

**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF BLAINE COUNTY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE SEPTEMBER 2016 SESSION**

Fourth Day

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

Pursuant to Statutory Provisions, the Board of Blaine County Commissioners (BCC) met this day at 9:00 a.m. Present were Chairman Jacob Greenberg, Vice-Chair Angenie McCleary, Commissioner Lawrence Schoen; County Administrator Derek Voss; Chief Deputy Assessor Martha Heuston; Recording Secretary Sunny Grant; and *Idaho Mountain Express* reporter Madelyn Beck.

Chairman Greenberg called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Blaine County resident Kiki Tidwell suggested Blaine County reclaim Parcel C of Valley Club West Nine from the Blaine County Housing Authority. It's a substandard-size lot in the neighborhood. She said the Housing Authority's track record on Parcel B had caused many people surrounding the house to hate affordable housing in Blaine County. Tidwell asked the BCC to consider "folding in" the BCHA, since it currently answers to no one, doesn't meet with the public and hasn't responded to her multiple emails.
- Tidwell listed numerous complaints about the BCHA director.

COUNTY DEPARTMENT REPORTS, Discussion and Consideration

Treasurer's Report - John David Davidson

- The Treasurer is getting a quote to include a brightly-colored insert in property tax bills that gives the property tax due date. The tax bills include the due date, but it's small, and a couple hundred people call the Treasurer every year to say they didn't see the due date.
- There is one public administrator case, and another potential case.

County Administrator - Derek Voss

- County Administrator Voss suggested the BCC review County projects quarterly instead of monthly, starting November 1.
- Department heads are currently reviewing employee evaluation forms.
- The Administrator is reviewing applications for Administrative Services Manager.
- County Land Use Administrator Tom Bergin, Commissioner Schoen and Voss met with Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) and US Department of Agriculture Rural Development representatives, and the owner of Mid Valley Water and Sewer, to discuss limitations and challenges of forming a water/wastewater facility in the Gateway community. It would cost \$25,000 to \$60,000 to do an initial engineering and cost assessment. The RCAC can provide technical support and facilitate some financial support through a guaranteed loan with some limitations. The County would have to invest on the front end and eventually go to bond. Rural Development doesn't think the South Gateway area is sufficient to sustain itself. The septic systems in the area and the sewage treatment plant are aging and will need upgrade and expansion at some point, even without additional housing. The County will work with South Central Public Health District to see what is sustainable.

Facilities Manager - Patrick Boyle

- County Auction
Eleven vehicles and other sundry items were auctioned off for a total of almost \$22,000.
- Fleet Vehicles
Blaine County needs three vehicles for County use, and currently has one vehicle. County Administrator Voss and Facilities Manager Patrick Boyle suggest the County purchase two Subaru Outback vehicles with safety packages. Boyle obtained bids from Idaho dealers who are familiar with the state bidding process. Initial warranty maintenance will be done in Twin Falls; other maintenance can be done by local mechanics. Boyle will be sure the vehicles are available in a lighter color. Commissioners discussed the usefulness of the safety feature package. Staff will provide training in the use of safety features if advisable. Staff decided it would be more economical to rent a van when a larger vehicle is needed.

CONTRACTS, GRANTS and AGREEMENTS, Discussion and Consideration

- **Recycle Systems Planned Maintenance Agreement** Record #

Also present: Blaine County Facilities Manager Patrick Boyle.

This is a new contract for bi-annual maintenance on the Recycle Center bailer. The equipment is valuable, and regular maintenance is necessary for safety and to extend its life.

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve contract between Blaine County and Recycle Systems, LLC, for Recycle Center bailer maintenance program. The value of the contract is \$2,520/year. Motion carried unanimously.

- **HVAC Controls & Specialties Service Agreement** Record #638830

Also present: Blaine County Facilities Manager Patrick Boyle.

This is quarterly maintenance and back-up for the automated system for the Annex. This contract reflects a 3% increase.

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve contract between Blaine County and HVAC Controls and Specialties for heating, ventilation and air conditioning system maintenance at the Blaine County Annex building. The contract value is \$5,224 for the year. Motion carried unanimously.

- **CH₂O System Survey** Record #638430

Also present: Blaine County Facilities Manager Patrick Boyle.

This is a monthly contract for the all-water system at the Public Safety Facility, and glycol systems at the Old Courthouse and County Annex. Systems are checked to be sure pH is safe for pipes and equipment, and that water is pathogen-free.

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve contract between Blaine County and CH₂O for water quality treatment and system maintenance related to hydronic systems at the Public Safety Facility, the Old County Courthouse and the County Annex, for an amount not to exceed \$2,130.72. Motion carried unanimously.

- **EC Power Systems Service Agreement** Record #

Also present: Blaine County Facilities Manager Patrick Boyle.

This is annual preventative maintenance of the Public Safety Facility generator.

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve contract between Blaine County and EC Power Systems for generator service and maintenance at the Public Safety Facility. The value of this contract is \$450 annually, plus additional expenses for parts and materials. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Clearwater Landscaping 2016-2017 Snow Removal Agreement**

- Blaine Manor Record #638228
- Judicial Building Record #638229
- McBride Building Record #638230
- Hope Garden Parking Spaces Record #638231
- Old Courthouse Record #638232

Also present: Blaine County Facilities Manager Patrick Boyle.

McCleary moved, seconded by Schoen, to approve FY 2016-17 Snow Removal Agreement between Blaine County and Clearwater Landscaping, for \$75/hour, as needed; or \$85/hour when snow accumulation requires loader. Contract covers snow removal at the Old County Courthouse, Hope Garden parking spaces, the McBride Building, Judicial Building, and Blaine Manor property if needed. Motion carried unanimously.

County Administrator Voss explained that the following Waterways contracts have been in place for many years, and have no material changes.

Also present: Blaine County Waterways Coordinator Lamar Waters.

- **Cooperative Agreement between the Blaine County Waterways Program and West Magic Recreation Club** Record #638827

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve cooperative agreement between Blaine County and West Magic Recreation Club for restroom maintenance. The value of labor is \$990 for FY2017. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Contract for Services Agreement with Cloyce Edwards** Record #

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve contract between Blaine County and Cloyce Edwards, for maintenance of public access sites in the Blaine County Waterways Program. The value is \$500 for 10 months, not to exceed \$5,000; plus \$165/month for six months, not to exceed \$990 annual for restroom maintenance as a subset of that maintenance; and mileage and vehicle reimbursement. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Contract for Services Agreement with Nate Norris for Dock and Restroom Maintenance at East Magic Reservoir** Record #

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve Contract for Services Agreement between Blaine County and Nate Norris for dock and restroom maintenance at East Magic Reservoir. The value of it is \$30.00/hour, not to exceed \$1,500 annually; \$150/month, not to exceed \$1,750 annually for FY2017 for the restroom portion at East Magic. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Contract for Services Agreement with Lamar Waters for Waterways Dock System Maintenance** Record #638392

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve Contract for Services Agreement between Blaine County and Lamar Waters for waterways dock system maintenance for FY2017. The value is \$30.00 hour, not to exceed \$1,500 annually; and a vehicle mileage reimbursement not to exceed \$450 annually. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Contract for Services Agreement with Lamar Waters for Waterways Program Coordinator** Record #638391
Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve Contract for Services between Blaine County and Lamar Waters for his role as Waterways Program Coordinator. His compensation is an hourly rate of \$30/hour, not to exceed \$3,600; and vehicle mileage reimbursement not to exceed \$460 annually for FY2017. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Independent Contractor Agreement with Terry O'Connor, Blaine County Ambulance District EMS Medical Director** Record #
Commissioner Schoen suggested the BCC request periodic reports from Blaine County Emergency Medical Director Terry O'Connor. County Administrator Voss said all ambulance providers and EMTs work under the license and authority of the medical director, and asked the BCC to approve the Independent Contractor Agreement with O'Connor at this time. Chairman Greenberg will ask Dr. O'Connor to report to the BCC in the near future. **McCleary moved, seconded by Schoen, to approve Independent Contractor Agreement between Blaine County and Dr. Terry O'Connor, the Blaine County Ambulance District EMS Medical Services as the director in the amount of \$60,904.** In discussion, Commissioner Schoen asked that the BCC hear from the County's medical director on a more regular basis, and certainly before renewing his or her contract. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- **Lease Agreement between Blaine County and Webb Landscape** Record #638478
This is for land adjacent to the County's Road and Bridge facility that has been used for parking for a number of years.
McCleary moved, seconded by Schoen, to approve the Lease Agreement between Blaine County and Webb Landscaping for lease of property adjacent to Blaine County Road and Bridge, in the amount of \$1,800. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Lease Agreement with Wood River Gun Club** Record #
The Gun Club has been good stewards of the premises. The Agreement requires them to clean up lead every five years, which they plan to do next year. County Administrator Voss said there is no reason why the County wouldn't want to sell the property. The lease can be terminated, at BCC discretion, with 30 days' notice at any time during the term of this lease.
Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve the Lease Agreement between Blaine County and Wood River Gun Club, for property described in the lease. The value of the lease is \$1 year. Motion carried unanimously.

The property is an old gravel pit that is no longer of any use to the County. Staff is unaware of any value to Blaine County; and access to the property is a challenge.

- **Blaine County Security Agreement with Alexis duPont** Record #638240
Also present: Blaine County Deputy Land Use Administrator Kathy Grotto.
The agreement and \$1,500 deposit provides security that reclamation areas on this recent plat amendment will be planted with riparian plants. Staff has a planting plan and estimated cost of plantings.
Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to approve the Security Agreement between Blaine County and Alexis duPont for security for revegetation of disturbed areas along Warm Springs Creek. The Security Agreement is for \$1,500 and will be returned as stipulated in the Agreement. Motion carried unanimously.

APPOINTMENT for BOARD OF HEALTH for SOUTH CENTRAL PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

Appointment is for the Minidoka representative on the South Central Public Health District. Commissioners individually vote for the candidates. Commissioner McCleary feels counties are best represented by current or past county commissioners. She will not vote for the candidate, who is not a county commissioners, without researching the candidate.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- **Junior College Residency forms**
College of Western Idaho, Dual Credit - Fall 2016 term: Grace Allen, Benjamin Anderson, Nick Domke, Preston Edgerton, Mackenzie Ellison, Gavin B. Hunter, Zac McStay, Dylah Porth, and Maria Romero.
College of Southern Idaho, Dual Credit - Fall 2016 – Spring 2017 term: Kali Castle, Shantell Chavez, Cooper Dean, Maxwell Dilworth, Morgan Drechsel, Samantha Escobar, Natalie Garcia, Rita Garcia, Kodi Green, Samuel Johnson, Tyler Johnson, Giovanna Leslie, Porter Mecham, Omar Morales, Lindsey Morey, Roy Peck, Tanner Reay, Jaqueline Rojas, Andrea Ruiz-Loera, Kolbie Sanderson, Olyvia Sparrow, Chantele Styhl, Bryan Vargas, Breeze Verhees, Athanasia Versis, and Lily Ward.
College of Southern Idaho, Fall 2016 – Spring 2017 term: Tori Alvarez, Bearriz Barriga, Karen Castillon, Sterling Davis, Ryan DeMoe, Paola Diaz, Kimberly Herrera, Janice Moulton, and Margaret Ruch.

- College of Western Idaho, Fall 2016 – Spring 2017 term: Andrea Morales-Lopez.
- New beverage license for Susannah Cruz dba Huitzo's Sabor Autentico Mexicano.

McCleary moved, seconded by Schoen, to approve the Consent Calendar for September 20, 2016. Motion carried unanimously.

JOINT PETITION for IRRIGATION DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION, Discussion and Consideration

Also present: County Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Tim Graves; and Pepin Corso Harris

County Attorney Tim Graves said no notice was required except Agenda notice. The petition to consolidate the Triangle and Cove irrigation districts, both of which were created through the partition process, was submitted by members of the irrigation districts on July 27, 2016. The petition was forwarded to the Idaho Department of Water Resources, which investigated the circumstances of the petition and provided the BCC with a report on September 12, 2016, that stated consolidation was reasonable to consider and suggested the BCC could proceed to an election.

State Statute requires two irrigation districts proposed for consolidation be contiguous, but doesn't say they must be completely contiguous. The parcels in these two irrigation districts were once one irrigation district; they are a bit patchwork and not entirely "contiguous".

The irrigation district will notice and hold the election according to State Statute. The County will receive the results of the election from the district and canvass the election results.

This meeting is to receive public comment on the proposed consolidation and for the BCC to consider if it is advisable to order an election.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Pepin Corso-Harris was present, and had no comment.

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to order an election for consolidation of the Triangle and Cove irrigation districts to be conducted by the irrigation districts, based on the BCC's finding that the BCC deems it advisable and that all statutory requirements have been met; the BCC has received a report from the Department of Water Resources; and that the election be held at the next General Election which is November 8, 2016; and, finally, that we direct our attorney to draft and submit a set of Findings and said Order. Motion carried unanimously.

..... Record #638233

BOARD of COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REPORTS, Discussion and Consideration

Indigent Defense Grant – Greenberg

The County applied for an Indigent Defense Grant, and received \$51,555.57 in grant funding. The grant application form indicated the money was to be used for an immigration lawyer, data tracking software, and fees for interpreters, as suggested by Blaine County's public defenders. The BCC and staff haven't yet discussed how the funds should be used for these purposes.

County Road and Bridge Tour – McCleary and Greenberg

The Road and Bridge field tour of roads and projects was extremely valuable. Commissioner McCleary suggested the public be encouraged to participate in future tours. Chairman Greenberg said innovative methods used in Hulen Meadows should be considered for other applications. McCleary and Greenberg had lunch with road crews currently working on Trail Creek summit, and realized how technical and dangerous that project is.

Cell Phone Ordinance Meeting – Greenberg

After several open meetings and a special evening meeting, the BCC passed the current form of the ordinance. The county's ordinance is consistent with ordinances passed by the cities of Hailey and Ketchum.

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO EXTENSION OFFICE QUARTERLY REPORT

Also present: University of Idaho Extension Educator Lauren Golden; 4-H Coordinator Kathi Kimball; and County Extension Administrative Assistant Sarah Busdon.

4-H Coordinator Kathi Kimball said funds from the Cimino Foundation and the University of Idaho enabled the Blaine County 4-H program to employ two interns to work with 4-H participants in:

- Science Technology Engineering & Math (STEM) Robotics program and three camps.
- Zero Robotics program students partnered with NASA and the International Space Station and had lunch with an astronaut. Students got to see a videolink of their program loaded on the robot in the international space station.
- The I Have A Dream Foundation supported a number of under-resourced students' participation in archery, horse and leadership camps.
- Students worked with The Hunger Coalition to provide small science activities to kids at Balmoral Park.
- Junior Master Gardening program participants worked in the Hope Garden and in the YMCA greenhouse.

- The Blaine County Fair was positive and successful in all aspects.
- The County Fair's Market Animal Project had a good turn-out, but a smaller sale than usual since some animals didn't make minimum weight. Gross auction proceeds were higher than before, thanks to generous community participation and an Argyros Family donation divided among all the students.

University of Idaho Extension Educator Lauren Golden reported on her endeavors:

- She helped convene a local community group in response to the Community Food Assessment completed last year.
- Prepared an impact statement on a large scale cover crop project in partnership with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and county soil conservation districts. Many producers are sold on cover crops, and continue to seek best practices and what crops work best.
- Golden is State Coordinator of US Department of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), which takes time but provides some funding for state and local projects.
- Local Master Gardener class led by two graduates was full.
- American Pasture Poultry Producers Association (APPPA) presented a Pasture Poultry workshop originating in Blaine County and live broadcast to five other sites in Idaho. Pasture poultry production is a niche market with producers spread out all over Idaho. There are efforts to create a processing facility in Idaho.

Andrus Center for Public Policy Women and Leadership 2016 Conference – McCleary

Conference was well attended by people from different backgrounds in the public and private sector.

South Central Behavioral Health Board Meeting – McCleary

Main work right now is getting contract in place for the crisis center in Twin Falls that will open soon.

DARK SKY RESERVE PRESENTATION

Also present: Idaho Conservation League Central Idaho Community Engagement Associate Betsy Mizell; University of Colorado Fiske Planetarium Education Manager/Astronomer Matt Benjamin; Idaho Conservation League Central Idaho Associate Dani Mazzotta; Stanley City Council President Steve Botti; Sun Valley resident amateur astronomer Steve Pauley; and Stanley residents Paul and Ann Hill.

ICL is working with Blaine and Custer counties to promote formation of a Dark Sky Reserve in central Idaho, under the auspices of The International Dark Sky Association. A "dark sky reserve" is an area of public and/or private land that is recognized for its commitment to protect the dark sky resource and meet standards for shielding and/or reducing outside light. The core of the reserve is usually public land, surrounded by a buffer area that is expected to take action to reduce any sources of light pollution that impact the core. The cities of Ketchum and Sun Valley, Blaine and Custer counties create light but have dark sky ordinances in place.

Astronomer Matt Benjamin said population growth is obliterating dark sky around the world. One third of humanity and 80% of Americans cannot see the Milky Way. In the lower 48 states, only a small band of dark sky remains from Montana to New Mexico. The band encompasses the Sun Valley area, which has always been a pristine place to view the night sky.

A dark sky reserve in central Idaho would be the first dark sky reserve in the United States. It would preserve the night sky environment, and provide opportunities for ecotourism and education, which would benefit the local economy.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Stanley resident Paul Hill said Custer County is home of the Challis Observatory, which is underutilized and supportive of a dark sky reserve. Custer County has a dark sky ordinance, and is interested in extending the buffer zone up toward Challis, if possible. The city of Stanley also has a dark sky ordinance.

Bellevue is interested in participating; but the City of Hailey is not interested.

Commissioner Schoen asked if the reserve area, including buffer, could be expanded to include southern Blaine County, Craters of the Moon and Butte County. Botti said expanding the boundaries could be considered, but it was important to keep the reserve a manageable size to reduce complexity and the number of entities involved. Other areas can certainly be added later.

BREAK

EXECUTIVE SESSION – §74-206 1(d) INDIGENT - Consideration of records that are exempt from disclosure as provided in Chapter 3, Title 9, Idaho Code.

Present were: Blaine County Indigent Services Director Brooke Baird.

McCleary moved, seconded by Greenberg, to convene in Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206 1(d) to consider indigent medical applications. Schoen (aye), McCleary (aye), and Greenberg (aye). Motion carried unanimously.

OPEN SESSION RESUMED

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to deny Cases #2016-50, 2016-51, 2016-52, 2016-56, 2016-59, and 2016-53 Medical Indigent Applications for Assistance, based on staff recommendation. Motion carried unanimously.

McCleary moved, seconded by Schoen, to approve Cases #2016-27, 2016-38, 2016-41, 2015-77, and 2015-24, based on staff recommendations, with a \$25/month reimbursement for each case. Motion carried unanimously.

McCleary moved, seconded by Schoen, to accept Notice of Cancellation of Hearing and Final Determination of Denial on Medical Indigent Application Case #2016-21. Motion carried unanimously.

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to accept Notice of Cancellation of Hearing and Final Determination of Approval on Medical Indigent Application Cases #2016-41, 2016-38, 2016-15, 2016-24, 2015-77, and 2016-27. Motion carried unanimously.

LAND, WATER AND WILDLIFE LEVY PROJECT

- **Rock Creek Ranch Restoration Project - Wood River Land Trust (WRLT), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Trout Unlimited (TU):** A public hearing on and consideration of the Full Application for conceptual approval for funding for the project from the Land, Water & Wildlife Levy for \$305,265 (40.7%) of the \$749,207 total cost for multiple components of a restoration project in two phases on lands owned by WRLT, TNC and the Bureau of Land Management southwest of Hailey in the Rock Creek drainage. The Board-appointed Levy Advisory Board completed its positive recommendation on August 31, 2016 to fund \$23,160 at this time and to further consider all other parts of the funding request in the future.

Also present: Blaine County Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Tim Graves; County Land Use Administrator Tom Bergin; Blaine County Land, Water and Wildlife Program Coordinator Clare Swanger; Land, Water and Wildlife (LWW) Program Levy Advisory Board (LAB) members Jim Phillips, Alan Reynolds, and Lili Simpson; The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Senior Conservation Manager Dayna Gross; Trout Unlimited (TU) Big Wood River Project Director Chad Chorney; Wood River Land Trust (WRLT) Board members Richard Carr, Sarah Michael and Kathie Levison; WRLT Director of Conservation Keri York; WRLT Community Engagement Coordinator Mike McKenna; WRLT / TNC Stewardship Technician Cameron Packer; Dan Smith; and Janet Carter.

LWW Program Coordinator Clare Swanger said notice was not necessary, but today's hearing was on the Blaine County website and on today's posted agenda.

Disclosures:

- Commissioner McCleary visited Rock Creek Ranch on September 19 with Keri York and Clare Swanger. They looked at various aspects of already-funded restoration areas, as well as proposed programs as described in materials of today's meeting.
- Commissioner Schoen did not visit the ranch in connection with this application, but has been on the ranch numerous times.
- Chairman Greenberg visited the site a couple months ago with Chad Chorney, Keri York, Clare Swanger and Tom Bergin.

The Wood River Land Trust (WRLT), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Trout Unlimited (TU) request \$305,265 (40.7% of the total estimated cost of \$749,207) for restoration and related work on Rock Creek and the 10,400-acre ranch located southwest of Hailey. This is reduced from an initial request of \$580,368 of an estimated total cost of \$1.2 million at that time. This collaborative project includes a number of partners and funders, and has numerous components and required permits over two phases. The bulk of the work associated with the Land, Water and Wildlife program request begins in July, 2017.

At this stage of the LWW levy process, the LAB is asking the BCC for approval in concept.

Seven of nine LWW LAB members participated in site visits before their consideration of the full application on August 10 and August 31, 2016. On August 31, six members recommended the BCC conceptually approve the part of the application calling for design only of Rock Creek tributary restoration, budgeted at \$23,160 of LWW funds; with the remaining issues of the application to remain pending for additional future consideration by the LAB. Two members opposed the recommendation. The LAB also passed a motion asking the BCC to advise the LAB how it wants the LAB to measure and assure lasting conservation outcomes in non-acquisition applications.

- Four areas and the lower reconnection are currently under construction and there is no request from the LWW program for those;
- Two of the components are on Bureau of Land Management land;
- The lower diversion is on BLM land and is part of the LWW program request;
- The middle and lower diversion, the upper reconnection, and the "BLM culvert" were presented to the LAB as one unit. They received Blaine County Stream Alteration Permits (SAPs) in August, 2016. The SAPs did not include the two lower diversion components on BLM land, or a portion of tributary restoration;

- The components on BLM land are subject to the BLM National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) permitting process. TNC and WRLT are waiting for NEPA clarification, which may require design and cost changes. Rock Creek Ranch applicants would prefer to apply for a Categorical Exclusion, which would be simpler and less expensive than a NEPA permit, and require a lesser funding request from the LAB.

Phase II components have not been planned, designed or costed out because the assessment on the tributaries has not been done. The LAB didn't make any recommendation on any part of this part of the project.

Since the LAB meeting, other useful information has been received that the LAB didn't have:

- Line item budget on the \$54,000 mobilization and general items;
- Initial thoughts on monitoring and reporting;
- A weed management plan, which was part of the Stream Alteration Permit;
- A list of reporting requirements to other funders and government agencies;
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) approval letter for the project. The NRCS holds two Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) conservation easements on the two separate parcels. Most of the property is covered in these easements, with the exception of a couple small development areas along the road that are kept available for university or Land Trust facilities.

Rock Creek Ranch is a working ranch, and one of the largest undeveloped ranches in the area. Its north-south valleys are some of the few remaining intact wildlife migration corridors; and there are many active sage-grouse leks on the property. The streams run year round in the high desert, and the ranch is a Rock Creek watershed. Protecting this kind of big open space and watershed is important to complimentary co-existence between open lands and farmers / ranchers, along with research on riparian and stream habitat, water and agricultural resources, and recreation.

The Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Idaho stipulates that the University will operate the ranch as an outdoor research facility for grazing, restoration, natural resources, communications, etc.

An advisory committee has been formed, with representatives from NRCS, Fish and Game, Fish and Wildlife Service, etc., that is developing a master management plan that will stay with the property. A "stakeholder group" will be formed that will include snowmobilers, hunters, mountain bikers, etc.

The property has been used for livestock for over 100 years, and shows some erosion; but Rock Creek water has been well spread across the property for irrigation. Beaver activity has been maintained over the years and is coming back. Stream restoration is focused on fixing the sediment, nutrients, and fish passage, primarily by developing off-stream watering areas to get the cattle away from the creek.

Wood River Land Trust Director of Conservation Keri York described project components and the budget.

One of Trout Unlimited's four tenets is to protect, reconnect, restore and sustain. Trout Unlimited and the Wood River Land Trust launched the Big Wood River Home Rivers Initiative (HRI) in 2014, and consider this Rock Creek Ranch restoration a perfect way to assess and enhance the Big Wood River watershed and ecosystem.

LEVY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

- Alan Reynolds said Rock Creek was once considered as a site for a future new town, so this proposal precludes that kind of land use approach. Rock Creek Ranch has come before the LAB three times, and each time, the value of the property has substantially increased and the price has decreased.
- The future of Blaine County depends on protecting its water resource.
- LAB Chairman Jim Phillips said the LAB's charge is to make recommendations for the highest and best use of taxpayer money for optimal conservation value. One of the LAB's six basic criteria for funding a full application like this is "lasting conservation outcome." The LAB reviewed and recommends work on the main channel project part of the application; and recommended the assessment funding, with intent to review design and plans after the assessment. Phillips said the LAB hesitated to recommend funding for the tributaries part of the application, because that would commit additional money and work without design or plans. The LAB requested guidance from the BCC on this part of the application.
- Lili Simpson concurred, saying the LAB wanted to get started on part of the project in the fall of 2016, but didn't think they had enough information for the tributaries to recommend approval at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Sarah Michael, WRLT Board Member, but speaking as a former Blaine County Commissioner instrumental in getting the LWW levy on the ballot, supports the big picture approach and asked the BCC to consider the full funding request of \$305,265. Michael said this is a major project for Blaine County and the State of Idaho; and NGO agencies have the ability to match funds to provide the full amount of restoration as it progresses.

The BCC was excited about the project, and all were willing to fund the assessment, the upper and middle diversion, the upper reconnection, and weed control.

McCleary moved, seconded by Schoen, to conceptually approve funding for the Rock Creek Ranch restoration project, specifically the Rock Creek tributary restoration assessment, not to exceed \$23,160; the mobilization general items, not to exceed \$54,673; the middle diversion project in Phase I, not to exceed \$17,539; the upper diversion and upper reconnection project, not to exceed \$36,781; and weed control, not to exceed \$4,800; for a total of \$136,953, total to be verified. In discussion, the BCC noted that this portion of the project now goes before the LAB for due diligence. **Motion carried unanimously.**

The BCC asked that the grant agreement stipulate that restoration efforts be perpetuated by the University of Idaho, should the University purchase the land.

- **Comprehensive Plan - Chapter 5, Natural Environment: Resources, Hazard Areas, and Conservation.** Continuation of public hearing and consideration of proposed amendments to Title 8, Ch. 1, Comprehensive Plan. The proposed Natural Environment chapter would replace Section 5, Hazardous Areas, and Section 10, Natural Resources, of the current Plan. Hazardous Areas and Natural Resources are required elements of a comprehensive plan per Idaho Code Section 67-6508. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of the chapter on March 31, 2016.

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to continue discussion of the Blaine County Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 5 Natural Environment to Tuesday, October 4, 2016, at 1:30 pm. **Motion carried unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION – §74-206 1(b) Personnel

Schoen moved, seconded by McCleary, to enter Executive Session, pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206 1(b), evaluation of a public employee, in this case, the County Administrator. Schoen (aye), McCleary (aye), and Greenberg (aye). **Motion carried unanimously.**

ADJOURN

At the hour of 5:00 p.m., with no more business before them, the County Commissioners adjourned.

Attest: _____ Approved _____
JoLynn Drage County Clerk Jacob Greenberg Chairman