## REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA Held in August 2025

The Board of Pondera County Commissioners met daily in informal session and in scheduled meetings on August 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2025.

### AUGUST 6, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Dalayne VanDyke, Public- Paul Anderberg

### MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING

The Commissioners discussed a Conrad property purchased at delinquent tax auction and request the funds paid to City of Conrad be reallocated for the delinquent water and sewer charges.

#### LEAVITT INSURANCE FOR AGENT COMMISSIONS

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded the approval of making Shannon Naylor with Leavitt Insurance to be the commissioned agent. The commission rate is 10% of Pondera County's premium. Motion carried.

### AUGUST 13, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Dalayne VanDyke

### MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Drishinski informed of the hiring of a new supervisor at the Northern Montana Joint Refuse Disposal District.

### EASEMENT WITH BOKMA FARMS INC.

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded to approve an easement to Bokma Farms Inc. for right-of-way access for agricultural purposes on a 90 foot of road commonly known as Airport Loop Road. Motion carried.

### JULY COMMISSION MINUTES APPROVED

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded to approve the July 2025 Minutes of the Commission. Motion carried.

#### REVISED JOB DESCRIPTION APPROVED

Commissioner Drishinski moved to approve the revised job description for Deputy Clerk and Recorder. Commissioner Kuka seconded. Motion carried.

#### EXPENDITURES IN EXCESS OF \$1,500-APPROVED

Commissioner Kuka moved to approve the purchase of a 2015 Chevy Surburban for Pondera County Sheriff Department in the amount of \$20,000.00. The funds for this purchase will come out of the Public Safety Capital Improvement. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

#### AUGUST 20, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Dalayne VanDyke, Public- Paul Anderberg

### MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Morren attended a meeting with MACO (Montana Association of Counties) on information about the new property tax laws.

### STANDARD AUDIT CONTRACT AMENDMENT

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded an amendment for a standard audit contract with Nexus CPA Group. The contract covers the audit period July 1, 2024 to June 30,2025. The audit amount will be \$41,190.00 coming from the General Fund. Motion carried.

# RESOLUTION ON DECLARING PROPERTY SURPLUS AND SETTING SALE PONDERA COUNTY RESOLUTION #2 – 2025/26 DECLARING PROPERTY SURPLUS AND SETTING SALE

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 7-8-2211, MCA, <u>Authorization to sell and exchange county property</u>, the Board of Pondera County Commissioners declares the following personal property belonging to the County as surplus property which is not necessary to the conduct of county business or the preservation of its property:

1998 Chevy Van

Value: \$3,000

WHEREAS, the Commissioners have determined it is in the best interests of the County to sell the items through Public Surplus Auction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners:

- 1) hereby declares the property listed above as surplus property which is not necessary to the conduct of county business or the preservation of its property,
- 2) agrees to sell the listed items through Public Surplus Auction

ADOPTED this 20<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2025 as moved by Commissioner Kuka, seconded by Commissioner Drishinski, and passed on a 3-0 vote of the board. Effective on passage and approval

### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren	/s/ Thomas A Kuka	
Jim Morren, Chairman	Thomas A Kuka, Member	
Attest: /s/ Kody L Farkell	/s/ Zane Drishinski	
Kody L. Farkell, Clerk & Recorder	Zane Drishinski, Member	

### AUGUST 27, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSION:

PRESENT: Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Dalayne VanDyke, Public- Paul Anderberg

HEARING CONDUCTED ON HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM GAP
PERMISSIVE LEVY & SHERIFF RETIREMENT SERVICE PERMISSIVE LEVY
Attending: Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner
Zane Drishinski, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy
Bartsch, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Dalayne VanDyke, Paul Anderberg

The notice of the hearing was published in The Independent-Observer and the Ponderosa Publications August 13 and 20, 2025 issues.

Commissioner Morren called the hearing to review the proposed Health Insurance Premium Gap Permissive Levy & the proposed Sheriff Retirement Service Permissive Levy to order at 10:00 am at the Pondera County Commissioners office, 20 4<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Conrad. There was no comment from the public and no written comment was received.

HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM GAP PERMISSIVE LEVY: The County is authorized to levy up to 24.74 mills for the levy. The levying amount equals

\$507,750.00. Clerk & Recorder Farkell explained that the County will most likely not levying for that amount for the upcoming fiscal year.

SHERIFF RETIREMENT SERVICE PERMISSIVE LEVY: The County is authorized to levy 0.751 mills for the levy. The levying amount equals \$15,274.00. Clerk & Recorder Farkell stated that the County will most likely levy the full amount for the upcoming fiscal year.

Hearing closed at 10:06 am.

#### HEARING ON FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26

Attending: Commissioner Thomas Kuka, Commissioner Jim Morren, Commissioner Zane Drishinski, Clerk & Recorder Kody Farkell, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Tammy Bartsch, Deputy Clerk & Recorder Dalayne VanDyke, and Paul Anderberg

The notice of the hearing was published in The Independent-Observer and the Ponderosa Publication August 13 and 20, 2025 issues.

Commissioner Morren called the hearing to review the proposed County budget to order at 10:06 am.at the Pondera County Commissioners office, 20 4<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Conrad. There were no written comments were received.

The Commissioners met with department heads in May and June regarding their department requests. All areas of the budget were discussed among the Commissioners and Clerk and Recorder during the months of June, July and August, resulting in the final budget which is the subject of the hearing. Those in attendance discussed the major expenditures expected in each department, as well as the revenues to be received.

Being no further discussion, the hearing was closed at 10:14 am.

### MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMISSION'S JURISDICTION OUTSIDE REGULAR MEETING

The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) has set up a public hearing, September 23, 2025 at 5:30 pm located at Conrad High School regarding the highly toxic industrial waste water dumping in Valier, Montana.

### REVISED JOB DESCRIPTION APPROVED

Commissioner Kuka moved to approve the revised job description for part-time Custodian. Commissioner Drishinski seconded. Motion carried.

### REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 CANCELLED

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded to cancel the regular meeting of the Commissioners scheduled for September 24, 2025. Commissioners will be attending the MACO Annual Conference in Great Falls. Motion carried.

# RESOLUTION ON DECLARING PROPERTY SURPLUS AND SETTING SALE PONDERA COUNTY RESOLUTION #3 – 2025/26 DECLARING PROPERTY SURPLUS AND SETTING SALE

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 7-8-2211, MCA, <u>Authorization to sell and exchange county property</u>, the Board of Pondera County Commissioners declares the following personal property belonging to the County as surplus property which is not necessary to the conduct of county business or the preservation of its property:

2014 Chevy Silverado Value: \$12,000

WHEREAS, the Commissioners have determined it is in the best interests of the County to sell the items through Public Surplus Auction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners:

- 1) hereby declares the property listed above as surplus property which is not necessary to the conduct of county business or the preservation of its property,
- 2) agrees to sell the listed items through Public Surplus Auction

ADOPTED this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2025 as moved by Commissioner Drishinski, seconded by Commissioner Kuka, and passed on a 3-0 vote of the board. Effective on passage and approval

### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren

/s/ Thomas A Kuka

Thomas A Kuka, Member

Attest: /s/ Kody L Farkell
Kody L. Farkell, Clerk & Recorder

Jim Morren, Chairman

/s/ Zane Drishinski

Zane Drishinski, Member

# RESOLUTION ON AUTHORIZING COST-OF-LIVING SALARY ADJUSTMENTS PONDERA COUNTY, MONTANA RESOLUTION #4 – 2025/26 AUTHORIZING COST-OF-LIVING SALARY ADJUSTMENTS

WHEREAS, the 2001 Legislature provided that County governing bodies create a county compensation board that shall prepare a compensation schedule for county elected officials for the succeeding fiscal year. The recommended compensation schedule shall be approved by a majority of the board including at least two commissioners; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners appointed the County Compensation Board and the Board met during a public hearing called by the Commissioners on June 12, 2025 and discussed several suggested compensation schedules for elected officials for FY2025/26; and

WHEREAS, the County Compensation Board recommended that compensation for elected officials in Pondera County for FY2025/26 be increased by an amount up to 3.5% cost-of-living adjustment; the recommendation was approved by the members of the Compensation Board, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, effective August 26, 2025, the County will pay a cost-of-living salary adjustment of 3.5% for elected officials based on the Clerk and Recorder's base salary to be added to the salaries of Pondera County elected officials. Additional compensation of \$2,000 annually for Commissioners and Sheriff will remain at the statutory rates. Additional compensation of \$2,000 was approved for the Clerk and Recorder who also serves as Election Administrator (pursuant to 7-4-2503(d), MCA, effective October 1, 2005).

Treasurer/Superintendent of Schools

\$61,258.17

plus compensation of \$3,500 for combined office

Clerk of Court

\$61,258.17

Clerk and Recorder

\$61,258.17

plus additional compensation of \$2,000 per year allowed under statute for Election Administrator duties

Commissioner

\$63,258.17

includes additional compensation of \$2,000 per year required by statute

Sheriff/Coroner

\$64,525.01

includes additional compensation of \$2,000 per year required by statute (Sheriff) plus additional \$2,000 for combined Coroner office

County Attorney/Public Administrator

\$116,127.00

State of Montana will pay reimburse the County at a rate set by statute, pursuant to 7-4-2502, MCA (2007)

Justice of the Peace

\$61,258.17

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, the County will continue to pay longevity of 1% of the Clerk & Recorder's base salary times the years of service for all elected officials who do not receive longevity per 7-4-2508 (2)(a) MCA. Longevity will be maxed at 12 years of service, continuing at the 12-year rate each year for the remainder of the elected official's service time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commissioners hereby set the gross base wages for undersheriff at 98% of the Sheriff base salary, sergeants at 90% of the Sheriff base salary, deputies with one year or more at the Pondera County Sheriff's Department at 86% of the Sheriff salary, and deputies under one year at the Pondera County Sheriff Department will be paid 85% of the Sheriff salary. Sheriff's department longevity shall be calculated pursuant to state statutes. Deputies to other elected officials will be paid at 86% of the Clerk & Recorder's base salary.

The cost-of-living increase and raise for non-deputy hourly full-time and regular part-time employees is hereby set at an increase of 3.5%.

Airport manager salary will remain at \$150 per month Seasonal employees' hourly rates will increase to \$17.60 per hour, beginning March 2026 (\$19.20 for returning employees)

Adopted this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2025 as moved by Commissioner Drishinski, seconded by Commissioner Kuka, and passed on a 3-0 vote of the board. Effective August 26, 2025.

#### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Pondera County, Montana

/s/ Jim Morren	/s/ Thomas A Kuka	
Jim Morren, Chairman	Thomas A Kuka, Member	
ATTEST: /s/ Kody L Farkell	/s/ Zane Drishinski	
Kody L. Farkell, Clerk & Recorder	Zane Drishinski, Member	

### EXTENSION REQUEST FOR AUDIT/FINANCIAL REVIEW/ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Commissioner Kuka moved and Commissioner Drishinski seconded an extension request for audit/financial review/annual financial report from the Montana Department of Administration. Motion carried.

### CLAIMS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT

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FUND		
Fund	Fund Description	
1000	GENERAL	43,440.73
2110	ROAD	20,560.00
2130	BRIDGE	547.76
2140	WEED	3,613.49
2160	COUNTY FAIR	31.80
2170	AIRPORT	16,304.71
2230	AMBULANCE	164.83
2290	EXTENSION SERVICE	6,762.34
2300	PUBLIC SAFETY (LAW	22,284.23
2401	ENFORCEMENT) BRADY LIGHTS MAINTENANCE	359.89

2830	JUNK VEHICLE	12.55
2850	911 EMERGENCY	1,504.57
2860	LAND USE PLANNING	1,625.00
2866	NORTHERN TRANSIT INTERLOCAL	355.24
2958	EP (DES) GRANTS	370.55
2963	ORAL HEALTH SERVICES GRANT	485.37
2965	INNOVATION BEH HEALTH	1,326.94
2971	WIC GRANT	59.53
2973	MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH	118.80
2976	IMMUNIZATION ACTION GRANT	108.02
2978	CHRONIC DISEASE GRANT	118.57
2980	HEALTH CARE FOUND. GRANT	2,800.60
4009	PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL IMP	34,066.40
7920	REFUND FUND	71.07
TOTAL CLAIMS		\$157,092.99
TOTAL	PAYROLL	\$350,492.65
TOTAL (	CLAIMS AND PAYROLL FUNDS	\$507,585.64

### <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. on August 29, 2025

Pondera County, Montana.

ATTEST:

Kody L Farkell, Clerk & Record