters Clean-Up Partner Meeting 8/3/23
- DNRC Funding Forum for Area V Conservation Districts 8/7/23
- Nutrient Work Group 8/16/23
- DNRC Funding Meeting for State Fire Suppression Fund/MT Forest Action Plan 8/16/23
- Flathead Rain Garden Initiative Partner Meeting 8/21/23
- Flathead Basin Wastewater Partner/Septic Cost-Share Meeting 8/23/23



Photos

**DURING THE 2023 FLATHEAD WATERS CLEANUP EVENT...**

**123**  
VOLUNTEERS  
REMOVED  
**2,066** POUNDS  
OF TRASH  
& IMPROVED  
**66** MILES  
OF RIVERBANK & LAKESHORE!

**THANK YOU**  
TO ALL  
VOLUNTEERS,  
PARTNERS, &  
SPONSORS!



MONTANA WATERS  
Clearly Connected









# NRCS DC Report – 8/28/2023

## Sean Johnson

### ➤ Programs

- EQIP and Joint Chiefs
  - Received quite a bit of late funding at the end of July/ early August so continuing to work on our contracting processes
- CSP
  - No active applications for FY23

### ➤ Review Items

- Pathways Intern Alie Simpson wrapped up her summer internship on August 4<sup>th</sup> to prepare for heading back to University of Montana for her sophomore year
- Attended in person Missoula Area DC meeting August 9-10 to help make suggestions for improvements in our processes for next year.
- Attended a field training on T & E plant Spaldings Catchfly at the Lost Trail NWR on August 22<sup>nd</sup>

### ➤ Upcoming Items

- New Soil Con

### ➤ Miscellaneous

- Snow Report
  - Next Snow Survey report will come out January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024
- Drought – Most of Flathead still in “Severe” category while the eastern side of the state is starting to re enter into some early drought status
  - None – 60%, D0 – 26%, D1 – 11%, D2 – 4%, D3 – 0%, D4 – 0% - July
  - None – 70%, D0 – 13%, D1 – 13%, D2 – 4%, D3 – 0%, D4 – 0% - June
  - None – 35%, D0 - 43%, D1 - 22% , D2 - 4%, D3 – 0%, D4 – 0%, - May
  - None – 33% , D0 – 27% , D1 – 35% , D2 – 5% , D3 – 0% , D4 – 0% - April
  - None – 16%, D0 – 27% , D1 – 38% , D2 – 16% , D3 – 3.11% , D4 – 0% - March
  - None – 5%, D0 – 27%, D1 – 44%, D2 – 20%, D3 – 3.71%, D4 – 0% - February
  - None – 8%, D0 – 31%, D1 – 24%, D2 – 25%, D3 – 11%, D4 – 0% - January
  - None – 12%, D0 – 21%, D1 – 26%, D2 – 25%, D3 – 16%, D4 – 0% - November

# June Drought Monitor

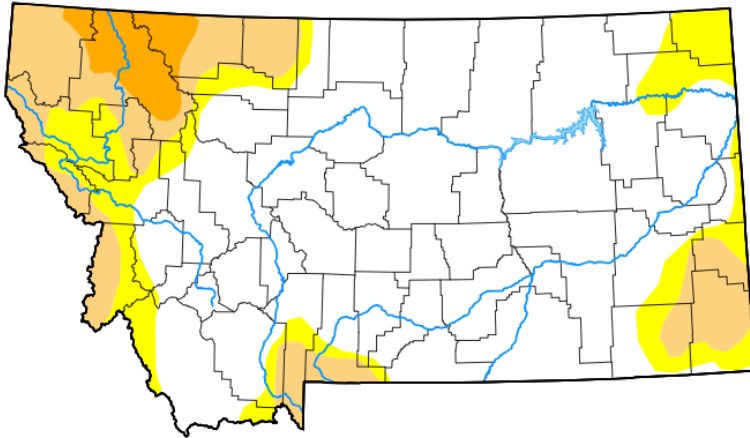
## Montana

Map released: Thurs. June 22, 2023

Data valid: June 20, 2023 at 8 a.m. EDT

### Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data



### Authors

United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):  
[Adam Hartman](#), NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC

Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):  
[Richard Heim](#), NOAA/NCEI

## Montana

# July Drought Monitor

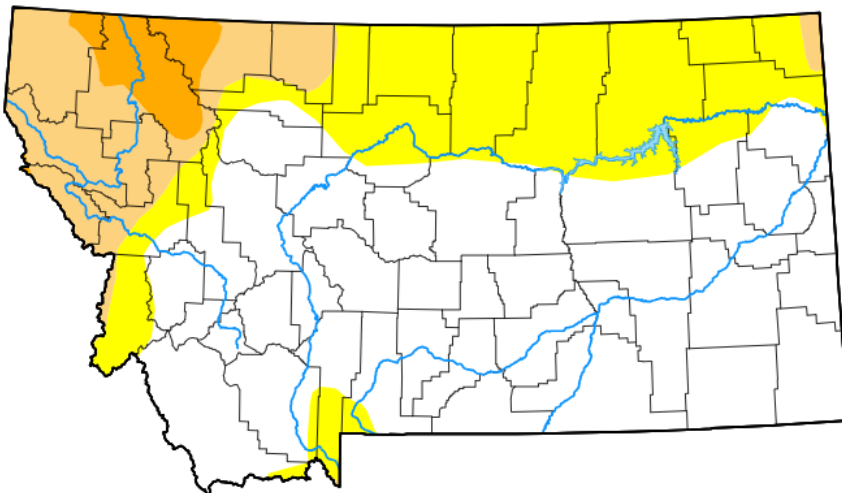
Hor

Map released: Thurs. July 20, 2023

Data valid: July 18, 2023 at 8 a.m. EDT

### Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data



### Authors

United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):  
[Richard Tinker](#), NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC

Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):  
[Brad Rippey](#), U.S. Department of Agriculture



## REPORT TO WESTERN CONSERVATION DISTRICTS JULY 2023

### FUNDING FORUMS

If you have not attended a CD Funding Forum yet, please join us to learn about funding program updates and for your opportunity to help shape programs into the future.

- August 7<sup>th</sup>: Kalispell, Bias Brewing, 5-7 PM
- August 17<sup>th</sup>: Missoula, Great Burn Brewing, 5-7 PM

### CDB GRANT PROGRAM UPDATES & OFFICE HOURS

We're updating the grant guidelines and making some exciting changes to our grant programs! Leading up to the **September 1 call for applications**, we will be doing a summer series for grants during our CDB Office Hours. Stay tuned for topics covering contracting, grant guideline updates, tips for applications, Submittable, and more. The CDB office hours in August will be at **2 PM on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and August 17<sup>th</sup>**.

### CDA & 310 GRANT UPDATES

All CDA and 310 reimbursements were sent through DocuSign on July 20. Payments will be processed when each agreement is executed (signed by all parties), so do not delay in returning it signed through DocuSign. The agreement may be signed by any elected and/or appointed supervisors only (not associate and/or staff). Also, you don't need to wait for the next board meeting, either. **If operational funds are low, please watch your expenditures into August.**

As you all know, the 2023 Legislature passed HB 321, which establishes a conservation district trust fund within the coal severance tax trust fund. In accordance with legislative intent, any new funding that becomes available through HB 321 will be allocated to stabilize CD operations. Based on initial projections, funding through the CD Account will be available to increase the CD operations base budget to \$60,000 for FY24. A call to receive your additional CDA funding for FY24 will be announced this fall.

-Hailey Graf



**Hailey Graf**  
Conservation District Specialist,  
Stream Permitting Coordinator

Conservation Districts Bureau

Phone : (406) 437-4435

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## FLATHEAD COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

**1. FZC-23-04** A zone change request from WGM Group, on behalf of Longbow Land Partners, LLC, for properties within the Bigfork Zoning District. The proposal would change the zoning on parcels accessed from Bigfork Stage and Highway 35 via Peaceful Drive near Bigfork, Montana, from *RC-1 (Residential Cluster)* and *R-1 (Suburban Residential)* to *R-2 (One-Family Limited Residential)*. The total acreage involved in the request is approximately 105.03 acres.

Nick Kaufman and Mike Brodie

Agenda items 1,2 and 3 are a package deal. The first item is a zone change:

- Highway 35 and Bigfork Stage
- Number of lots possible – Several different answers but with density bonuses it could be up to 320 however, the PUD is for 125
- Capacity of Bigfork Sewer and Water System
- Fire Protection – WUI. Setbacks needed for fire protection.
- Impact of schools, environmental impact
- Difficult topography to build on.
- Stressed the impact of services, postal, senior, medical/mental health, impact on roads.
- Schools Transportation – Buses and traffic
- Future Development – possible of more lots
- Mayre Flowers – Citizens for a Better Flathead submitted a packet of comments the board needed time to address.
- Impacts of Bigfork i.e., parking, infrastructure cannot support more people.
- Character of Bigfork
- Lots on condition of Bigfork Stage

### **Board Discussion and Decision:**

New information submitted needs to be reviewed.

Voted 5-2 to Table

**2. FPPUD-22-02** A request from WGM Group, on behalf of Longbow Land Partners, LLC for Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD) approval for properties accessed from Bigfork Stage and Highway 35 via Peaceful Drive near Bigfork, Montana, within the Bigfork Zoning District. Containing approximately 105.03 acres, the applicant has also requested a zone change from *RC-1 (Residential Cluster)* and *R-1 (Suburban Residential)* to *R-2 (One-Family Limited Residential)* with a PUD overlay to reduce the minimum lot size from 20,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet, reduce the minimum lot width from 100 feet to 60 feet, and reduce the side setback from 10 feet to 5 feet and the side corner setback from 20 feet to 15 feet.

The PUD would allow for smaller lots but would only allow 320 maximum lots. The request is for 125 lots.

- Please table until fire chief's comments can be clarified.
- Widen Ice Box Canyon
- Bigfork Sewer and Water Letter must be received.
- Additional turn lanes on Peaceful Drive
- Concerns about additional subdividing of area
- A lot of effort for 15 more lots
- Emergency services getting to and from the area.
- Displaced wildlife concerns

### **Board Discussion and Decision:**

New information submitted needs to be reviewed.

Voted 7-0 to Table

**3. FPP-22-29** A request from WGM Group, on behalf of Longbow Land Partners, LLC, for preliminary plat approval of Northshore Woods-Phase 1 Subdivision, a proposal to create 51 residential lots on 105.03 acres. The proposed lots would be served by Bigfork Water & Sewer. The property is accessed from Bigfork Stage and Highway 35 via Peaceful Drive near Bigfork, Montana.

Northshore Woods Subdivision would be for 51 lots full buildout would be 125 lots.



- Concern for public safety, schools, environmental,
- Destroying Bigfork Culture
- Traffic Concerns
- Setbacks between homes and fire safety concerns
- Need Bigfork Sewer and Water to provide a will serve letter.

**Board Discussion and Decision:**

Any further development would have to come back through the Bigfork Land Use Advisory Committee, Planning Board and Commissioners.

The new information submitted needs to be reviewed.

Voted 7-0 to Table

Public Hearings on these 3 items ended at 9:44 pm

- 4. FPP-23-12** A request from Mummy Mountain, LLC, with technical assistance from 406 Engineering, Inc., for preliminary plat approval of Green Valley-Fifth Filing, a proposal to create nine (9) residential lots on 92.19 acres. The proposed lots would be served by individual septic systems and individual wells. The property is located at 279 Green Valley Lane, near Columbia Falls, MT.

No testimony in opposition.

Voted 7-0 to Recommend Approval

- 5. FPP-22-21** A request from Roxy Zomer, with technical assistance from Water & Environmental Technologies, for preliminary plat approval of Glacier Meadow RV Park Expansion, a proposal to add 32 RV sites to an existing RV park. The subdivision would be served by a multi-user well and multi-user septic system. The property is located at 15735 Highway 2 East in Essex, MT, and totals approximately 55 acres.

No testimony in opposition.

Voted 6-0 to Recommend Approval

Breckenridge abstained.

- 6. FPP-23-08** A request from Breckenridge Surveying and Mapping, on behalf of Kindal & Bonni Murry, for preliminary plat approval of Murrymede Subdivision, a proposal to create two (2) residential lots on 15.70 acres. The proposed subdivision would be served by individual septic systems and individual wells. The property is located at 1795 Fairview Cemetery Road, Columbia Falls, MT.

No testimony in opposition.

Voted 6-0 to Recommend Approval

Breckenridge recused himself.

- 7. FPP-23-11** A request from Sands Surveying, Inc., on behalf of Jim Chavez, for preliminary plat approval of Columbia Falls, LLC Subdivision, a proposal to create five (5) industrial lots on 8.825 acres. The proposed subdivision would be served by individual septic systems and individual wells. The property is located at 4965 Highway 2 West, Columbia Falls, MT.

No testimony in opposition.

Voted 7-0 to Recommend Approval

- 8. FZC-22-10** A zone change request from Andy Holoma, on behalf of JBC 12, LLC, for property within the Evergreen Zoning District. The proposal would change the zoning on a parcel located on Ash Road in Kalispell, MT from R-1 (Suburban Residential) to B-2 (General Business). The total acreage involved in the request is approximately 8.145 acres.

This property is planning to develop an RV Park

One person testified in opposition to the zone change his concerns were:

- Stormwater drainage – “it is in a flood zone”
- Groundwater contamination
- Property values, traffic, wildlife impacts

Applicant Rebuttal – these issues will be addressed when the property is developed.

Voted 7-0 to Recommend Approval