

Missoula Board of County Commissioners

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES COVER SHEET



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2023 – 2 PM

Hybrid meeting – Missoula County Courthouse Annex Sophie Moiese
Room/Microsoft Teams

[Click here to view the meeting recording.](#)

Time stamps (in green) correspond to meeting recording above. Please click to
the time stamps listed to view a particular item in the meeting.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:

Chair Josh Slotnick

Commissioner Juanita Vero

Staff Present:

Annie Cathey, Administrative Aide, Commissioners' Office

Mel Fisher, Strategic Initiatives Manager, Commissioners Office

Bradley Seaman, Elections Administrator, Elections' Office

Chet Crowser, Chief Officer, Lands and Communities

Vinnie Pavlish, Civil Attorney, County Attorneys' Office

Allison Franz, Communications Manager, Commissioners' Office

Anne Hughes, Chief Operations Officer, Commissioners' Office

Juniper Davis, Manager, Parks, Trails, and Open Lands

Matt Heimel, Planner, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

1. **CALL TO ORDER** *[Time stamp – 2:01]*
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** *[Time stamp – 2:23]*
3. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *[Time stamp – 2:34]*
Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people.
4. **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS** *[Time stamp – 2:44]*
 - a. Closed Captioning
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
 - a. Menorah Discussion *[Time stamp – 4:45]*

6. CURRENT CLAIMS LIST [Time stamp – 30:36]

Claims received as of October 31, 2023 to November 16, 2023 by the Commissioners' Office total \$6,189,243.13.

7. HEARINGS

a. 2024 Precinct Updates [Time stamp – 31:20]

Bradley Seaman, Elections Administrator, Elections Office

Commissioner Vero made the motion that the Board of County Commissioners of Missoula County hereby approve the Precinct changes for 2024.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 2-0.]

[Resolution 2023-092 Book: 1095 Page:949]

b. 2024 Commissioner District Revisions

[Time stamp – 36:09]

Bradley Seaman, Elections Administrator, Elections Office

Commissioner Vero made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve the changes to the Commissioners' Districts for 2024.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 2-0.]

[Resolution 2023-093. Book: 1095 Page: 1083]

c. Larchmont Golf Course Operations and Business Plan Review

[Time stamp – 37:50]

Chet Crowser, Chief Officer, Lands and Communities

Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Board of County Commissioners approve the final draft of the Larchmont Golf Course Operations and Management Transition Plan as presented by staff.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 2-0.]

8. OTHER BUSINESS

[None]

9. ADJOURN

Chair Slotnick – Called the meeting to adjourn at 2:52 p.m.

BCC Public Meeting November 30, 2023 – Transcription

This transcription was produced by transcription software. There may be discrepancies between this transcription and meeting dialogue. You can view the recording of the meeting on the county's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/missoulacounty> or contact the commissioners' office to obtain a copy.

Dialogue in the transcription attributed to "Sophie Moiese Room" is for all speakers that attended the meeting in person. Attendees that participated virtually are labeled individually.

Good afternoon, everybody.

0:25:32.100 --> 0:25:40.0

Sophie Moiese Room

Would like to call to order this Missoula board of County Commissioners public meeting for Thursday, November 30th.

0:25:40.350 --> 0:25:41.630

Sophie Moiese Room

Would you all join me in the pledge?

0:25:45.700 --> 0:25:57.620

Sophie Moiese Room

Deligence to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

0:26:3.310 --> 0:26:9.610

Sophie Moiese Room

Zula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the Aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispell people.

0:26:11.770 --> 0:26:16.450

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah, public announcements, any first, would you mind describing the closed captioning?

0:26:19.790 --> 0:26:20.760

Sophie Moiese Room

Hello everyone.

0:26:20.820 --> 0:26:29.340

Sophie Moiese Room

If you were joining us for this meeting virtually today, instructions for turning on clothes captioning are on your screen, no?

0:26:31.980 --> 0:26:44.270

Sophie Moiese Room

If you are joining us in person, we will have closed captioning on all the screens here in the Sophie moist room and and we also have assisted listening devices available.

0:26:44.740 --> 0:26:50.790

Sophie Moiese Room

Please come to me if you would like an assisted listening device and we will get one for you.

0:26:51.100 --> 0:26:59.30

Sophie Moiese Room

We ask that you speak that speakers today, Please remember to speak slowly and clearly during the meeting.

0:26:59.280 --> 0:27:2.280

Sophie Moiese Room

This helps with the accuracy of the closed captioning.

0:27:3.480 --> 0:27:8.810

Sophie Moiese Room

There will be multiple chances during the meeting for public comment during those times.

0:27:8.820 --> 0:27:15.590

Sophie Moiese Room

If you'd like to speak, we ask if you're virtually that you use the raise hand feature.

0:27:15.900 --> 0:27:20.890

Sophie Moiese Room

If you are on Microsoft Teams, this is the small hand button.

0:27:21.340 --> 0:27:25.890

Sophie Moiese Room

If you recalling in on the phone, you need to hit star 5 to raise your hand.

0:27:26.280 --> 0:27:30.610

Sophie Moiese Room

Then once called on, you will need to hit star 6 to unmute.

0:27:31.880 --> 0:27:36.130

Sophie Moiese Room

If you have any questions or concerns, please find me during the meeting and let me know.

0:27:39.810 --> 0:27:41.880

Sophie Moiese Room

Thanks any.

0:27:41.930 --> 0:27:45.540

Sophie Moiese Room

I was just gonna OfferUp maybe to Dave Miller, who's listening, or anybody else.

0:27:45.550 --> 0:27:46.500

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm you might be.

0:27:46.560 --> 0:27:50.300

Sophie Moiese Room

You might would like to turn your camera off while you're just listening.

0:27:55.650 --> 0:27:56.310

Sophie Moiese Room

Great. Thanks.

0:27:59.730 --> 0:28:0.190

Sophie Moiese Room

All right.

0:28:2.60 --> 0:28:20.850

Sophie Moiese Room

I have one other piece of public announcement and then we're going to do public comment on items not on the agenda and after just start with this saying, oh in this job and in my previous job I did mountains of public speaking and rarely do I ever even get nervous.

0:28:20.860 --> 0:28:23.280

Sophie Moiese Room

And right now I can feel my heart bouncing out of my chest.

0:28:23.950 --> 0:28:25.400

Sophie Moiese Room

So give me a little grace.

0:28:25.530 --> 0:28:29.860

Sophie Moiese Room

I start here as you may have heard.

0:28:32.800 --> 0:28:46.190

Sophie Moiese Room

We had an ask to put a menorah on the courthouse lawn and we did a lot of deliberating on this and I wanted to speak to some of this and I know that a bunch of you are here to talk to it and we're excited to have you speak on this as well.

0:28:49.410 --> 0:28:52.100

Sophie Moiese Room

The question for us is not to display a menorah.

0:28:52.610 --> 0:29:5.800

Sophie Moiese Room

This is something we have done for many years and we'll do again and we in the past have done this in the courthouse and next to the menorah is a Christmas tree and these are symbols of the holidays in the Rotunda.

0:29:5.810 --> 0:29:9.40

Sophie Moiese Room

This is what we have always done and we will continue to do.

0:29:9.350 --> 0:29:15.260

Sophie Moiese Room

The question is not should we display a menorah that was happening, whether or not anybody would have requested that would have happened.

0:29:16.680 --> 0:29:20.230

Sophie Moiese Room

We got a new request to put them in, Norah, on the courthouse lawn.

0:29:22.300 --> 0:29:31.430

Sophie Moiese Room

Anyone who pays attention to world events would notice that across the globe, there's been an upsurge once in horrible anti-Semitic violence.

0:29:31.440 --> 0:29:41.580

Sophie Moiese Room

And Islamophobic violence in tiny little places that resemble Missoula in their warm and fuzzy coziness, like Burlington, Vt, to world cities like New York and London and Paris.

0:29:41.590 --> 0:29:44.600

Sophie Moiese Room

This is a terrible thing and it's happening at a level right now.

0:29:44.610 --> 0:29:48.900

Sophie Moiese Room

That is, I think, on unseen since the Second World War.

0:29:49.150 --> 0:29:51.880

Sophie Moiese Room

We're in a very precarious and fragile time.

0:29:53.930 --> 0:30:7.30

Sophie Moiese Room

My belief is that there's a certain level of anti-Semitic and Islamophobic rage that is bubbling, bubbling under the surface of all civilization, and has been for many, many years.

0:30:7.930 --> 0:30:15.250

Sophie Moiese Room

This war has all allowed that to burst out and we see it like I just said all over the globe.

0:30:16.920 --> 0:30:21.150

Sophie Moiese Room

Part of this bursting out we see in symbols.

0:30:21.160 --> 0:30:33.860

Sophie Moiese Room

Very oversimplified symbols that people take as tokens of of political position and when they see these symbols, neither rally behind them or they lash out against them.

0:30:34.130 --> 0:30:35.520

Sophie Moiese Room

These symbols are very simple.

0:30:35.530 --> 0:30:36.430

Sophie Moiese Room

They're not nuanced.

0:30:36.440 --> 0:30:38.410

Sophie Moiese Room

There's no Gray, there's no deep understanding.

0:30:39.730 --> 0:31:8.130

Sophie Moiese Room

Our concern is that if we are to break with our long standing tradition of having a menorah in the in the Rotunda next to a Christmas tree, and instead put a large menorah on the courthouse lawn in this specific historic moment, that menorah will erroneously be seen as a political symbol, not a religious symbol, erroneously be seen, we get to control our intent.

0:31:8.200 --> 0:31:18.770

Sophie Moiese Room

We do not get to control others understanding our concern, our fear as that this would be generally misunderstood because of the specific historic context.

0:31:18.850 --> 0:31:20.170

Sophie Moiese Room

We are in at this moment.

0:31:23.390 --> 0:31:29.170

Sophie Moiese Room

I feel like for us the larger question is not whether or not we should display a menorah.

0:31:29.180 --> 0:31:29.890

Sophie Moiese Room

We're going to do that.

0:31:30.910 --> 0:31:40.750

Sophie Moiese Room

The larger question is how do we protect communities of people in Missoula County who are especially vulnerable at this moment?

0:31:40.960 --> 0:31:55.770

Sophie Moiese Room

Because of this historical context, and I count myself as in that group, I am in that group in this very moment for some of you, I am not being Jewish enough, and for some of you I'm being too Jewish.

0:31:56.940 --> 0:31:59.110

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm simultaneously both and.

0:31:59.120 --> 0:32:2.370

Sophie Moiese Room

I know that both groups, not the people here would.

0:32:2.440 --> 0:32:7.990

Sophie Moiese Room

Would could could be interested in doing harm to me because of that stance that has happened in other places.

0:32:9.310 --> 0:32:10.740

Sophie Moiese Room

So I feel that precarity.

0:32:13.160 --> 0:32:17.840

Sophie Moiese Room

To address this precarity, to address this fragility, this potential for violence.

0:32:19.170 --> 0:32:34.810

Sophie Moiese Room

What we would like to do is convene folks who are from those communities and lean into our nonprofit groups who work specifically in this space and have real discussions on how do we best support people who are from these communities right now.

0:32:35.790 --> 0:32:39.280

Sophie Moiese Room

So they know their supported and that their safety is ensured.

0:32:39.570 --> 0:32:41.380

Sophie Moiese Room

The three of us can't do that on our own.

0:32:41.530 --> 0:32:51.480

Sophie Moiese Room

We need to make sure folks like you who are here today are part of that discussion and other people who are not in the room are part of that discussion and it can't happen in 45 minutes and be done like the other day.

0:32:52.280 --> 0:32:56.10

Sophie Moiese Room

It needs to be thoughtful and reasoned, and we need to listen a lot.

0:32:56.20 --> 0:33:1.450

Sophie Moiese Room

And then take real good steps, steps that are nuanced, not big, bold political symbols.

0:33:5.500 --> 0:33:7.310

Sophie Moiese Room

Believe me, this is hard to say.

0:33:7.440 --> 0:33:10.170

Sophie Moiese Room

What I would lay this out I my name.

0:33:10.220 --> 0:33:26.560

Sophie Moiese Room

I carry a name of of of a young man who was killed in Germany in the early 1940s in World War 2I carry his name, and I have wondered often is my long and beautiful life worthy of the sacrifice of his short one?

0:33:27.170 --> 0:33:35.10

Sophie Moiese Room

And that question is in my mind and on days like today, so if you wanna, you know, appearing to me out have at it.

0:33:36.420 --> 0:33:37.790

Sophie Moiese Room

No, it is not that simple.

0:33:38.220 --> 0:33:39.380

Sophie Moiese Room

At least it's not that simple for me.

0:33:41.50 --> 0:33:50.270

Sophie Moiese Room

So with that, we have an official statement and my friend and colleague Juan will read that that was well said.

0:33:50.280 --> 0:33:50.680

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

0:33:51.70 --> 0:33:51.520

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm.

0:33:51.870 --> 0:33:56.730

Sophie Moiese Room

And we did not choreograph this, so our official statement sounds very much like.

0:33:59.150 --> 0:34:0.600

Sophie Moiese Room

Your personal statement.

0:34:0.750 --> 0:34:1.460

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

0:34:2.30 --> 0:34:3.920

Sophie Moiese Room

So, Commissioner Strohmeier can't be here.

0:34:3.930 --> 0:34:8.590

Sophie Moiese Room

He's at the climate conference in Dubai right now, but here is the Commission's official statement.

0:34:9.270 --> 0:34:15.100

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm, we understand the decision we made about displaying the menorah on the courthouse lawn is disappointing.

0:34:15.110 --> 0:34:19.850

Sophie Moiese Room

Too many in the Community, including perhaps many of the people who are here to comment today.

0:34:20.970 --> 0:34:29.690

Sophie Moiese Room

We want to reiterate this was an extremely difficult decision for us and we came to it only after much intense discussion and contemplation.

0:34:30.390 --> 0:34:46.810

Sophie Moiese Room

We appreciate Rabbi Vogel's requests and the conversation it generated amongst the three of us about this complex topic, while also illuminating the complicated role we often play as government officials elected to represent residents from all walks of life who have diverse beliefs.

0:34:48.60 --> 0:34:52.390

Sophie Moiese Room

This decision was not about whether we support Missoula's Jewish community.

0:34:52.400 --> 0:35:11.800

Sophie Moiese Room

We unequivocally do we agree with Rabbi Vogel's sentiment that displaying the menorah and an outdoor public setting would be a way for us to outwardly demonstrate our support for Jewish people in Missoula during this time of heightened distress and fear that has only intensified the intergenerational trauma experienced in the Jewish community.

0:35:13.150 --> 0:35:25.340

Sophie Moiese Room

At its core, though, this decision was about allowing a holiday symbol, and these have historically been displayed inside the courthouse Rotunda to be displayed more publicly on the courthouse lawn.

0:35:25.350 --> 0:35:49.220

Sophie Moiese Room

And if doing so would be construed as a statement on the current complicated war impacting many innocent people at this particular intense moment in history in which people around the world face increased anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and other acts of hate, we are reminded that our action should strive to be inclusive of all viewpoints represented in Missoula Fish community, as well as the community at large.

0:35:49.850 --> 0:35:58.920

Sophie Moiese Room

Also, while we are grateful for the degenerative discussion among the Commission, this request prompted, excuse me, I really misread that sentence.

0:35:59.50 --> 0:36:18.230

Sophie Moiese Room

Also, while we are grateful for the generative discussion among the Commission, this request prompted we quickly recognize this conversation must expand to include all the different voices than Jewish community and others we plan to reach out to members of these communities to continue this conversation and ensure it includes as many voices as possible.

0:36:19.280 --> 0:36:25.930

Sophie Moiese Room

We do that, we do know that many of those voices are here in this room or online right now.

0:36:25.990 --> 0:36:26.310

Sophie Moiese Room

Have.

0:36:26.320 --> 0:36:29.0

Sophie Moiese Room

So we're gonna open it up for public comment.

0:36:31.490 --> 0:36:32.80

Sophie Moiese Room

Thanks, Juan.

0:36:32.90 --> 0:36:34.0

Sophie Moiese Room

So anybody you'd like to come.

0:36:34.50 --> 0:36:34.480

Sophie Moiese Room

Come on up.

0:36:34.490 --> 0:36:34.800

Sophie Moiese Room

Speak.

0:36:34.810 --> 0:36:36.640

Sophie Moiese Room

Make sure the microphones on and tell us your name.

0:36:47.320 --> 0:36:48.430

Sophie Moiese Room

Rabbi pesky Vogel.

0:36:49.400 --> 0:36:50.560

Sophie Moiese Room

Rabbi of the Hibachi.

0:36:50.570 --> 0:36:50.940

Sophie Moiese Room

Which center?

0:36:52.810 --> 0:37:8.460

Sophie Moiese Room

I appreciate it, Josh, in opening the session and you know, talking very respectfully and I I, I respect the decision I do, I just want to, uh, I'll be brief just a couple minutes on on my thoughts.

0:37:8.470 --> 0:37:11.860

Sophie Moiese Room

Personally, nobody here is speaking on behalf of anybody.

0:37:12.530 --> 0:37:25.570

Sophie Moiese Room

I just want to make that very clear and obviously there is no one person that talks on behalf of all Jews in any given place, that goes without saying, but I'll be brief about outreach.

0:37:25.580 --> 0:37:38.650

Sophie Moiese Room

Organization is the largest Jewish organization in the world that spends 6 continents, 110 countries close to 6000, Jewish institutions of all types and stripes, educational, social, religious.

0:37:39.320 --> 0:37:44.350

Sophie Moiese Room

They began erecting public menorahs in in the public sphere in the mid 1970s.

0:37:44.530 --> 0:37:46.880

Sophie Moiese Room

Believe the first one was in 1975 in Los Angeles.

0:37:48.10 --> 0:38:0.400

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh, it's a famous anecdote that Jimmy Carter during the Iranian hostage crisis came out of the White House, made a rare appearance towards the end of his term to light the menorah on the in the front of the White House.

0:38:1.160 --> 0:38:2.550

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh, he didn't do it for votes.

0:38:2.600 --> 0:38:4.530

Sophie Moiese Room

Reagan, I believe, was already elected by then.

0:38:4.970 --> 0:38:8.660

Sophie Moiese Room

This was in December of 79, but he understood that the Menorah.

0:38:9.70 --> 0:38:9.820

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh.

0:38:9.860 --> 0:38:10.680

Sophie Moiese Room

Symbolized.

0:38:10.770 --> 0:38:16.380

Sophie Moiese Room

He understood what it symbolized, what it meant to the country, especially during that crisis at that time.

0:38:16.650 --> 0:38:27.920

Sophie Moiese Room

And he explained that in the speech that he gave them, there are thousands upon thousands of menorah displays on public property around this country on county property, city property or what have you.

0:38:30.900 --> 0:38:38.950

Sophie Moiese Room

And perhaps the board or many are unaware that Missoula itself has had going on 10 years many minority displays around the city.

0:38:39.880 --> 0:38:44.870

Sophie Moiese Room

There's the 12 footer on the 93 there's a 12 footer on the intersection of Brooks and Russell.

0:38:44.880 --> 0:38:49.540

Sophie Moiese Room

Every year there's a minority display in the library that was put up last year.

0:38:49.910 --> 0:38:53.140

Sophie Moiese Room

Of course, the large Manor in front of harsh alone building that stands all year round.

0:38:53.960 --> 0:38:55.500

Sophie Moiese Room

There's never been an issue with it.

0:38:55.630 --> 0:39:0.370

Sophie Moiese Room

If it antagonizes somebody, uh, so be it.

0:39:0.380 --> 0:39:4.50

Sophie Moiese Room

But as far as we know, it has only been a positive.

0:39:5.60 --> 0:39:7.970

Sophie Moiese Room

There's one in the airport as well, with small one, and there never been any issues.

0:39:7.980 --> 0:39:24.650

Sophie Moiese Room

But above all, the notion that a manured display should be denied on the grounds that the display, or that the support of the Jewish community at this time might be antagonizing or controversial or political, is ludicrous in my opinion.

0:39:24.660 --> 0:39:29.590

Sophie Moiese Room

Again, and it's downright embarrassing that that sentiment was published in a newspaper.

0:39:30.160 --> 0:39:30.710

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm.

0:39:31.280 --> 0:39:35.150

Sophie Moiese Room

And an actual news article, the Menorah is a Jewish symbol.

0:39:35.400 --> 0:39:46.640

Sophie Moiese Room

It is also a nationally recognized symbol of religious freedom of expression, of hope, of light and positivity, period, and I know you said that it would be mistakenly misconstrued.

0:39:47.990 --> 0:39:50.910

Sophie Moiese Room

But how it's being used as a political tool is beyond me.

0:39:51.800 --> 0:39:58.850

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh, and the suggestion that the board's reasoning is implying to many of the Jews, which is why you're seeing the reaction.

0:39:59.200 --> 0:40:6.50

Sophie Moiese Room

Many of the local Jews that in today's climate Jews would be better off hiding their Judaism or limiting their open expression of the Judaism.

0:40:6.60 --> 0:40:9.300

Sophie Moiese Room

So it's not to antagonize anybody or create a controversy.

0:40:11.80 --> 0:40:15.760

Sophie Moiese Room

I don't want to characterize it with one or two words because it's so many levels of wrong.

0:40:16.550 --> 0:40:18.440

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm I I would be here all day.

0:40:18.730 --> 0:40:19.920

Sophie Moiese Room

But you understand what I mean.

0:40:20.630 --> 0:40:23.530

Sophie Moiese Room

And the messages of indignation and outreach that you might have seen.

0:40:24.400 --> 0:40:28.80

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh, not at the denial, but at the reasoning behind it.

0:40:28.250 --> 0:40:33.810

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm is because the vast, vast majority of Jews in this county are proud.

0:40:34.320 --> 0:40:42.490

Sophie Moiese Room

They're proud of their Jewish identity, of their beliefs, of their observances, even if they don't look religious like me, and they want that menorah up, they do.

0:40:43.300 --> 0:40:47.650

Sophie Moiese Room

We appreciate the concern on our behalf, but this is what we want.

0:40:50.0 --> 0:40:55.730

Sophie Moiese Room

And finally, this was an initiative that I started quietly a few years ago with the county legal team.

0:40:56.90 --> 0:41:4.940

Sophie Moiese Room

I don't know why it's so public now, but this initiative regarding a nationally recognized symbol of pride and light and positivity will not divide the Jewish community in Missoula.

0:41:5.950 --> 0:41:6.740

Sophie Moiese Room

It will not.

0:41:7.540 --> 0:41:13.860

Sophie Moiese Room

There are far more Jews in this country than you wish to believe, and they feel like they've been sidelined for far too long.

0:41:14.350 --> 0:41:24.300

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh Judaism will be a proud and beautiful element of this landscape that prides itself on concepts like diversity and inclusion for many years to come.

0:41:25.190 --> 0:41:26.320

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you very, very much.

0:41:26.640 --> 0:41:30.920

Sophie Moiese Room

I do hope to continue this conversation in a more proper setting.

0:41:52.690 --> 0:41:54.260

Sophie Moiese Room

Oh, hi.

0:41:54.330 --> 0:41:55.400

Sophie Moiese Room

My name is Ed Brown.

0:41:55.590 --> 0:41:56.790

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh commissioners.

0:41:56.850 --> 0:41:59.300

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh, in the great Jewish tradition.

0:41:59.310 --> 0:42:1.70

Sophie Moiese Room

Before I speak, let me say a few words.

0:42:2.940 --> 0:42:6.70

Sophie Moiese Room

I know which Commissioner Strohmeier were here.

0:42:6.80 --> 0:42:9.950

Sophie Moiese Room

I know all of you personally knew he met his wife first.

0:42:10.60 --> 0:42:13.770

Sophie Moiese Room

His wife was amazing, carrying me through bereavement when my mother died 12 years ago.

0:42:14.640 --> 0:42:17.630

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh, when you and I had strange meetings, you know?

0:42:17.680 --> 0:42:20.930

Sophie Moiese Room

Uh, helping out 100, who had lost his phone?

0:42:21.260 --> 0:42:34.0

Sophie Moiese Room

We hadn't even met yet, but through Telus, something which we ended up serving on the board and I heard you speak about your own experiences with, or at least your father with the racism and prejudice, which is horrible.

0:42:34.990 --> 0:42:38.320

Sophie Moiese Room

And Josh, your mother and I went to the same high school.

0:42:39.370 --> 0:42:41.160

Sophie Moiese Room

I think she might have graduated with my brother.

0:42:41.170 --> 0:42:44.830

Sophie Moiese Room

He's just a little older, but anyways, so we all have a history.

0:42:47.20 --> 0:42:49.720

Sophie Moiese Room

And I'm going to take a little different tact while I speak.

0:42:49.730 --> 0:42:50.360

Sophie Moiese Room

But you know, like.

0:42:50.370 --> 0:43:4.230

Sophie Moiese Room

But even going with Josh and I went to a high school that was about 30% Jewish, and it was Christians, Catholics and Jews, everybody for the most part got along except for the normal teenage stuff and a lot of inter dating.

0:43:4.290 --> 0:43:9.510

Sophie Moiese Room

He probably, even at your marriage, things like that happened and still in contact with a lot of those people.

0:43:9.620 --> 0:43:14.170

Sophie Moiese Room

Anyways, back in New York, so we have intersections.

0:43:14.340 --> 0:43:15.640

Sophie Moiese Room

But anyways, let me begin.

0:43:17.450 --> 0:43:17.850

Sophie Moiese Room

So.

0:43:20.350 --> 0:43:25.580

Sophie Moiese Room

Charlottesville, KKK Jews will not replace us.

0:43:25.990 --> 0:43:28.620

Sophie Moiese Room

There are good people on both sides, really.

0:43:30.340 --> 0:43:31.70

Sophie Moiese Room

Tanya gersh.

0:43:31.80 --> 0:43:31.620

Sophie Moiese Room

Whitefish.

0:43:32.770 --> 0:43:34.560

Sophie Moiese Room

Richard Spencer, whitefish.

0:43:34.750 --> 0:43:35.590

Sophie Moiese Room

Heil Trump.

0:43:36.540 --> 0:43:44.620

Sophie Moiese Room

Andrew Anglin, neo-Nazi of 300,000 trolls trolling Tanya and her family love lives here.

0:43:45.450 --> 0:43:51.200

Sophie Moiese Room

Really, Tonya stands up when, say, \$14 million judgment.

0:43:51.710 --> 0:43:53.320

Sophie Moiese Room

No hate in our state.

0:43:53.800 --> 0:43:56.230

Sophie Moiese Room

Really harsh alone.

0:43:56.760 --> 0:44:1.130

Sophie Moiese Room

Neo Nazis pro Palestinians doing the work of Charlottesville.

0:44:1.320 --> 0:44:6.360

Sophie Moiese Room

Richard Spencer, Andrew Anglin, Hamas love lives here.

0:44:6.860 --> 0:44:7.170

Sophie Moiese Room

Really.

0:44:8.110 --> 0:44:10.820

Sophie Moiese Room

What mass wants the elimination of Israel and Jews?

0:44:11.80 --> 0:44:13.730

Sophie Moiese Room

Your neighbors love lives here.

0:44:14.690 --> 0:44:17.480

Sophie Moiese Room

No hate in our state and frank.

0:44:17.490 --> 0:44:19.360

Sophie Moiese Room

Hiding not on my watch.

0:44:40.320 --> 0:44:41.620

Sophie Moiese Room

My name's Michael lacks.

0:44:41.630 --> 0:44:54.830

Sophie Moiese Room

I've been a resident of Missoula for four years, and when I first saw that the menorah was denied, you know, it kind of upset me, upset me for a few reasons.

0:44:55.500 --> 0:45:3.650

Sophie Moiese Room

One is that you know we have Christian symbols all over this town that you know the city puts up.

0:45:3.960 --> 0:45:7.420

Sophie Moiese Room

And as a Jewish man, you know it's offensive.

0:45:8.950 --> 0:45:14.870

Sophie Moiese Room

And if the menorah is going to be offensive to people, I mean, I think that in fairness, you take down the Christmas symbols.

0:45:16.770 --> 0:45:19.420

Sophie Moiese Room

The other thing is and and I'm really.

0:45:19.650 --> 0:45:21.380

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm really appreciative of this.

0:45:21.910 --> 0:45:31.780

Sophie Moiese Room

I had a whole different thought, but when you brought out the fact that you weren't really trying to protect the Jewish community, I thought that was a really, really good statement.

0:45:32.90 --> 0:45:34.0

Sophie Moiese Room

The thing is, you can't protect us.

0:45:34.470 --> 0:45:43.680

Sophie Moiese Room

You know, we had Crystal Nach, we had the Holocaust, we had all these things, and frankly, we outlive our enemies.

0:45:44.450 --> 0:45:52.380

Sophie Moiese Room

And by not having this menorah visible, it's an act of, in my opinion, of, of, of being cowards.

0:45:52.910 --> 0:45:55.480

Sophie Moiese Room

It also fuels Christian nationalism.

0:45:56.350 --> 0:46:7.440

Sophie Moiese Room

It pushes, you know, the Jewish people, Jewish community in the background, and it allows Christian nationalism to raise its head and its strong here in Montana.

0:46:7.450 --> 0:46:18.270

Sophie Moiese Room

Let's let's be honest and I think that by denying this, you're saying basically is we're cowards and us Jews were not cowards.

0:46:18.730 --> 0:46:20.250

Sophie Moiese Room

We push back.

0:46:20.680 --> 0:46:26.390

Sophie Moiese Room

You've heard the slogan never again as you lost family in the Holocaust, so did I.

0:46:26.880 --> 0:46:30.50

Sophie Moiese Room

My grandmother, I was the only one to get out.

0:46:31.520 --> 0:46:41.690

Sophie Moiese Room

Excuse, it's very, very, very strong in my heart, but I really think that we're acting as cowards but not allowing this to show.

0:46:41.920 --> 0:46:46.250

Sophie Moiese Room

And we're fueling Christian nationalism, and that's all I have to say.

0:46:56.890 --> 0:46:57.140

Sophie Moiese Room

Any.

0:47:0.820 --> 0:47:4.970

Sophie Moiese Room

That you I want to ask, Michael lacks.

0:47:5.390 --> 0:47:7.260

Sophie Moiese Room

Can I ask him a quite a clarifying question?

0:47:8.640 --> 0:47:9.660

Sophie Moiese Room

Sure, I'm sorry.

0:47:12.870 --> 0:47:14.120

Sophie Moiese Room

I just want a quick question.

0:47:14.130 --> 0:47:19.280

Sophie Moiese Room

So the menorah being placed inside the Rotunda?

0:47:21.50 --> 0:47:23.20

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah, your your thoughts on that, I'm sorry.

0:47:28.750 --> 0:47:30.680

Sophie Moiese Room

I don't think it should be placed with the Christmas tree.

0:47:30.690 --> 0:47:42.760

Sophie Moiese Room

I think should take them both out in the spirit of fairness, she shouldn't have anything inside the Rotunda in the Rotonda out on the streets or anywhere that is that is sponsored by the city.

0:47:43.110 --> 0:47:43.490

Sophie Moiese Room

OK.

0:47:43.500 --> 0:47:43.930

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

0:47:43.940 --> 0:47:47.340

Sophie Moiese Room

And there's the, you know, you know, it's really funny about this whole thing.

0:47:47.670 --> 0:47:52.760

Sophie Moiese Room

You know this holiday Hanukkah, it's not found in in our tanach.

0:47:52.970 --> 0:47:55.840

Sophie Moiese Room

In the Old Testament, it's found in the New Testament.

0:47:55.850 --> 0:47:56.370

Sophie Moiese Room

Did you know that?

0:47:57.610 --> 0:48:3.470

Sophie Moiese Room

And it was celebrated by the person of Jesus was called the Feast of Dedication.

0:48:3.480 --> 0:48:12.40

Sophie Moiese Room

The festival of lights and it's just funny that you'll have a Christmas tree, but you won't have the menorah.

0:48:12.50 --> 0:48:13.430

Sophie Moiese Room

It just makes no sense whatsoever.

0:48:15.160 --> 0:48:21.530

Sophie Moiese Room

Ohh OK, but I guess I was confused because there's a menorah and Christmas tree in the Rotunda free inside.

0:48:21.540 --> 0:48:22.580

Sophie Moiese Room

Why have it at all?

0:48:22.760 --> 0:48:23.390

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

0:48:23.400 --> 0:48:24.30

Sophie Moiese Room

OK, got it.

0:48:24.40 --> 0:48:31.910

Sophie Moiese Room

No, I mean really, why not just remove any kind of religiosity from the streets and from the public, you know, from public sponsor?

0:48:31.920 --> 0:48:32.830

Sophie Moiese Room

I don't understand it.

0:48:33.80 --> 0:48:33.490

Sophie Moiese Room

OK.

0:48:33.540 --> 0:48:34.80

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

0:48:34.90 --> 0:48:34.410

Sophie Moiese Room

Sure.

0:48:34.420 --> 0:48:36.0

Sophie Moiese Room

I mean, where's the Kwanzaa stuff?

0:48:36.900 --> 0:48:40.670

Sophie Moiese Room

You know where's where's the the things for the Muslim people?

0:48:40.820 --> 0:48:43.50

Sophie Moiese Room

What about Satan worshippers?

0:48:43.200 --> 0:48:46.530

Sophie Moiese Room

I mean, shouldn't they all have their their religiosity?

0:48:46.540 --> 0:48:50.250

Sophie Moiese Room

There are things out on the street and then you think about the atheists.

0:48:50.260 --> 0:48:51.750

Sophie Moiese Room

How do you think atheists feel?

0:48:52.260 --> 0:48:53.690

Sophie Moiese Room

You know they're in the minority.

0:48:54.280 --> 0:48:57.180

Sophie Moiese Room

I mean, you know, you're going to be fairly or not.

0:48:57.660 --> 0:49:2.110

Sophie Moiese Room

And I think that having the Christian symbols is something that is unfair.

0:49:3.30 --> 0:49:7.820

Sophie Moiese Room

You know, I've lived with it all my life and I accept it, you know?

0:49:7.830 --> 0:49:15.860

Sophie Moiese Room

But it's unfair when it comes to a a political or, you know, from a city, you know, from a country.

0:49:15.970 --> 0:49:18.500

Sophie Moiese Room

Take it all out, you know, or put them all in.

0:49:18.950 --> 0:49:20.40

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you for the clarification.

0:49:30.270 --> 0:49:31.290

Sophie Moiese Room

A new commissioners.

0:49:31.300 --> 0:49:32.30

Sophie Moiese Room

My name is Matt.

0:49:32.40 --> 0:49:39.190

Sophie Moiese Room

Hi I'm all first of all just like to publicly announce I am accounting employee but I'm here on my own personal time to express my own personal opinions.

0:49:40.420 --> 0:49:43.400

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm not protesting your decision about the menorah.

0:49:43.410 --> 0:49:44.570

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm not requesting reversal.

0:49:44.580 --> 0:49:46.190

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm not requesting reconsideration.

0:49:47.440 --> 0:49:49.700

Sophie Moiese Room

I just like to express some personal thoughts on the matter.

0:49:49.710 --> 0:49:54.990

Sophie Moiese Room

I had some things written down, but I deeply appreciate the comments that you made to begin with it.

0:49:55.0 --> 0:49:58.710

Sophie Moiese Room

Help me reframe those points and helps give give context.

0:49:58.720 --> 0:50:5.270

Sophie Moiese Room

So umm, I think that what you said before about continuing this conversation is something that's really necessary for the communities.

0:50:5.280 --> 0:50:17.430

Sophie Moiese Room

You can tell there's some really heated feelings from everyone, and it will really, really help, but kind of the main points that I wanna make are about the decision space.

0:50:17.660 --> 0:50:23.800

Sophie Moiese Room

And I recognize that you were sensitive to putting out information that could be erroneously misinterpreted.

0:50:24.700 --> 0:50:34.400

Sophie Moiese Room

But and I don't know if I had all the right information from the discussion that took place, but it seemed to me that there was.

0:50:34.410 --> 0:50:35.850

Sophie Moiese Room

There was discussion about.

0:50:37.970 --> 0:50:55.650

Sophie Moiese Room

Potentially being seen as taking sides in a war about antagonizing people that the minority like you said could be misinterpreted and offensive, and we can't really control that and that that I feel influenced was a primary influence on the decision that was made.

0:50:56.840 --> 0:51:6.850

Sophie Moiese Room

I just want to back up and really reinforce another point that I think I saw in the article that we, the country really needs a clear policy on public display of religious items.

0:51:6.860 --> 0:51:8.290

Sophie Moiese Room

That seems really clear.

0:51:8.300 --> 0:51:26.360

Sophie Moiese Room

Maybe we have that, I don't know, but in my amateur legal research, I found Lynch versus Donnelly Allegheny versus the ACLU, some Supreme Court cases that can give us some context, some questions we can talk about on this general topic, you know, can't can this display be clearly understood as conveying secular?

0:51:29.40 --> 0:51:29.250

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah.

0:51:29.350 --> 0:51:37.720

Sophie Moiese Room

Let me start over Canada display be clearly understood as conveying secular recognition of different traditions over the holiday season.

0:51:38.220 --> 0:51:45.80

Sophie Moiese Room

Is the government engaging in a practice that has the effect of promoting or advancing a particular religion or the opposite?

0:51:45.90 --> 0:51:46.310

Sophie Moiese Room

Does it disapprove?

0:51:48.260 --> 0:51:51.750

Sophie Moiese Room

What a reasonable observer get a message of endorsing a particular faith?

0:51:51.980 --> 0:51:55.730

Sophie Moiese Room

Those are all questions that should be the basis of a decision.

0:51:56.20 --> 0:52:21.680

Sophie Moiese Room

My concern is that when the decision was framed and this historical context that you had described

earlier, that there can be cascading misinterpretation, that it can be misinterpreted as potentially conflating Jewish tradition with controversial and political issues, and that can have a slippery slope of logic, a slippery slope and a lack of logic that we deal with every day.

0:52:22.190 --> 0:52:26.40

Sophie Moiese Room

Some of those points that could be interpreted negatively interpreted.

0:52:26.350 --> 0:52:32.420

Sophie Moiese Room

It may validate opinions that Jewish culture is to be seen in the same light as perceived oppression and wartime actions.

0:52:32.750 --> 0:52:50.40

Sophie Moiese Room

It might validate opinions that support for a Jewish community is somehow a political problem, and then on the flip side, it may show certain members of the Jewish community that we need to hide those traditions that we need to suppress Jewish identity.

0:52:50.210 --> 0:52:58.860

Sophie Moiese Room

And it may give the impression that you should not publicly display our traditions because it can antagonize and offend people who might not like us.

0:52:59.130 --> 0:53:15.560

Sophie Moiese Room

So to sum it up, my main concern is that the basis of this decision was based on a perceived controversy and that there are legitimate legal questions and tests that have been established in case law that should, should really be at adhere to. So.

0:53:15.570 --> 0:53:17.400

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

0:53:17.410 --> 0:53:22.550

Sophie Moiese Room

I'll look forward to seeing how the conversation continues and I'll sit there and I should probably get back to work soon.

0:53:37.190 --> 0:53:38.740

Sophie Moiese Room

Anybody online wish to speak.

0:53:51.920 --> 0:53:52.110

Sophie Moiese Room

Are.

0:53:52.120 --> 0:53:53.110

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you all for coming.

0:53:53.120 --> 0:54:2.370

Sophie Moiese Room

Really appreciate that you take time out of your day to speak on these things and to speak so openly and honestly and lie and look forward to talking with you some more on these issues. Thanks.

0:54:6.800 --> 0:54:8.280

Sophie Moiese Room

Alright, our current claims list.

0:54:10.90 --> 0:54:12.270

Sophie Moiese Room

Oh oh.

0:54:20.220 --> 0:54:26.70

Sophie Moiese Room

Current claims list claims received as of October 31st, 2023 to November 16th, 2023 by the Commissioner's Office.

0:54:26.80 --> 0:54:28.670

Sophie Moiese Room

Three by the Commissioner's Office total six million \$189,243.13.

0:54:28.680 --> 0:54:32.70

Sophie Moiese Room

\$189,243.13.

0:54:32.680 --> 0:54:34.970

Sophie Moiese Room

OK, we have 123 hearings today.

0:54:34.980 --> 0:54:42.350

Sophie Moiese Room

The first one is on 2024 precinct updates and Bradley Seeman, our elections administrator, will lead us off.

0:54:42.360 --> 0:54:44.990

Sophie Moiese Room

And Bradley, thank you so much for the tea.

0:54:51.590 --> 0:54:52.860

Sophie Moiese Room

Mike, thank you guys.

0:54:54.690 --> 0:54:55.380

Sophie Moiese Room

Thanks Chris.

0:54:55.390 --> 0:54:57.940

Sophie Moiese Room

I was like somebody is really helpful in the audience here.

0:54:58.450 --> 0:55:0.740

Sophie Moiese Room

Got a couple of different resolutions before you today.

0:55:0.750 --> 0:55:2.920

Sophie Moiese Room

The first one is for precinct boundaries.

0:55:3.690 --> 0:55:5.920

Sophie Moiese Room

We are updating our precinct boundaries.

0:55:6.290 --> 0:55:13.740

Sophie Moiese Room

We had presented to you in September about our we presented to you in September about our precinct boundary changes.

0:55:14.100 --> 0:55:18.480

Sophie Moiese Room

We had presented a plan at that included a lot of different research precinct.

0:55:18.490 --> 0:55:21.900

Sophie Moiese Room

As you may remember, is that smallest jurisdiction in a federal election.

0:55:22.350 --> 0:55:29.320

Sophie Moiese Room

It's used by central committees to elect precinct committee men and women, and it also in Missoula County helps voters know where they're going to go to vote.

0:55:30.710 --> 0:55:37.800

Sophie Moiese Room

We did a lot of surveying of voters through 2015, 2020, as well as watched voter trends over the last few years.

0:55:37.810 --> 0:55:48.560

Sophie Moiese Room

And we have dropped over half in the number of voters that voted polling places since the last redistricting and 80% of our active voters are vote by mail voters now.

0:55:48.620 --> 0:55:58.750

Sophie Moiese Room

So our utilization really dropped in our polling locations as we updated our precinct boundaries, it made sense to look at our polling locations at the same time because of the way we named them.

0:55:59.40 --> 0:56:3.730

Sophie Moiese Room

Bonner, 89, means that a voter lives in House District 89 and votes at the Bonner School.

0:56:4.200 --> 0:56:13.330

Sophie Moiese Room

So when we looked at that, we also had location concerns for our polling places such as safety and security of students or ADA access to those locations.

0:56:14.350 --> 0:56:26.160

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm Missoula County had the most polling locations out of any county and under the proposed precinct plan, where we name our precincts based off of our polling locations, we would still have the most polling locations out of any county.

0:56:27.120 --> 0:56:32.720

Sophie Moiese Room

And we did a very robust public comment period for this from the Elections Office.

0:56:32.730 --> 0:56:52.940

Sophie Moiese Room

We held meetings and invited in elected officials groups that work in parallel, so our third party groups

that go out and register voters as well as members of the Central Committee to come see our plan before we presented it and take comments from them, we held him Azula, Vos, Missoula Voice page from the 15th through the 28th before we presented for you all.

0:56:53.330 --> 0:56:57.750

Sophie Moiese Room

And we even had a meeting in Evro, which was our furthest change in a polling location.

0:56:57.760 --> 0:56:59.580

Sophie Moiese Room

All of our polling location changes.

0:56:59.930 --> 0:57:6.300

Sophie Moiese Room

We're within a five mile radius that was based off of one of those surveys of asking voters how far are you willing to travel to go to?

0:57:7.680 --> 0:57:11.810

Sophie Moiese Room

We were able to incorporate all of those comments into the plan we presented to you in September.

0:57:11.820 --> 0:57:26.440

Sophie Moiese Room

So today I am just going forward and stating that there is no additional public comment that after we reopen that comment period and asking for the approval of the plan of the precinct boundary changes which also impact our polling locations for the 2024 cycle.

0:57:26.660 --> 0:57:32.310

Sophie Moiese Room

I really feel like we've done a very robust job to come up with the best possible plan we can for our 2024 elections.

0:57:34.670 --> 0:57:36.110

Sophie Moiese Room

So that's my whole picture right there.

0:57:37.270 --> 0:57:41.100

Sophie Moiese Room

And as we go through this, it is that you have maps in front of you.

0:57:41.110 --> 0:57:42.930

Sophie Moiese Room

We had maps available for people coming in.

0:57:43.200 --> 0:57:47.30

Sophie Moiese Room

No changes were represented in any of those from the previous presentation.

0:57:47.160 --> 0:58:2.600

Sophie Moiese Room

Really looking at making sure that we incorporated boundary changes, listen to some of that comments with some great comments, examples of comments where you should consolidate everything to 1 centralized location at the fairgrounds or you should not eliminate any of the polling locations that you had.

0:58:2.760 --> 0:58:10.320

Sophie Moiese Room

So we worked really closely to make sure that we were addressing those concerns and looking at our specific areas that may have had ADA access issues.

0:58:10.650 --> 0:58:12.720

Sophie Moiese Room

My old polling place, Saint Joe's school.

0:58:13.130 --> 0:58:15.260

Sophie Moiese Room

The ADA ramp was on the other side of the building.

0:58:15.270 --> 0:58:22.580

Sophie Moiese Room

So you had to go through the school to get into the voting location and that presented a security concern as well as an ADA access concern.

0:58:23.110 --> 0:58:33.490

Sophie Moiese Room

That's the reason that we've looked at a lot of our precinct boundary changes as well as updated all of our different polling locations and we're asking the Commission to vote on adopting our new teaching boundaries for 2024.

0:58:35.550 --> 0:58:36.570

Sophie Moiese Room

Bob Bradley? Yeah.

0:58:39.530 --> 0:58:40.860

Sophie Moiese Room

You have any questions?

0:58:41.110 --> 0:58:44.70

Sophie Moiese Room

I do not, as usual, Bradley is very thorough.

0:58:46.220 --> 0:58:48.10

Sophie Moiese Room

Any any public comment?

0:58:48.20 --> 0:58:50.450

Sophie Moiese Room

Anybody else like to ask Bradley anything about this?

0:58:52.770 --> 0:59:6.950

Sophie Moiese Room

I like that we still lead the state in polling locations and we've done some consolidation and are more efficient, recognizing the fact that 80% of voters are using mail in and we don't need the same dispersed facilities, we want needed to have exactly as you guys saw yesterday.

0:59:6.960 --> 0:59:10.120

Sophie Moiese Room

We're always working to improve our processes and coming up with better plans.

0:59:10.130 --> 0:59:11.480

Sophie Moiese Room

So it was an exciting day.

0:59:14.0 --> 0:59:19.460

Sophie Moiese Room

Well, I move that the Commission approved the updated precinct changes for 2024.

0:59:21.20 --> 0:59:23.250

Sophie Moiese Room

I'll second that and call for any public comment.

0:59:25.690 --> 0:59:26.20

Sophie Moiese Room

OK.

0:59:26.30 --> 0:59:26.720

Sophie Moiese Room

All in favor?

0:59:26.770 --> 0:59:26.950

Sophie Moiese Room

Aye.

0:59:28.50 --> 0:59:29.720

Sophie Moiese Room

Thanks for making the trip, Bradley.

0:59:29.730 --> 0:59:30.860

Sophie Moiese Room

Appreciate it and great work.

0:59:30.870 --> 0:59:35.600

Sophie Moiese Room

Yesterday it was really inspiring to see you and you, you and your team do what they do so well.

0:59:35.990 --> 0:59:36.770

Sophie Moiese Room

Well, thanks very much.

0:59:36.780 --> 0:59:38.670

Sophie Moiese Room

I have one more for you though. Ohh.

0:59:38.680 --> 0:59:39.300

Sophie Moiese Room

OK.

0:59:39.410 --> 0:59:40.20

Sophie Moiese Room

Oh, I remember.

0:59:40.30 --> 0:59:40.180

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah.

0:59:40.190 --> 0:59:41.300

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah, we get new districts.

0:59:41.510 --> 0:59:43.0

Sophie Moiese Room

So is it true?

0:59:43.10 --> 0:59:43.940

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm now under Valley County.

0:59:45.190 --> 0:59:48.780

Sophie Moiese Room

As I was like, holy cow, last crew didn't make that happen.

0:59:48.790 --> 0:59:49.170

Sophie Moiese Room

Right.

0:59:49.360 --> 0:59:57.490

Sophie Moiese Room

We have presenting before you today is a resolution to update our Commissioner, district boundaries, so the precinct boundaries would be inside those House districts.

0:59:57.720 --> 1:0:11.530

Sophie Moiese Room

Commissioner, district boundaries are the division of Commissioner districts equally by both sides and population, so geographical size as well as population presented to you is our plan that we had presented previously in September.

1:0:11.960 --> 1:0:16.930

Sophie Moiese Room

We did open another public public comment period and received no public comments on this as well.

1:0:17.720 --> 1:0:25.90

Sophie Moiese Room

Personally, I did take quite a few different public comments on this and the number one thing we got requested was the same that we presented in September.

1:0:25.560 --> 1:0:43.170

Sophie Moiese Room

A bullseye pattern, urban semi urban and rural, but due to the laws requirement that it's both equal in geographic area as well as population, that is not a possibility and so we work closely and walked many different voters through those laws and explained that process.

1:0:43.360 --> 1:0:45.750

Sophie Moiese Room

But we didn't receive any comments through the voice page.

1:0:46.100 --> 1:0:55.20

Sophie Moiese Room

So before you today is a plan to update our Commissioner, district, countries as well, which would be in place for the 2024 election cycle. Thanks.

1:0:57.640 --> 1:0:59.490

Sophie Moiese Room

No questions any.

1:0:59.540 --> 1:1:1.230

Sophie Moiese Room

Any questions from the public on this?

1:1:1.240 --> 1:1:1.980

Sophie Moiese Room

Any comment at all?

1:1:5.60 --> 1:1:11.790

Sophie Moiese Room

OK, I move that the Commission approved the updated Commissioner districts, I'll second that and call once again for any public comment.

1:1:14.10 --> 1:1:14.360

Sophie Moiese Room

OK.

1:1:14.410 --> 1:1:15.120

Sophie Moiese Room

All in favor?

1:1:15.230 --> 1:1:15.960

Sophie Moiese Room

Aye, aye.

1:1:16.390 --> 1:1:17.90

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you, Bradley.

1:1:17.100 --> 1:1:17.330

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah.

1:1:17.340 --> 1:1:17.650

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

1:1:20.480 --> 1:1:22.930

Sophie Moiese Room

And now the chat to talk about large model.

1:1:22.940 --> 1:1:24.630

Sophie Moiese Room

We have a large amount crew here today.

1:1:24.800 --> 1:1:27.420

Sophie Moiese Room

We do, yeah.

1:1:27.430 --> 1:1:28.580

Sophie Moiese Room

Good afternoon, commissioners.

1:1:28.590 --> 1:1:46.80

Sophie Moiese Room

Check Krauser chief lands and communities officer and who we are here today to ask you for a Commission action and requesting that you approve the final draft of Larchmont Golf Course, operations review and business plan, and then direct staff to move forward with transition to a county led management model.

1:1:46.90 --> 1:1:52.680

Sophie Moiese Room

So I'll go through some of the background and then our recent conversations, a bit of the report itself and what next steps might look like today.

1:1:53.630 --> 1:2:6.840

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm, so First off I just want to thank a lot of the staff, in particular Michelle Denneman and Sarah Richardson for some of their work and particularly as well as our consultant with National Golf Foundation and the the LARCHMONT staff.

1:2:6.850 --> 1:2:23.700

Sophie Moiese Room

It's been a collective effort to get to this point and there will be much more work to come, but there's been some tremendous effort and I would be remiss if I didn't add some thanks at the beginning to give you a little bit of background for folks who either may not be familiar or just to help get it on the record.

1:2:23.710 --> 1:2:40.280

Sophie Moiese Room

Larchmont is a public 18 Hole championship golf course driving range, practice, amenities, maintenance facility and clubhouse, and those were the the pieces that the consultant reviewed and that I'll talk about here in a second location is along reserve St, and that's kind of between Fort Missoula and Brook Street.

1:2:40.290 --> 1:2:43.980

Sophie Moiese Room

So probably most folks have driven by the Larchmont Golf course.

1:2:43.990 --> 1:3:2.550

Sophie Moiese Room

If they've driven reserve St, it was developed by the county in 1982 and then it's been owned by the county, but managed under the operation and kind of the Pro shop management through a contract with summit Golf and Bill Gallagher is the primary entity there and and is here with us today.

1:3:3.160 --> 1:3:19.790

Sophie Moiese Room

He has decided he would like to retire and so he is planning on to retiring here at the end of the year and we have our contract set to expire at that point in time and and every conversation we've had has been unsuccessful in in trying to sway him the other direction and keep working.

1:3:19.800 --> 1:3:28.920

Sophie Moiese Room

So we'll we'll honor and respect that, but that has then led to the need to have some discussions and and contemplate what to do moving forward with the course.

1:3:29.990 --> 1:3:44.140

Sophie Moiese Room

So the the recent discussions we've had largely with county staff began kind of in 2022, just to start to explore these options and we also selected a National Golf Foundation to conduct at the third party assessment of the facility.

1:3:44.150 --> 1:3:50.680

Sophie Moiese Room

As I mentioned earlier, with the the course, the clubhouse maintenance facility and the amenities that are that are part of the course.

1:3:51.430 --> 1:4:0.220

Sophie Moiese Room

UM, they finished that report up here in October and presented that to the BCC, Larchmont Staff, County staff, and the Larchmont Advisory Board.

1:4:0.630 --> 1:4:4.840

Sophie Moiese Room

And I'll go through some of the key findings there just to to highlight some of those.

1:4:4.930 --> 1:4:15.840

Sophie Moiese Room

Most of what I have to share is almost verbatim from the report, so they did a pretty good job of thoroughly assessing things and I felt like honestly, their language is probably better than my own.

1:4:15.850 --> 1:4:19.360

Sophie Moiese Room

So you'll you'll hear a lot of that if you do read through the report.

1:4:19.650 --> 1:4:39.630

Sophie Moiese Room

That is essentially a the same words that you'll see there, and I think that the biggest takeaway message was, as they put it, when they came out to take a look at the course and work with us, work with staff, they're used to coming into communities where it really is a doom and gloom sort of scenario where they see municipal courses that aren't keeping up.

1:4:39.640 --> 1:4:41.830

Sophie Moiese Room

They maybe have maintenance backlogs, things like that.

1:4:41.840 --> 1:4:45.50

Sophie Moiese Room

What they articulated is doom and gloom, and they said it was really refreshing.

1:4:45.60 --> 1:4:48.860

Sophie Moiese Room

They came to this effort and there there was no doom and gloom.

1:4:48.870 --> 1:4:52.760

Sophie Moiese Room

Things actually had a fairly positive review and so that started the the conversation.

1:4:53.530 --> 1:5:2.800

Sophie Moiese Room

And from there I think we just continued to appreciate the work that Bill and his crew have continued to do over the years and really retaining a public facility and a pretty top notch condition.

1:5:2.810 --> 1:5:13.50

Sophie Moiese Room

So their evaluation of large amount itself provide kind of a detailed assessment of the physical and economic conditions and then also the market environment.

1:5:13.60 --> 1:5:34.10

Sophie Moiese Room

So that's the context that we're using to evaluate options moving forward in that I think interestingly with Larchmont, the current financial condition as they said is superior to most municipal courses in the US we're only about 33% of those can cover both on site expenses and other indirect costs like depreciation and internal charges, things like that.

1:5:34.20 --> 1:5:47.660

Sophie Moiese Room

So the revenue model at large Mont under the the guidance of Senegal and Bill and the staff has really been umm, really extraordinary in terms of its comparison to other municipal courses across the country.

1:5:47.670 --> 1:5:51.120

Sophie Moiese Room

And I think sets up the county and the community with a lot of options.

1:5:51.170 --> 1:5:52.100

Sophie Moiese Room

So that's really been great.

1:5:53.70 --> 1:5:57.860

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm, they also looked at some alternative management approaches and compared some of those.

1:5:57.870 --> 1:6:13.450

Sophie Moiese Room

What they what they see nationally and then gave us some recommendations and also recap some of those models so that we could consider those they had a few minor recommendations for future capital investment and that mostly was geared around keeping on track and keeping up with the current standard.

1:6:13.600 --> 1:6:19.130

Sophie Moiese Room

Nothing that was immediate or that was going to require significant event investment right out of the gate.

1:6:20.110 --> 1:6:33.900

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm, there will need to be a continuation which has been the case of the evaluation of fees and how those fees relate to the ongoing administration of the course itself and keeping up with the costs associated with managing the cores.

1:6:33.910 --> 1:6:45.380

Sophie Moiese Room

But really, you know, that's all geared toward maintaining this really solid fiscal model that exists there now and and as they said really positions the course to be kind of a market leader in our community.

1:6:45.390 --> 1:6:54.320

Sophie Moiese Room

As it relates to a kind of a public 18 hole golf course that is affordable, but also just right now facilitating some pretty high activity levels.

1:6:54.330 --> 1:6:56.100

Sophie Moiese Room

So it's kind of a nice balance of those things.

1:6:58.670 --> 1:7:9.990

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm, so from there I guess I'll dive into a little bit of the models that they evaluated and and there are other recommendations in the the report itself that talk more specifically about the course.

1:7:10.80 --> 1:7:11.510

Sophie Moiese Room

I'm not going to go into those today.

1:7:11.520 --> 1:7:16.850

Sophie Moiese Room

They are attached to the packet and folks can certainly get a copy of that report if they'd like to read more.

1:7:17.180 --> 1:7:23.360

Sophie Moiese Room

What I'm going to touch on today is are the models that they evaluated or highlighted for us and then the recommendation that we have a staff.

1:7:24.620 --> 1:7:57.300

Sophie Moiese Room

So the models that they evaluated was a self operation model, meaning the county would take on full management administration and then they looked at concession agreement models where you could have contracts for either components of the golf operation or a collective sort of concession for multiple operational functions, a full service management contract where you had a fixed fee, a full service management contract where you had potentially a fixed and variable fee model, which would be kind of a hybrid and then an operating lease where it would just be essentially leased out to a private entity.

1:7:58.210 --> 1:8:1.60

Sophie Moiese Room

Their recommendation really came down to two options.

1:8:1.70 --> 1:8:9.140

Sophie Moiese Room

One would be to continue on with what we have existing now and that being a contractor, that would essentially step into the role that summit golf had been taking on.

1:8:9.450 --> 1:8:15.930

Sophie Moiese Room

And then the other option that they highlighted as probably the top kind of these top two would be the self operation model.

1:8:16.880 --> 1:8:22.570

Sophie Moiese Room

We have elected to propose the self operation model largely for a couple of reasons.

1:8:22.580 --> 1:8:33.190

Sophie Moiese Room

One being that there wasn't an immediate interest in stepping in, at least from the existing golf staff golf staff that were on on the course into that contracting role.

1:8:33.750 --> 1:8:45.930

Sophie Moiese Room

And then in addition to that, we have had, we have the staff who have been there for a very long time and integral in the operation of the course interested as well as I think bill and interest from the Advisory Board as well.

1:8:45.940 --> 1:8:51.860

Sophie Moiese Room

And considering this self operation model and so that's the avenue that we have looked at most closely.

1:8:52.180 --> 1:8:55.170

Sophie Moiese Room

The other options, and the report states this as well.

1:8:55.340 --> 1:9:9.930

Sophie Moiese Room

We're really deemed unnecessary in their eyes just due to the effectiveness of the operation, the strong number of rounds that are played there, the reviewer performance, the condition of the property and and low level of capital needs that existed at the course now.

1:9:9.940 --> 1:9:16.440

Sophie Moiese Room

So those were the two options that were presented as the highest recommended by a National Golf Foundation.

1:9:16.960 --> 1:9:23.160

Sophie Moiese Room

And so we're moving forward with a recommendation to you all that we move forward with the soap self operation model.

1:9:24.270 --> 1:9:40.240

Sophie Moiese Room

Umm, we would move forward with next steps should you decide to go that route in pulling together a team that has already been working on this again, that's gonna be comprised of a number of staff from the HR side, finance side, a lands and communities.

1:9:40.650 --> 1:9:44.80

Sophie Moiese Room

Now, with the Commissioner's Office, I'm probably missing a few.

1:9:44.90 --> 1:9:46.460

Sophie Moiese Room

Few Erica with risk and benefits.

1:9:46.610 --> 1:9:49.120

Sophie Moiese Room

Venice, our legal Rep on that group.

1:9:49.370 --> 1:10:12.250

Sophie Moiese Room

And it will continue working with staff to just flesh out kind of the nuts and bolts details of what that looks like to fully transition the course as it's been operated in a contract model into something that would be self operated that I won't go into all the nuts and bolts there, but the intent would be to have that first phase fully operational as of January 1st, which would then be in line with the expiration of Bill's contract.

1:10:12.480 --> 1:10:25.260

Sophie Moiese Room

There be a number of other phase steps that would need to take place moving forward into the upcoming season, but there should be time in order to to be able to get that rolling, especially given the fact that we have staff they're going to be continuing on.

1:10:28.380 --> 1:10:46.330

Sophie Moiese Room

Let's see the the other thing that I guess I'll mention, which has been part of the county staff perspective in terms of goals associated with considering transition options and and there's three primary kind of focus concepts I guess that have been part of these conversations.

1:10:46.860 --> 1:10:57.110

Sophie Moiese Room

One is that we need to be looking at the transition that's going to incorporate all of the applicable county policies and procedures into bringing that course under the self operation model.

1:10:57.850 --> 1:11:12.320

Sophie Moiese Room

Secondly, we really want to make sure that the that we value and consider the perspective of staff as well as the large amount Advisory Board and that golf community and in in that transition and all of that really being for the purpose of ensuring a smooth transition and quality experience for the public.

1:11:12.330 --> 1:11:16.740

Sophie Moiese Room

So ideally, if we do that job well, they may not even notice that much has changed.

1:11:17.310 --> 1:11:27.900

Sophie Moiese Room

So those are our goals in the packet is the the report from NGF Consulting, which again outlines all of those components and review of the course itself.

1:11:27.910 --> 1:11:36.440

Sophie Moiese Room

We also have job description for the Gulf manager, which would oversee the course as well as Superintendent, Superintendent role.

1:11:36.690 --> 1:11:38.580

Sophie Moiese Room

And then we'll have a number of other positions.

1:11:38.590 --> 1:11:41.330

Sophie Moiese Room

Of course, it'll come on with the typical seasonal staffing model.

1:11:41.340 --> 1:11:47.300

Sophie Moiese Room

There are a couple of other permanent positions, I think a total of five that are HR staff have worked on finalizing.

1:11:47.310 --> 1:11:50.0

Sophie Moiese Room

So we have those pretty close to ready to go.

1:11:51.10 --> 1:11:51.440

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah.

1:11:51.450 --> 1:11:56.780

Sophie Moiese Room

The rest would just be keeping up with the pace and trying to hit that timeline leading into the next golf season.

1:11:56.790 --> 1:12:7.140

Sophie Moiese Room

So I will close their I know we do have a number of folks here that may either want to say something about the course and also may may be able to feel the question or two if you have them.

1:12:7.380 --> 1:12:27.360

Sophie Moiese Room

Again, I just wanna thank all the staff and most mostly bill, his work and the the tenured staff that are working hard out there and doing a lot of things that probably aren't noticed by us or the public but have led to what seems like a pretty positive looking opportunity that they've been able to transition to us.

1:12:27.370 --> 1:12:32.680

Sophie Moiese Room

I think that's pretty rare and so certainly appreciative of that effort and they certainly deserve strong kudos.

1:12:34.130 --> 1:12:34.990

Sophie Moiese Room

Thanks a lot Chad.

1:12:35.850 --> 1:12:38.720

Sophie Moiese Room

So I do want to say one thing before diving in.

1:12:38.790 --> 1:12:45.990

Sophie Moiese Room

I can't help myself, but the National Golf Foundation of, Say, Federation came in and gave us a presentation.

1:12:46.220 --> 1:12:52.730

Sophie Moiese Room

It you know, we had heard a lot about Larchmont and the scuttlebutt around town is it's great place.

1:12:52.740 --> 1:12:53.950

Sophie Moiese Room

People really like going there.

1:12:53.960 --> 1:12:54.830

Sophie Moiese Room

It's super popular.

1:12:54.840 --> 1:12:56.230

Sophie Moiese Room

It's part of our community.

1:12:56.240 --> 1:12:56.420

Sophie Moiese Room

It's.

1:12:57.970 --> 1:12:59.940

Sophie Moiese Room

You can't really imagine Missoula without large amount.

1:12:59.950 --> 1:13:8.440

Sophie Moiese Room

It's part of things, but it was really valuable to have some experts come and really look under the hood and they gave us a thorough presentation with a big fat phone book.

1:13:8.450 --> 1:13:17.200

Sophie Moiese Room

If you guys remember phone books like that thick of a document and what they said of what really stuck with me was, ah man, people really love this.

1:13:17.670 --> 1:13:18.960

Sophie Moiese Room

It's a great place.

1:13:19.350 --> 1:13:20.900

Sophie Moiese Room

It's top notch.

1:13:20.950 --> 1:13:28.710

Sophie Moiese Room

You actually charge more money, and I remember these guys kind of going feeling uneasy, which made me feel really good.

1:13:29.20 --> 1:13:31.870

Sophie Moiese Room

This it will be a municipal, a county golf course.

1:13:31.980 --> 1:13:42.720

Sophie Moiese Room

This should be available to everyone to have that kind of experience and it's just fantastic to hear that we're providing an experience for people that is greater in quality than they actually pay for.

1:13:44.290 --> 1:13:53.720

Sophie Moiese Room

This should be for anybody who wants to golf, and it's a testimony to the skill of the folks who work at Larchmont, and it's a a tradition, and it will soon be a legacy that we are pledged to continue.

1:13:55.860 --> 1:14:1.670

Sophie Moiese Room

That's a little bit, I know who's on the board and we have a bunch of folks here who can chat.

1:14:1.780 --> 1:14:3.750

Sophie Moiese Room

So anybody wanna speak to this please?

1:14:3.760 --> 1:14:4.110

Sophie Moiese Room

Come on up.

1:14:7.360 --> 1:14:8.170

Sophie Moiese Room

You don't have to.

1:14:8.240 --> 1:14:8.720

Sophie Moiese Room

You're here.

1:14:13.900 --> 1:14:14.790

Sophie Moiese Room

OK, great.

1:14:14.800 --> 1:14:15.140

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

1:14:16.750 --> 1:14:19.430

Sophie Moiese Room

Felt this is great is there.

1:14:19.780 --> 1:14:21.540

Sophie Moiese Room

We have a motion, sure.

1:14:23.900 --> 1:14:28.650

Sophie Moiese Room

We do, and I'm realizing that you, if you have your packet in front of you.

1:14:28.720 --> 1:14:32.860

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah, within RC, if we can dig for it, I could have put this up for you.

1:14:33.310 --> 1:14:34.780

Sophie Moiese Room

The commercial golf.

1:14:34.850 --> 1:14:35.610

Sophie Moiese Room

Ohh gosh.

1:14:35.620 --> 1:14:36.340

Sophie Moiese Room

Excuse me.

1:14:36.430 --> 1:14:36.810

Sophie Moiese Room

Move that.

1:14:36.820 --> 1:14:48.200

Sophie Moiese Room

The Commission approved the National Golf Foundations recommendations for our self operation oversight structure and staffing for management of Larchmont Golf course and direct staff to move forward with implementation of the 2024 season.

1:14:49.900 --> 1:14:50.480

Sophie Moiese Room

Thanks.

1:14:50.820 --> 1:14:51.170

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah.

1:14:51.180 --> 1:15:1.30

Sophie Moiese Room

No, just echoing Josh the culture and it's been an exciting couple years with Larchmont and maybe it's all your strategy to be.

1:15:1.80 --> 1:15:3.130

Sophie Moiese Room

Yeah, I see how it is.

1:15:3.280 --> 1:15:7.250

Sophie Moiese Room

You guys had a long game here, so we're gonna fire the community up.

1:15:8.180 --> 1:15:15.790

Sophie Moiese Room

You create a pandemic, so everyone got into golf, and then we're gonna, like, develop this area and got the community talking about Larchmont again.

1:15:16.80 --> 1:15:23.800

Sophie Moiese Room

And no, but kudos to staff umm and the board and and players and the community.

1:15:24.10 --> 1:15:38.890

Sophie Moiese Room

It's really special that the culture of Larchmont is so palpable that National Golf Foundation folks from Florida and wherever it can come here and feel it so strongly, so testament to your work.

1:15:38.900 --> 1:15:39.260

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

1:15:39.270 --> 1:15:39.600

Sophie Moiese Room

Thank you.

1:15:40.660 --> 1:15:44.440

Sophie Moiese Room

So I'll second your motion and call for any public comment.

1:15:46.440 --> 1:15:47.160

Sophie Moiese Room

OK, seeing none.

1:15:47.170 --> 1:15:47.880

Sophie Moiese Room

All in favor?

1:15:48.410 --> 1:15:49.300

Sophie Moiese Room

Aye, aye.

1:15:49.640 --> 1:15:50.510

Sophie Moiese Room

Thanks, larchmont.

1:15:54.980 --> 1:15:55.570

Sophie Moiese Room

Without, we're done.

1:15:57.230 --> 1:15:57.500

Sophie Moiese Room

Right.

1:15:57.500 --> 1:15:58.110

Sophie Moiese Room

Did I miss something?

1:16:0.240 --> 1:16:0.670

Sophie Moiese Room

OK.

1:16:1.140 --> 1:16:3.370

Sophie Moiese Room

Could you stay for a SEC gal from the media?

1:16:3.380 --> 1:16:4.180

Sophie Moiese Room

I can't remember your name.

1:16:4.190 --> 1:16:5.750

Sophie Moiese Room

Sorry, Catherine.

1:16:5.790 --> 1:16:6.550

Sophie Moiese Room

Catherine. OK.