

**FREMONT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 6, 2023**

**Present for the meeting was:** Commissioners Scott Kamachi, Blair Dance and Rick Hill

**Also attended by:** Clerk Abbie Mace, Deputy Clerk Kim Fletcher, Civil Attorney Blake Hall, Treasurer J'lene Cherry, Assessor Carol Blanchard, Sheriff Len Humphries, Chief Deputy Sheriff Bart Quayle, and Coroner Brenda Dye

Commissioner Hill led the pledge.  
Commissioner Dance said the prayer.

Commissioner Kamachi called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance.

Treasurer J'lene Cherry reported we have sent out our warning letters for 2019's. There are 50 of them this year, but 4 of those are deceased so their properties may be tax deeded. She doesn't know if we will be able to find family interested in them. CAI will not be supporting property in 5 years, so we will need to start putting money aside for a new property software, but we really only have 1 option with Tyler. The problem is only 8 counties are using CAI for property, so they just want to be done doing the work to maintain it. There are other counties in the process of converting but it is a long process, and it is expensive. Ada and Nez Perce Counties have written their own programs. Our IT Manager Josh Warnke has told her he will start looking into prices for other options.

Assessor Carol Blanchard reported she appreciated the opportunity to be in Boise for the IAC meetings last week. She felt it was very educational and she feels good about some of the decisions and fixes they are trying to make for homeowners this year. We've had our preliminary test from the State, and we are not in compliance with where we are at in our assessment, so assessments unfortunately will go up again for homeowners to include residential. It is important to note it is the state that sets those property values, not the county, but it is our responsibility to process the data and uphold the code.

Sheriff Len Humphries reported he attended one of the Computer Arts sessions and asked what the plans were for the law enforcement package and didn't really get a reassuring answer. He is concerned about what the software looks like that we will have to switch to, or will it even keep us going, and believes new software will be something the whole county needs to look at, but he feels we will be unable to run 2 programs consecutively. The loss of data is a concern. We have 20 in custody and 4 offsite. We have filled all of our dispatch positions and are in the process of filling one more in patrol. He had a meeting last week with the State Sheriff's, everyone is having a hard time with hiring. They haven't been able to do very much work with the jail expansion in the last couple of weeks because of the cold but hopefully with it warming up some this week they will be able to catch up some.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Bart Quayle reported the ISA yearly jail inspection is on March 8<sup>th</sup> and the Commissioners are invited to attend. Since January 3<sup>rd</sup>, we have logged 11,307 activity logs. There were 206 phone calls for 911, served 127 civil papers, 59 school checks, 106 snowmobile registration entries, 336 traffic stops, 325 incident reports, 18 arrests, and 106 citations, and we responded to 18 traffic accidents.

Coroner Brenda Dye reported we did have several suicides last year. She hopes this year the suicide rate will go down. One of her deputy coroners has resigned, so another job will be posted and hopefully filled soon.

Clerk Abbie Mace reported she went to 2 meetings with Computer Arts/Harris at the IAC Conference. They presented 4 proposals on the financial side of things. Only 1 was viable; they are going to rewrite a piece of software they created for Alabama with Idaho's laws put into it. It will be a 3 to 4-year process. And instead of having a huge increase all at once, they propose to have our rates go up 30% next year, 20% the next, 10% the next and 7% the next year. It is cheaper than other options even if it is an increase to us. The Counties that have converted to Tyler haven't been able to stop paying Computer Arts in order to access their information. Bonneville County is still running both for the last 4 years. We can't afford to do that. She feels this rewrite might be a good option for us. Support is also supposed to improve, but we'll see. She and Sheriff Humphries met with the people from Ada county to discuss the logistics of our big trial being held there in April. They are being very hospitable to us and are trying to help absorb some of the costs, but it's still going to be expensive. There are hearings this week, the Judge will need to make some decisions on about some motions that have been presented, so those decisions may impact how things go or don't go in Boise at this point. She cross-deputized 3 of their court clerks to be able to clerk the trial. She had one of the public defenders ask for a county credit card, it was discussed with Treasurer Cherry and Civil Attorney Blake Hall, but it has not been recommended. They are looking for other solutions for this individual. They had a subcommittee that met with the State Tax Commission for Clerks. The L2's and some changes they are proposing to make things more user friendly. They need to update everything this year, and everything is past due so it will be busy for a while. The State Controller's office has been working on Transparency Idaho. They have it up and running now so you can look at the website and see data histories and financial records for each of the Counties. It will break down into City's information and Taxing Districts soon.

Commissioner Dance reported the EMS Sustainability Task Force had a Zoom meeting last month, and they are in a mode of regrouping. The resolution is being presented at the capitol this week and has a lot of support. We are having an in-person EMS meeting in 2 weeks at the capitol so he will be going back to Boise. He appreciated the opportunity to attend the Deputy Assessors' swearing in 2 weeks ago. Public Health and ECIPDA didn't have a meeting last month but will this month. Public Health will be looking at new ways to look at the administration and involving and communicating with Counties involved because the Counties contribute a significant portion of their funding and support. There is a building at the Island Park Landfill transfer station that has collapsed which will be discussed later in today's meeting, along with some items from the Ashton Senior Citizen's Center. We are hoping for some positive results from Computer Arts and have voiced our comments and concerns in their meetings at the conference last week. He feels in a way its good to know where they stand, because it gives us a direction where we need to go next.

Commissioner Hill reported the cold weather had delayed the construction on the jail but the masons have still been working, and they are comfortable with the schedule they are on. The roof is on the annex and construction is done. There is still some water dripping but they have discovered some damaged ceiling joists in Tamra's room that will need to be repaired. The carpet in the big meeting room needs to be replaced. Tom and Darren feel the rest of the carpet in the building can be cleaned but they might as well replace it, too. He went to the Snowmobile Advisory Committee meeting a couple weeks ago, the

tracked vehicles and snow coaches are still a concern, but Bill Davis explained the forest service's stance and how our forest plan is a multi-use while Montana's is only single use, which seems to have resolved some issues. Mr. Davis has restricted some of the use of the snow coach, so it seems to be helping ease some of their concerns.

Commissioner Kamachi reported he and Commissioner Hill went to the Fair Board meeting to see about their finances and they seem to be doing well but may need to tighten up their budget a little bit and try to increase participation. The Eastern Idaho Solid Waste District has set the final plan and the no migration plans with DEQ. They would also like to see the final plans and no migration for the other cells we won't be using right now. They want to see the big picture so we are in the process of getting those put together. He went to the 7<sup>th</sup> District Magistrates Commission Meeting in Arco to select a new Judge. He attended the Boise meetings. The first meeting he attended was with the Capital Crimes Commission, and they talked about how they may need to incorporate 3 more Counties and increase their donations to \$1M. He attended the Public Lands meetings and it seems everything is moving forward. He attended the Transportation Committee and felt it was very informative. He also attended the Ancillary meeting about drugs and how they are being moved into our communities. It is critical we pay attention to warning signs our Sheriff's office has issued and if we see something suspicious, it needs to be reported to law enforcement. Everyone needs to be careful.

#### **ITD RE: AT Grade Closure of St. Anthony South Interchange Update**

ITD discussed they are at the public involvement phase of their project to discuss the southern at-grade crossings to the south of St. Anthony. ITD provided a draft for a public meeting to help get some public input about these intersection closures. The final draft of the invitation will be posted on the ITD website by the end of this week.

Clerk Mace asked about the south interchange.

ITD stated construction should start this year. The final design review is on Valentine's Day, and they are hoping to get it bid and start construction by Fall.

Commissioner Dance asked about the Chester to Ashton project.

ITD is hoping to go to bid in October and start working next year. They are working on another alternate route, and property acquisition of 40 properties this Spring. The residents are starting to complain, and they are trying to address those complaints but a big part of the problem is the environmental assessments that are taking more time than they would like.

ITD has gotten complaints about the bumpy roads on highway 20, and are working on a plan to fix those this year and working on a long-term plan to help prevent them from developing in the future.

#### **Social Services Debbie Biorn RE: Executive Session IC74-206(1)(d) - action item**

Commissioner Kamachi made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to IC 74-206(1)(d) **To consider records that are exempt from disclosure as provided in [chapter 1, title 74](#), Idaho Code;** at 10:16 a.m. Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Commissioner Kamachi voting "Aye" and Commissioner Hill voting "Aye". Commissioner Kamachi declared the meeting open at 10:21 a.m.

**Elections Clerk Bonita Sutton RE: Approval of Polling Locations - action item**

Ms. Sutton presented the polling locations for the March 14, 2023 election for approval.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve the polling locations for the March 14, 2023 election.

Commissioner Kamachi seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

**Planning and Building Administrator Tom Cluff RE: Executive Session IC 74-206(1)(a); Appoint P&Z member s - action item ; Discuss policy for appointing Commission Members - action item; Department Report**

Commissioner Kamachi made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to IC 74-206(1)(a) **To consider hiring a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent**, wherein the respective qualities of individuals are to be evaluated in order to fill a particular vacancy or need. This paragraph does not apply to filling a vacancy in an elective office or deliberations about staffing needs in general; at 10:37 a.m.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Commissioner Kamachi voting "Aye" and Commissioner Dance voting "Aye".

Commissioner Hill voting "Aye" Commissioner Kamachi declared the meeting open at 11:02 a.m.

Mr. Cluff asked if we want to expand the board. We currently have a full board, so we can stay where we are at 7 members, or we can opt to add more members.

Commissioner Kamachi stated he would like to see representation from each part of the county. 9 members would be a manageable number, so we may need to wait until we receive applications from the Salem and the Teton/Newdale areas, but for now it would be good to stay at 7 members in order to prevent stalemates.

Commissioners Dance and Hill agreed. It is important to have every area in the county represented. We do have enough to offer 8 positions now, but we should wait for 1 more application in order to gain the 9<sup>th</sup> position, and we should keep the applications on file to bring the applicants back and offer those positions when they are available again.

Mr. Cluff discussed the policy for appointing members to the P&Z Commission. There have been concerns that the Planning and Zoning Commission isn't transparent enough in how board members are appointed and there may need to be a change in the policy to address the transparency issues.

Commissioner Dance commented there has been an idea offered about allowing the existing P&Z commission to vet the applicants prior to coming to the Commissioners for final approval in relation to transparency.

Mr. Cluff stated his approach has been to come to the County Commissioners first to see if they know anyone who may be a good candidate for the P&Z Commission. He then goes to the P&Z Commission for recommendations. This is followed up by the interview process. There are also unsolicited applications. It could be changed so applications are put on the Planning and Zoning Commission agenda for vetting before they are brought to the County Commissioners for final approval. The other option would be to bring the applications directly to the Commissioners for vetting to help prevent favoritism.

Commissioner Hill stated in Boise he asked other Commissioners similar questions and one of his concerns is if we do this with P&Z, it may need to be done with other committees as well for consistency.

Civil Attorney Blake Hall stated in all other counties he has worked with, the County Commissioners have the final say in all appointments because they are the elected officials. The concern they would have is to decide if this works for them and continues to work. He feels they are able to be unbiased where most committees are not. According to statute, the final say belongs to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Kamachi stated he feels part of the problem he sees is a lot of people that apply comment their applications are lost so they don't feel like they've been given a fair opportunity at the job. All of their applications need to be seen.

They discussed where to keep track of applications and how to advertise new positions. Applications for the P&Z committee will now be turned in to the Clerk's office so they can be presented directly to the Commissioners. This will hopefully help prevent applications from going missing.

Mr. Cluff reported December 2021 we had 3 total and 2 residential permits, and in 2022 we had 9 total and 3 residential permits. 2022 ran above the trends but we are starting to run closer to normal. He is frustrated with our rollout of the iWorks software. They seem to be unable to incorporate our fees into their software. He and Ben are going to sit down with them this week to see if they can give them some guidance in how we need to have it set up, but if it isn't going to work, we may need to find something else. There are other counties that started using iWorks that have already moved on to other software. He is going to start asking around to find out what software they have switched to, to get ideas of other options.

**GIS Greg Newkirk RE: Fall River Ranch - 1<sup>st</sup> Amended Plat - action item; North Pinehaven Div. No. 3 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Amended Plat - action item; Zwiefelhofer Farm Div. No. 1 - action item; Meadowlark Div. No. 1 - action item ; Invoice for \$8,80 0 from ESRI For GIS Software Maintenance - action item**

Mr. Newkirk presented application #22-108 for Fall River Ranch - 1<sup>st</sup> Amended Plat along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve application #22-108 from Debbie Tanner to vacate lots 3 and 4 of Fall River Ranch - 1<sup>st</sup> Amended Plat along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Mr. Newkirk presented application #22-058 for North Pinehaven Div. No. 3 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Amended Plat along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve application #22-058 from Kristina Nelson-Barkey to consolidate lots 11 and 12 of block 9 of North Pinehaven Div. No. 3 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Amended Plat along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Mr. Newkirk presented application #22-098 for Zwiefelhofer Farm Div. No. 1 along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve application #22-098 from Kenneth Zwiefelhofer for Zwiefelhofer Farm Div. No. 1 short plat along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Mr. Newkirk presented application #22-115 for Meadowlark Div. No. 1 along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve application #22-115 for Meadowlark Div. No. 1, a 3-lot short plat for Darius Abegglen along with Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Decision.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Mr. Newkirk presented a renewal for the maintenance of our GIS software from ESRI in the amount of \$8,800. He did negotiate this cost down because of some of the software that we aren't using.

Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve invoice #94416482 for the GIS Software Maintenance from ESRI in the amount of \$8,800.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

**Public Works Director Brandon Harris RE: 200N and 400N Bridge Bids - action item; Road and Bridge Equipment Purchasing Plan Approval - action item**

Mr. Harris presented bids for the 200N and 400N Bridges. The 400N bridge has been bid at \$204,787.11 from Oldcastle Infrastructure. The 200N bridge is out in the Salem area, it is narrow and at an angle and really needs to be widened for safety reasons. The cost of the bridge from Oldcastle will be \$227,003.88. The work on these bridges from start to finish can be done within a week.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve the 400N bridge from Oldcastle Infrastructure for \$204,787.11, and the 200N bridge from Oldcastle Infrastructure for \$227,003.88.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Mr. Harris presented a plan for Road and Bridge to be able to purchase needed equipment. We have heard back we can get a John Deere grader in 3 months. We currently have 5 graders, 1 loader, 11 trucks, a dozer, an excavator, a roller, and our chip seal roller that all need to be replaced.

He created a 5-year purchasing plan for equipment for 2023. He discussed equipment we have already purchased and are currently paying on. We would like to get a John Deere and a CAT Grader, a Kenworth Transport, a Kenworth End Dump/Pup, and a Side Dump, for a total of about \$758,866.66. We would need to finance the 2 graders, but we would be able to purchase the trucks. He believes we would be able to get about \$240,000.00 from surplussing the older vehicles.

The most pressing issue is the John Deere grader at a cost of \$460,431.01. It will need to be financed and we will surplus the older one, but they are getting close to the point it will be offered to another buyer.

Clerk Mace discussed concerns with our funding. Because our big court case was moved to Boise this April, we don't know how much of our funds will be dumped into it, and how much we will have left over for anything else. Its hard to gauge anything at this point, even with a plan in front of us.

Commissioner Kamachi voiced concerns because we don't know where our funds will be next year due to our big trial, plus the jail expansion has been taking overages as well, but we also don't want to fall behind on vehicles for our county when they are needed and prices will only continue to go up.

Commissioner Hill stated he understands Commissioner Kamachi's concerns, but we also can't put our county's needs on hold. He feels we should move forward at least on the grader, and then we can take our time to look at the plan for the other vehicles.

Commissioner Hill made a motion to purchase the John Deere Grader 032129-J1C Fremont County in the amount of \$460,431.01, after seeking the best options to be able to finance it.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

**Sheriff Len Humphries RE: Executive Session IC74-206(1)( b) - action item ; Search and Rescue Snowmobile Purchase - action item**

Commissioner Kamachi made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to IC 74-206(1)(b) **To consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or public school student;** at 2:19 p.m. Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Commissioner Kamachi voting "Aye" and Commissioner Dance voting "Aye". Commissioner Hill voting "Aye" Commissioner Kamachi declared the meeting open at 2:31 p.m.

Mr. Humphries stated Search and Rescue have been given an opportunity to purchase another snowmobile from Golden Spike in the amount of \$15,286.00. They do have the funds for this purchase.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve the purchase of another snowmobile for Search and Rescue from Golden Spike in the amount of \$15,286.00.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

**Parks and Rec Director Tamra Cikaitoga RE: New Members, Snowmobile Advisory Committee - action item**

Ms. Cikaitoga discussed Tom Bithell and Steven Emery, who have submitted applications to be on the Snowmobile Advisory Committee. She doesn't know them personally, but the other members of the board have given their recommendations for approval to the committee for 5-year terms, and they have already been attending meetings so they are familiar with the processes and discussions. They are also both avid snowmobilers.

Commissioner Hill commented he remembers them from the last committee meeting. They introduced themselves and expressed their interest in becoming members of the committee.

Commissioner Dance asked if their preference would be more inclined towards snowmobiles or side-by-sides.

Ms. Cikaitoga stated they didn't really indicate, but the whole board seemed to be more understanding about the point of view of the Forest Service after Bill Davis made his presentation. They understand the side-by-sides can't be banned on all trails, but they are grateful the access to the trails is being limited for safety reasons.

Commissioner Hill made a motion to approve Tom Bithell and Steven Emery to the Snowmobile Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

**EMS Bert Mecham RE: Levy - action item; Agency Report**

Mr. Mecham discussed the ambulance district levy. In November's election, the permanent levy didn't pass. He would like to try to go for a temporary levy in an election in May 2023 in the amount of \$400,000.00 to help with staffing and other EMS needs.

Commissioner Dance stated it might be beneficial to wait to find out what the state contributes with their sustainability task force legislation this year.

Mr. Mecham stated he has been in communications with the state already, but even if everything goes well, we wouldn't get any funding for 2 years and our current levy will run out this year.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve the request for a supplemental levy of \$400,000.00 for the May 2023 election.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Mr. Mecham reported budgetarily we are down 45 runs this quarter compared to this time last year. Vacation rentals are down as well so that could be reflecting with these numbers. We could be coming back to normal from Covid years. We had 208 runs for this quarter. Our collections services have gone down and past due has gone up, so he will be looking at new vendors for collections. Our staffing is ok even though we are still looking to fill positions. St. Anthony has 20 on staff, Ashton has 17, Island Park has 18, and we have 12 Medics. Our supply inventory is good right now. We did Trauma Assessment Training in November. We've taught 3 CPR classes with 32 students, and EMT class has finished with 2 hires from that class. We have 2 ambulances coming in April, one chase vehicle is on its way and the truck has come in and will just need to get its equipment and decals set up.

**Prosecuting Attorney Lindsey Blake RE: Conditional Hiring of Contract Attorney - action item**

Ms. Blake cancelled her appointment.

**Miscellaneous**

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve the claims for February 6, 2023 as presented.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Commissioner Dance made a motion to approve the minutes from February 23, 2023 as amended.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Commissioner Kamachi made a motion to approve the Junior College Application for the College of Southern Idaho Spring 2023 academic year for Garrett Hawkes.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Commissioners discussed the building at the Island Park landfill transfer station that collapsed under the snow over the weekend. Public Works Director Brandon Harris stated it was an older building attached to another building, he is surprised it lasted as long as it did, considering it wasn't really built for Island Park. It was a storage building, but he would like to replace it with a shed with a slanted roof for the snow, and 4 bays to be able to park equipment in. The insurance company has valued the building at \$54,000. They have talked about settling with us for the value of the building, so we could use those funds for the rebuild, we have about \$250,000 in the Capital Improvements fund that could be used, along with some reserve funds, and we could cash forward from this year's budget as well if needed. We don't know if the foundation is an actual foundation that can be reused, or if it's just slab, but he feels we really may have to start over from the ground up.

Commissioner Dance discussed some requests submitted by the Ashton Senior Citizen Center Board.

**The first item for discussion:** The husband of one of the cooks has been plowing snow out of the way of the kitchen door so the cooks have access. He has been doing it on a voluntary basis, but the board feels like he should be compensated for his effort.

Clerk Mace asked if the funds would come from their budget or ours because it is a county building, and when it needs to be plowed, it is usually done by the county.

Civil Attorney Blake Hall stated since he isn't an employee, he is doing the work as a volunteer. If he was doing the work on a regular basis, he would need some kind of proof of workers comp and a contract. Any funds would probably come out of their budget.

Commissioner Dance stated this gentleman is doing the work as a volunteer. It is the board that feels he should be paid for his work. He will take his concerns to their board and mention they will need to use their funds if they choose to pay him.

**The second item for discussion:** There is a gentleman at the center that spends a lot of time as a volunteer at the center and has offered to provide services as back-up driver for the Meals on Wheels van when one is needed.

Clerk Mace stated he could apply in the Clerk's office as a relief driver.

**The third item for discussion:** The car port at the center was damaged over the weekend due to ice and snow buildup. Carey Daniels has taken the worst of the weight off of the roof, but it still needs to be shoveled off and there are several repairs to be made. Carson Reed could do the snow removal, but he would need a contract for the work and to prove he has workers comp.

Commissioner Dance made a motion enlist the services of Carson Reed to do the job of removing the snow off of the car port contingent on obtaining a contract and proving workers comp.

Commissioner Hill seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

Commissioner Kamachi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:56 pm.

Commissioner Dance seconded the motion. A full voice vote was heard with all commissioners voting in favor.

There being no further business to come before the board the meeting was adjourned.

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L. Scott Kamachi, Chairman  
Fremont County Commissioner

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Abbie Mace, Clerk