

Missoula Board of County Commissioners

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES COVER SHEET



THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2025 – 2 PM

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

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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 Juanita Vero
Commissioner David Strohmaier
Commissioner Josh Slotnick

Staff Present:

Cheryl Hartman, Administrative Assistant, Commissioners' Office
John Hart, Lead Civil County Attorney, County Attorneys' Office
Patrick Swart, Planner, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Jennie Dixon, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Christina Dewar, Administrative Assistant, Commissioners' Office
Melissa Fisher, Strategic Initiatives Manager, Commissioners' Office
Carey Powers, Communications Coordinator, Communications
Allison Franz, Manager, Communications
Mattie Scott, Administrative Assistant, Commissioners' Office/Facilities
Tim Worley, Senior Planner, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Patricia Spotted Wolf, Support Specialist, Commissioners' Office

1. **CALL TO ORDER** *[Time stamp – 0:00]*
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** *[Time stamp – 0:04]*
3. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *[Time stamp – 0:16]*
Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people.
4. **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS** *[Time stamp – 0:32]*
 - a. Closed Captioning

5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA [Time stamp – 1:08]

6. CURRENT CLAIMS LIST [Time stamp – 1:19]

Claims received as of August 06, 2025 to August 13, 2025 by the Commissioners' Office total of 2,547,750.91.

7. HEARINGS

a. Lolo Ranch BLR and Aggregation [Time stamp –1:39]

Jennie Dixon, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Board of County Commissioners of Missoula County approve the request by Lolo Ranch, LLC. to utilize the Relocation of Common Boundaries and Aggregation exemptions on properties legally described in Attachment A and based on the facts and findings of the staff analysis and presented in the exemption application and affidavit.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 3-0.]

[Letter 2025-143 was sent to Performance Engineering in c/o Scott Aspenlieder.]

b. Riverside Industrial Subdivision Extension [Time stamp –16:16]

Katy Reeder, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve the Riverside Industrial Subdivision phasing plan extension, based on the findings of fact in the staff report.

Commissioner Slotnick seconded.

[Motion Passed 3-0.]

[Letter 2025-145 was sent to WGM Group in c/o Caitlin Frisbie.]

8. OTHER BUSINESS

[None]

9. ADJOURN

Chair Vero – Called the meeting to adjourn at 2:21 p.m.

BCC Public Meeting August 28, 2025 – Transcription

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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.

0:04

To the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice law.

0:16

Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territory of the Salish and Kalispei people.

0:24

We have a closed captioning announcement.

0:30

Hello everyone.

0:30

If you're joining us for this meeting virtually today and stretching instructions for turning on closed captioning are on your screen.

0:38

If you're joining us in person, we'll have closed captioning on all the screens here in the Sophie Movies room.

0:43

Just a reminder, there will be multiple chances during the meeting for public comment virtually and in person.

0:48

During those times, if you would like to speak, we ask that you use the Raise Hand feature.

0:52

If you're on Microsoft Teams, this is a small hand button.

0:55

If you're calling in on the phone, you'll need to hit *5 to raise your hand.

0:58

Then once called upon, you'll need to hit *6 to unmute.

1:02

If you have any questions, please come find me during the meeting.

1:05

Thank you.

1:06

Thanks, Cheryl.

1:08

Is there any public comment on items not on the agenda?

1:15

We don't see anyone in the room or online.

1:19

Our current claims list as of August 6th to August 13th by the Commissioner's Office totals \$2,547,000 and seven hundred \$547,750.91.

1:35

We have two public hearings.

1:39

We'll begin with Lola Ranch boundary line relocation and aggregation.

1:43

Jenny Dixon.

1:58

Bus from Lola Ranch represented by Performance Engineering to use the relocation of common boundaries and aggregate.

2:07

I don't have a loud enough.

2:12

This is a request from Lola Ranch represented by Performance Engineering to use a relocation of common boundaries and and the aggregation exemptions.

2:20

Boundary line relocations that affect six or more lots must be reviewed by the governing body.

2:28

This property is located on the West side of Hwy.

2:30

93 at the base of the Bitterroot Mountains approximately 9 miles South of Missoula between Lolo and Florence and encompasses 2456 acres approximately.

2:43

And why is that you?

2:47

You'll notice I don't have it outlined here, but on the next slide I have the entire acreage outline, but it's generally in this location here South of Rowan Rd.

2:56

north and and of course West of the gravel operation and just north of the county line.

3:10

There we go.

3:13

So the proposal is to aggregate 18 existing tracks into 14 proposed tracks and then relocate common boundaries between those 14 tracks.

3:23

No additional tracks will be created and in fact there will be fewer, obviously going from 18 to 14.

3:30

Primary access to the ranch is via McLean Creek Rd.

3:37

All tracks involved are unzoned and fall within the boundaries of the 2002 Regional Land Use Guide for Lolo.

3:46

The western portion of the property is recommended for open and resource land use, which is the Gray transitioning to increasing residential density on the east side of the property, which are the green colors.

3:57

1 is a one per 10 design, 11 dwelling per 10 acres designation and then the lighter green, more lime green is 1 dwelling unit per five acres.

4:08

So increasing density towards Hwy.

4:09

93.

4:11

There is a small portion of community commercial or I'm sorry what we call a commercial crossroads on the northeast corner of the property just outside that circle because I was giving you a general location, but at that little corner up here is on their property.

4:30

The ranch is currently listed for sale as a ranch with a residence.

4:36

The applicant has stated that the intent is to create distinct parcels that separate areas of active ranch use such as irrigation pivots, range lands and timberlands.

4:46

The request is also to create clear boundaries to allow for a continued negotiation with potential conservation easement holders.

4:55

The original ownership as I mentioned consists of 18 tracks and none of those existing tracks exceeds 320 acres.

5:02

And the reason that number is important is state law allows you to to divide property without review in 260 acre tracks, right.

5:12

So if it's less than 320, there's not a way to to do that without further review.

5:19

And so none of the existing tracks are over that 320 and so they could not be divided without further review.

5:31

With the proposed configuration, the tracks vary in size from 71 acres to 694 acres.

5:40

Only one of the tracks is over the 320.

5:43

It's the highlighted one in the kind of Gray blue that 694 acres.

5:51

Since it is over 320 acres, it could be divided into 160 acre tracks without review.

6:00

So it would creation of this track at this size would potentially allow that track to be divided into 4 tracks.

6:09

If this were to happen, the number of tracks would still be less than the number of tracks that currently exist.

6:15

Because what would happen is if if this 694 were divided using that 160 acre exemption if you will, you're at 17 tracks right now you're at 18.

6:26

And so because of that and because of the way the packet was presented and the reasons for doing so, staff did not feel that this was an evasion criterion.

6:38

It made sense to have.

6:40

I mean, you can see the location of that track and I can take you back to the air photo.

6:44

It made sense to have larger tracks higher up on the slopes and accommodate.

6:49

And you can see the difference between this layout and this layout, which this obviously does not follow any kind of natural feature.

6:58

And this one is trying to do that if the proposal had been brought forward as a subdivision actually get to the following impacts might be considered for mitigation through conditions of approval.

7:12

And that's one of our evasion review criteria is if someone is proposing an exemption.

7:17

But we look at hey, if this were a subdivision, what would we have put as conditions of approval?

7:22

It could lead to a conclusion of evasion which we did not hear, but roads and non non motorized facilities meetings, county standards would be required for a major subdivision.

7:34

As you know, exemptions do not require any kind of access as a condition.

7:40

Traffic impacts to off site roads would require mitigation depending on the level of development proposed, and MDT did comment that future development at this location would require a traffic impact study with the possibility of a warrant for a traffic signal, a roundabout, or some sort of continuous T or other intersection control at Rowan Road and Hwy.

8:00

93 S 3rd subdivisions are required to develop a plan for fire suppression, addressing water supply for Fire Protection and adequate physical access to accommodate emergency service vehicles.

8:13

All structures will be required to comply with building and fire code and any development at this location with structures or roads will be reviewed by the fire department.

8:25

A major subdivision requires 11% of Parkland or common area dedication or cash in lieu.

8:30

And I don't think that's, you know, an issue here.

8:32

Obviously, mitigating impacts on agricultural soils could play a role on the northeastern corner, which is interesting.

8:40

It's that location where the community cross commercial crossroads is meaning a commercial activity.

8:47

If if this were to go through a subdivision review, the NRCS map does identify prime farmland soils if irrigated at that location and so we might be looking at potential conditions to mitigate those impacts.

9:01

2 more areas of riparian resource would be needed to would need to be identified and protected through a riparian resource management plan.

9:11

Though there no flood hazard areas have been identified on this property, the main drainage is McLean Creek and there are some smaller secondary drainages.

9:21

Finally, areas of slope over 25% would require a geotech study if development were proposed on those slopes or they would need to be designated as no build, no alteration.

9:31

And those are the kind of conditions you might see if this were to go through subdivision review.

9:36

But as proposed, A boundary line relocation, we felt that this was the most appropriate approach.

9:43

By the way, these photos are from the website for the sale of this ranch.

9:48

So you're looking at the ranch and staff is recommending approval of the proposed boundary line relocation and agricultural exemptions for properties that are legally described in attachment A because there are 18 of them.

10:02

I did not put those in your motion.

10:04

That's it.

10:08

Thank you.

10:09

Is there anyone from engineering firm to speak to this our McLean family?

10:16

So the engineer is Scott.

10:18

Oh, I didn't see.

10:20

I'm sorry.

10:22

Yeah.

10:22

And he's from Billings.

10:23

And so I see a hand raised that might be him or his associate.

10:28

Yes.

10:29

OK.

10:30

Hi.

10:31

Go ahead, Scott, or I'm assuming this is Scott.

10:34

Yeah, this is Scott.

10:37

Thank you, Commissioners.

10:39

Thank you, Miss Dixon for the thorough report and evaluation of the application.

10:45

We, we appreciate the time and the effort that went into to working with us on this.

10:52

I think Miss Dixon described the situation very well.

10:56

What we were attempting to do here, what we're trying to do here is, is really align these boundaries with the uses of the ranch, following the natural, natural barriers, separating out the irrigated lands from the, from the plateaus, from the, from the mountain and, and really trying to create definable and, and definable parcels that could be explained and, and really operated as a, as a part of the operating ranch currently.

11:30

So this is a a lot of from the owner's perspective, cleaning up what was out there, re establishing the boundaries and and redefining what's, what's in place out there.

11:43

So nothing, nothing more than that at this stage of the game.

11:48

The owners are, are and have had active conversations with conservation groups out there looking at potential conservation easements.

11:56

I think there there is a desire to do that if, if the two sides can figure that part out, that's also how some of these boundaries landed the way that they did.

12:07

So with that, I won't take up any more of your valuable time.

12:12

I'm happy to answer any questions should you have it.

12:15

Thank you.

12:17

Thanks, Scott.

12:19

Sir, any public comment, anything else Jenny to add, we did post it on Missoula County Voice and I don't as of a few days ago and I forgot to check it this morning.

12:34

We did not have any public comment on this.

12:37

OK.

12:37

And Cheryl said there is none on The Voice today.

12:40

OK, well thanks.

12:44

So first, I just want to say I appreciate the new boundary lines somewhat matching with the actual uses of the land given that this is working land and how that would set the owners up to do to engage with conservation easements if that's what they wanted to do in a more realistic way.

13:02

I totally appreciate that.

13:03

My question is really more out of curiosity is when when was the original breakdown of these lots done?

13:12

You mean the create the 18 of the 18?

13:14

Yeah, thanks.

13:15

Sorry for the clumsy language.

13:17

Yeah, the the original 18.

13:18

I'm just curious and if it's not available that's fine.

13:25

Some of them are part of a subdivision like up, I believe up in this area.

13:32

So that would have been in the last 20 or so years, but I, but given the legal descriptions, I don't, I guess I don't know for sure, but I, I have a feeling they've been around for a while.

13:48

They were all, most of them were done through, you know, digit exhibits.

13:52

And Scott, I don't know if you, you and I, we actually, that was one of the reasons for the delay on this, because they did submit in May and when it first came in, they identified 20 legal tracts.

14:06

And our Stephen Abnett, he identified only 18.

14:11

And so I had them go back and identify, you know, what are the legal tracks.

14:15

And and so we kind of went back and forth on legal tracks.

14:18

So I'm not sure if, Scott, in your research in doing that, you have a sense of how these tracks were established originally.

14:24

I just imagined through just the exhibit.

14:27

Yeah.

14:28

Thank you, Madam Chair.

14:30

Commissioner, Miss Dixon is correct.

14:33

Some of those up in the north were created through, you know, more recent subdivision stuff.

14:39

I would say in the, you know, 90s and 2000s era.

14:43

A lot of these, particularly as you get further West and southwest, these are original government tracks primarily.

14:51

So original deeds and things that have been carried forward from from government lot lotting of the area way back early 1900s government lots.

15:06

Does that does that mean like homesteading times I when the government created aliquet parts?

15:13

I believe so, yes.

15:14

Interesting.

15:14

And I also brought this image up just so you can recognize this site also as the Mcclay Ranch where ski runs were installed.

15:24

Alright, thanks for indulging my curiosity.

15:28

Did you have something to add?

15:30

OK.

15:33

Motion language.

15:37

I would move to approve the request by Lolo Ranch LLC to utilize the relocation of common boundaries and aggregation exemptions on properties legally described in Attachment A based on the findings and a conclusion in the staff analysis and as presented in the exemption application and affidavit.

15:54

Second, any further discussion or public comment?

15:59

All in favor, aye.

16:02

Thanks, Scott.

16:04

Thanks, Jenny.

16:07

Thank you, Commissioners, and we appreciate your time and support of the project.

16:15

OK.

16:16

Next we have Riverside Industrial subdivision phasing plan extension.

16:20

Patrick Swart.

16:23

Good afternoon.

16:23

For the record, I'm Patrick Swart.

16:26

I'm a planner with the Office of Planning, Development and Sustainability, and today I'm presenting the staff report for the Riverside Industrial Subdivisions Phasing Plan Extension request.

16:35

This comes to us from Riverside Contracting, Inc and they're represented by WGM Group.

16:46

Here we can see the property location, the parcels outlined in black and green here it's about 160 acres and we're in the Y area of Missoula County just to the southwest of the interchange of Interstate 90 and Hwy.

16:58

93 N.

17:02

The original subdivision was approved on August 4th of 2022 for 36 lots on that 160 point O3 acres was subject to 32 conditions of approval and it was approved with two phases.

17:15

Phase one, the original approved submittal deadline was August 4th of 2025 and Phase 2 has a submittal deadline of August 4th of 2028.

17:29

The subject property is falls within the 2019 Missoula Area land use element and it has three separate land use designations, industrial center, working lands and planned neighborhood, which aligns with the zoning on the parcel.

17:44

We can see the zoning map on the screen here.

17:46

It's split zoned industrial center light is shown in Gray, AG working 40 is shown in green and neighborhood residential is the orange color.

17:56

There the phasing we can see the original phasing plan which on the screen here follows those zoning boundaries.

18:06

Phase one includes that AG working lands and industrial lands.

18:10

The proposal here is to extend the submittal deadline for phase one out to August 4th of 2028 and the reasons in the application for this request are to better align this development with the Y infrastructure plan and to allow them to consider potential alternative water and wastewater system options that may become available out in the Y area there.

18:30

Specifically, they called out the Grass Valley industrial water system that's going in in the Grass Valley Gardens wastewater system, which are both pretty close to the to this development up on the screen.

18:45

Here is a list of the specific review criteria we evaluate these requests on.

18:49

I won't read through all these unless you have questions.

18:52

We can come back and visit it, but detailed findings and conclusions for these criteria are in the staff report that was attached to today's meeting.

19:01

This was sent out for agency comment.

19:03

We only received one comment from the Public Works Building Division WHO stated they don't have any objections to the request and just noted that future structures will require the appropriate building and trade permits that We also posted a Missoula County voice page for this and we have not received any public comments as of this morning.

19:24

With that, our recommendation today is for approval.

19:27

I have a motion on the screen for you when you're ready.

19:29

Can you just go back to the aerial?

19:31

Maybe it, I'm not sure if it showed it or not.

19:33

The, the proximity to, yes, Grass Valley Industrial.

19:39

Let me turn the laser pointer on here.

19:41

So this property which has that shared boundary here just to the north is Grass Valley Gardens where the proposed wastewater, public wastewater system will be.

19:51

And then you can see the purple shaded parcels.

19:54

Here is the Grass Valley Industrial where the water system is going in.

19:59

Sorry, Josh, did you have something?

20:04

OK, He's got it.

20:05

OK.

20:08

All right.

20:08

Thanks, Patrick.

20:09

Is there anyone, Jamie?

20:11

Yeah, WGM, who'd like to add to this chair?

20:19

Thank you.

20:19

Thank you.

20:20

Commissioners Jamie Erbacher with WGMI also have Caitlin Frisby here with me today as well.

20:25

And nothing really to add.

20:26

This is fairly straightforward.

20:28

We're really just waiting for the progress of the water and wastewater systems in this area and the Y infrastructure plan, and there's lots of opportunity out here.

20:38

So, yeah, thank you.

20:40

Thank you.

20:42

Is there any public comment, Chief Finley?

20:46

OK, don't see anyone in the room or online.

20:53

All right.

20:54

I would move to approve the Riverside Industrial Subdivision Phasing Plan extension, extending the final plat submittal deadline for Phase one to August 4th, 2028, based on the findings of fact in the staff report.

21:04

I'll second that.

21:06

Any further discussion or public comment, OK, All in favor, aye, thank you that I believe we're adjourned.

21:14

Have a great day everyone.

