

Missoula Board of County Commissioners

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES COVER SHEET



THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026 – 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
Commissioner David Strohmaier

Staff Present:

Cheryl Hartman, Commissioners' Office
Melissa Fisher, Commissioners' Office
Chris Lounsbury, Missoula County
John Hart, County Attorneys' Office
Matt Heimel, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Chet Crowser, Lands and Communities
Sam Scott, Clerk and Recorder's Office
Bryce Christiaens, Ecology and Extension
Annie Cathey, Commissioners' Office
Kevin Heisler, Public Works
Tenzin Lhaze, Communications
Jeremiah Petersen, Sheriffs' Office
Carey Powers, Communications
Patricia Spotted Wolf, Commissioners' Office
Jill Johnson, Lands and Communities
Allison Franz, Communications
Analeshia Rodriguez, Lands and Communities
Jason Mitchell, Public Works
Anne Hughes, Missoula County
Kevin Dantic, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Tim Worley, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Andrew Hagemeier, Community and Economic Development
Vincent Pavlish, County Attorneys' Office

Bethany Gunther, Parks and Trails
Patrick Swart, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

1. **CALL TO ORDER** *[Time stamp – 0:02]*
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** *[Time stamp – 0:04]*
3. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *[Time stamp – 0:37]*
Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people.
4. **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS** *[Time stamp – 0:45]*
 - a. Closed Captioning
 - b. Proclamation: Juneteenth
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA** *[Time stamp – 4:13]*
6. **CURRENT CLAIMS LIST** *[Time stamp – 10:47]*
Claims received as of May 25, 2026 to June 1, 2026 by the Commissioners' Office total \$1,362,031.02.
7. **HEARINGS**
 - a. **Open Hearing for a Resolution Regarding the Miller Creek Feral Horses Process**
[Time stamp – 10:03]
Chris Lounsbury, Missoula County Chief Administrative Officer

[Continued until the July 23, 2026 Commissioners' Public meeting]
 - b. **Montana Knife Company Abatement per MCA 15-6-1524** *[Time stamp – 1:22:39]*
Sam Scott, Clerk and Recorder's Office

[Application was withdrawn by the applicant]
 - c. **Montana Knife Company Abatement per MCA 15-6-138** *[Time stamp – 1:23:25]*
Sam Scott, Clerk and Recorder's Office

Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve a tax abatement on the qualifying Class 8 property owned by Montana Knife Company at 80% during the initial five year assessment contingent on the determination of eligibility of the equipment by the Montana Department of Revenue.

Commissioner Vero seconded.

[Motion Passed 3-0.]

[Signed RCA was returned to Sam Scott.]
 - d. **Resolution: Floodplain Fees Revision** *[Time stamp – 1:32:21]*
Matt Heimel, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve the resolution to enact revised floodplain fees for services rendered by the Missoula County Planning, Development and Sustainability Department.

Commissioner Vero seconded.

[Motion Passed 3-0.]

[Resolution 2026-080 Book: 1129 Page: 722.]

8. OTHER BUSINESS

[None]

9. ADJOURN

Chair Slotnick – Called the meeting to adjourn at 3:41 p.m.

BCC Public Meeting June 11, 2026 – 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.

0:02

Our Thursday afternoon public meeting.

0:04

Would you please join me in the pledge?

0:08

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

0:28

Don't have the new landing knowledge, I'm just going to go with the old one.

0:37

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

0:45

We have some public announcements.

0:49

Hi everyone.

0:50

I'm just going to have a closed captioning announcement.

0:57

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

1:03

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

1:09

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

1:15

The Chair will open discussion for public comment after each staff presentation.

1:19

Please respectfully keep your comments to 3 minutes.

1:22

If you're on Microsoft Teams, we ask that you use the Raise Hand feature.

1:26

This is the small hand button at the top of your screen.

1:29

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

1:33

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

1:36

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

1:39

Thank you.

1:41

Thanks, Joe.

1:43

We have a proclamation.

1:47

This is in recognition of Juneteenth Independence Day.

1:52

WHEREAS Missoula County and the City of Missoula acknowledged the lasting impacts of racism in the United States, fueled largely by the horrific institution of slavery.

2:02

And WHEREAS, news of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States for more than two years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1st, 1863, and months after the end of the Civil War.

2:19

And whereas, on June 19th, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Texas with the news that the Civil War had ended and the enslaved were free.

2:29

And African Americans have celebrated this anniversary, known as Juneteenth Independence Day, for more than 150 years to honor African American freedom while encouraging self development, respect and dignity for all people.

2:44

And whereas, the character demonstrated by former slaves should inspire us in this country to give thanks for the freedom won by so many people in all nations and to strive for the goals of bringing freedom and democracy to people of other countries, no matter what their race or religion.

3:01

And whereas, although Juneteenth Independence Day is starting to be recognized as a national and even global event, the history behind the celebration should not be forgotten and Montana proudly joins the 50 States and the District of Columbia in observing Juneteenth as a state or ceremonial holiday.

3:22

Therefore, be it resolved that we, Missoula County and the City of Missoula, do hereby proclaim the 19th of June as Juneteenth Independence Day to commemorate African American emancipation from slavery.

3:35

Celebrate the freedom won by people in many countries and rededicate ourselves to the cause of liberty.

3:42

Dated this 11th day of June 2026 and signed by the Mayor of Missoula, Andrea Davis and year three Missoula County Commissioners.

3:51

Thanks Dave.

3:53

I'm, I'm just going to add Lib and say a couple of Juneteenth things and that next week on June 19th at 10:30, there will be a celebration at our very own Fort Missoula.

4:03

We will be there.

4:05

I think this is the fifth year.

4:06

It's a really fantastic, well run, uplifting event and I encourage you all to go.

4:13

Do we have any public comment on items not on the agenda?

4:16

That means anybody can speak about anything they want that isn't on the agenda for three months.

4:21

So if the thing you want to speak about is 3 months, how about that You can go for three months.

4:26

We will.

4:26

You can't breathe, you can't pee.

4:28

It's just three months straight now, 3 minutes.

4:31

So, but be just give a thought if what you're going to comment is something we have a hearing about, like the horses in Miller Creek, now is not the time.

4:39

But if you want to talk about something that isn't on the agenda, you get 3 minutes and Dave will operate the shot clock and make sure you look at the shot clock so it won't feel like a surprise when we cut you off.

4:50

OK, thanks a lot.

4:51

Come on up.

4:57

Last week was my inaugural meeting and I'm getting the hang of it.

5:03

Awesome, welcome back.

5:03

Thank you.

5:04

I'll be here every Thursday.

5:06

You are so welcome.

5:08

I see that it's public comments.

5:10

You gotta say your name though.

5:11

Marianne Bongiorno, South County District 1.

5:15

And I see that it's comment, not a question, so I quickly edited this.

5:22

My comment is that I believe that in regards to the floodplain mapping and the adaptation of the floodplain mapping in the elevation surveys, the Loma is way too expensive for most people.

5:33

We're living in time where our income does not keep up with inflation.

5:38

And Loma is, although it's an appeal process in place.

5:42

I would encourage Missoula County, since this is a very important issue to come up with a, a different appeal process or another appeal process for those that can't afford Loma.

5:56

All right.

5:57

And then the next thing, and I see I have a little bit of time.

6:04

I can only assume it's not a question, it's an assumption in the comment.

6:07

We're going by the current floodplain maps, not the proposed floodplain maps when it comes to compliance.

6:15

Thank you.

6:16

Thank you, ma'am.

6:18

Anybody else like to speak to anything that isn't on the agenda?

6:24

It appears we have Kevin Durant.

6:26

No, that's a different KD.

6:27

That's Kevin Davis.

6:30

Kevin.

6:32

Thank you.

6:33

Commissioners, can you hear me?

6:34

Yes, Sir.

6:36

Excellent.

6:36

Thanks.

6:37

I wanted to take a moment.

6:38

I'm Kevin Davis, long time Missourian and in my spare time host a Reserve St.

6:44

Public Working Group and we meet most Friday mornings on Zoom, 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM.

6:50

All members of the public are invited to attend.

6:54

You can Google Reserve St.

6:55

Public Working Group for information on how to attend.

6:59

I wanted to speak about an extraordinary author and speaker.

7:04

We had a Missoula on May 22nd and I invited invited commissioners to attend.

7:10

We didn't see any county staff there.

7:14

So I wanted to speak briefly and recap that event today.

7:19

And in fact, I have copies of the author's book.

7:23

It's Jenny Burton.

7:24

The book is the Gabriel Plan.

7:26

I have copies for all three commissioners.

7:29

If interested.

7:30

Just get a hold of me, please.

7:32

And she speaks in in writes in detail about a lot of issues we encounter in Missoula and invest a lot of tax dollars in, including homelessness, mental health crises, drug and alcohol addiction, urban camping and incarceration.

7:52

And after the event, this is some of the feedback that I we got from participants that attended the in person May 22nd presentation.

8:04

And these are quotes from attendees.

8:05

Jenny seems awesome and what a wealth of knowledge.

8:08

She can definitely change the world.

8:11

Another attendee, please tell Jenny that her talk was the most inspiring, passionate and thought provoking presentation I've attended in a long time.

8:19

Thanks again for arranging it.

8:22

Another attendee.

8:23

However controversial her ideas about recovery may be, what she says is worth hearing, worth taking seriously, and most of all, worth doing something about.

8:33

Read the Gabriel Plan and decide for yourself.

8:36

And finally, this is it, this is hope, this is speaking to me.

8:41

I feel so grateful I got to hug her, to meet her.

8:45

You invited a hero.

8:48

So with that, if you did not attend and are interested in the content, the recording of that event is available.

8:57

Get a hold of me for that link as well.

8:59

And thank you for your time.

9:03

Thank you, Kevin.

9:04

And I just want to remind all the folks out there in online world to make sure and keep your mic muted, OK?

9:11

Anybody else in the room or online who would like to speak for three minutes on anything that they so desire?

9:21

OK, wonderful.

9:22

We'll move on to our current claims list.

9:24

Claims received as of May 29th, 2026 to June 3rd, 2026 by the Commissioner's Office total \$1,362,031.02.

9:36

We have 1234 hearings this afternoon.

9:40

The first hearing is to open.

9:42

It's to open a hearing for a resolution for the Miller Creek feral horses process and our very own Chris Loundsbury will present.

9:51

So Chris is going to talk for a bit and then after Chris is done, anyone who would like to speak to this item will have 3 minutes to do so.

9:59

OK, Thank you.

10:01

Thanks, Commissioners.

10:03

Just for the record, my name is Chris Lansbury.

10:04

I'm the Chief Administrative Officer for Missoula County.

10:07

So we're here today, commissioners, to talk a little bit about an issue that was brought to you several months ago by residents in the Miller Creek area involving the feral horses that have begun to move in out of the Sapphire Range into the Miller Creek neighborhood.

10:21

So just want to set some parameters for the presentation today and for our public comments.

10:27

So we're here today to open the hearing.

10:29

This hearing will remain open for a minimum of four weeks.

10:32

So we would have another hearing scheduled in July for the closing of that process and then a decision point for the commissioner.

10:38

So there won't be decisions made today.

10:42

Just this piece of the public hearing is really important because we want this plan to look like Missoula County, not something that is cookie cutter or come came from someplace else and to address the real issues that have been put and brought forward by the the public.

10:57

So a little bit of history on this particular group of horses.

11:00

The feral horses in this area have been there since the 1900s.

11:05

There are several bands that actually span from Miller Creek all along the Sapphire Mountains, about 60 to 100 horses in total span that distance.

11:13

We get calls in from the Lolo Florence area and that is actually one continuous band just with offshoots that have come down into the Miller Creek area.

11:24

So do you want to set a little bit of a difference here for folks and try and makes put some clarity around this between the difference between feral horses as they are in the Montana Code and what are considered wild horses?

11:36

So wild horses are species of horses that have ancestry that can be traced back and that have never been domesticated and they are protected by federal law.

11:45

And generally speaking, those that federal law allows for them to be on federal or state lands and the federal government, BLM or another state agency manages them.

11:54

In this particular case, what we have are a band of feral horses in this case.

11:58

So those are domesticated horses that have just in essence been turned loose and have grown naturally in the area.

12:04

They aren't wildlife and they aren't wild horses in this particular case.

12:08

And so there isn't a management agency that's specifically dedicated to them.

12:12

They don't fall under the state's direct jurisdiction.

12:14

As a matter of fact, the Montana Code Annotated specifically calls out counties as having a level of responsibility in a depart as well as the Department of Livestock in trying to manage a feral or a stray horses.

12:29

So a few reasons that this issue does require the county's attention is we have had members of the public come forward to the county commissioners and ask you to look at this issue and have staff spend some time and try and develop a plan that might work for Missoula County in particular.

12:43

We know that there have been issues with horse interactions in the Miller Creek area that have involved things like a horse vehicle accident that happened within the last year that ended up with the euthanasia of one of the the horses as well as hospitalization for the driver of the vehicle in that particular case.

12:58

And that unfortunately is not the only incident that has occurred in that area.

13:05

The other thing I just want to highlight here is that in this particular case, like we talked about with wild horses where they're on state or federal land, these horses are actually roaming on private property.

13:15

And so that area that we think of running along the Bitterroot or sorry, along the Sapphires up in through Miller Creek actually is mostly in private ownership.

13:23

There's very little public ownership of land in that area.

13:26

And that conflict with residents in that area as well as horse owners in that area is one of the real challenges that we face.

13:33

So talking a little bit about public safety, you know, here we did have that incident that involved a vehicle colliding with one of the horses.

13:42

You know, horses on average weigh about 1500 lbs.

13:44

So it's the significant damage factor for that as well as as well as there being you know real potential for those conflicts to occur as the horses continue to move down into that residential area.

13:57

In addition, we've had several reports of some of the stallions becoming very aggressive and territorial, especially to folks who are out walking, might be dogs, might be children in the area.

14:06

But we have received several calls around that as well as just some knowledge from working with Department of Livestock of issues that have occurred in other communities as well.

14:15

One of the things folks often don't realize, and I am by no means a horse expert, but that that came out during that is that horses carry unique diseases.

14:23

They aren't necessarily transmissible to humans, but they are really transmissible to other domesticated horses in the area.

14:28

And as well as the kind of bite strength of a horse's jaw is pretty significant and can actually do pretty significant damage to humans.

14:39

Continuing on with that idea of the of the zoologic concerns there, the Department of Livestock highlighted through their veterinary services some of the kind of natural disease that they would expect to see in a herd of this size that was feral.

14:53

And those include things like equine herpes, influenza, equine infectious anemia, salmonella, pigeon, pigeon fever.

15:01

And I'm going to have a hard time with this next word, equine pyroplasmosis, which can remain undetected in horses for a significant long time and unfortunately are really transmissible to other horses.

15:15

There are some vaccines for them, but of course, with wild horses, they aren't vaccinated.

15:18

So if somebody misses a vaccination opportunity for their domesticated horse, that's where that transmission route can occur.

15:28

So some of the challenges of course, as you know, is that Miller Creek continues to develop and it is developing densely to an urban standard for a good portion of it.

15:36

Our modern subdivision regulations both in the city and the county don't really take into account things that would work in a traditional range land setting to keep horses out of a given area.

15:46

So our fencing standards aren't designed for that in residential neighborhoods.

15:50

They are when we look at other neighborhood types, but not for residential.

15:54

Certainly HOA regulations, those kinds of things don't contemplate the idea of unmanaged horses in residential neighborhoods.

16:04

So we talked a little bit about what we kind of have for a history of them, some of the real public safety challenges that are out there, some of the zoologic challenges that are out there.

16:14

I want to talk a little bit about what the proposed resolution does, and it is a draft resolution.

16:18

It will change through the public comment period.

16:21

But what it does is it broadly defines what the difference is between abandoned and stray horses in that area.

16:29

It clarifies their legal status and then it establishes a county authorized process for the capture by private land owners.

16:37

When there are conflicts, it requires the involvement of the Department of Livestock to make sure that these are not owned horses, that they don't belong to somebody so we aren't taking away somebody's private property.

16:47

And then it provides A lawful pathway for the placement of horses through either non profit partnerships, private ownership or through the Department of Livestock.

16:56

It is important to specify that the Department of Livestock ultimately in statute has jurisdiction to dispose of horses.

17:03

And that piece that's in statute is not something we can change.

17:11

So what the resolution doesn't do is it doesn't change as I mentioned, state law, we don't have the ability to do that.

17:17

The county can't defy state law.

17:19

The process for Department of Livestock, if they become involved, if the other pathways aren't available, that's the process that has to be followed and that is a public sale of horses through their auction system.

17:30

We also don't have the ability to create law in this area.

17:35

The county is not granted jurisdiction by the legislature to make its own ordinance or its own laws around how these horses are treated.

17:41

So we have to work inside that statutory framework that's provided by the state, and that's what this resolution does.

17:48

So we are looking for public comment.

17:50

The goal here is to guide and refine the resolution and make sure that we, inside the boundary set by state law, do things in Missoula's best interest and the best way for our citizens and for the horses in the area.

18:02

The goal is not full removal of the horses.

18:05

No one is suggesting that 60 to 100 horses from this area be taken out of the area, but it is to make sure that private property rights are respected, public safety is respected, and the horse's safety is also respected.

18:19

So following the public comment period here today, we'll continue to take public comment for the next several weeks.

18:27

The best way for folks to do that, obviously they can provide public comment at today's public hearing.

18:31

They can submit written comment through the Missoula County Voice page that's dedicated to this.

18:35

And we've already received quite a bit of public comment which has guided the resolution to date, and we'll continue to do that.

18:41

And then of course, they can directly e-mail the Commission at the BCC at Missoula County dot Gov address or dot US address.

18:52

And then the next step for this is, as I mentioned, the comment period will remain open.

18:56

County staff will compile and review the public comments, make adjustments to the resolution, and then that will come back to the Board of county commissioners for your consideration.

19:04

And that process can look like adoption of the resolution can look like direction back to the staff to make changes or of course, you can choose not to adopt the resolution.

19:14

And with that, commissioners, I would ask that you open the public hearing and turn it over to the public to provide public comment.

19:20

And I'm going to just minimize my screen for folks so that you can see folks who online might have their hand raised.

19:25

Awesome, Thank you so much, Chris.

19:28

Before we dive into public comment, I did want you all to note notice that Juanita Vero, our third county commissioner, is joining us.

19:36

She is online, obviously not right here, but she's she's with us today.

19:41

So we will do in the room 1st and then we'll go online.

19:45

So anybody who would like to gets 3 minutes come on up and Dave will operate the shot clock.

19:51

And I encourage you to keep an eye on the numbers and when you come up, make sure you push the button.

19:57

You'll know that it works because the green light will come on and, and please tell us who you are before you start.

20:02

I'm Pat Culver, I live in the Miller Creek area.

20:05

I've been here over 50 years.

20:07

I have livestock and.

20:09

I wanted to read what some of my thoughts were signed for.

20:14

Suggestion and bold lettering is attention Miller Creek area visitors and residents.

20:19

You may see loose horses in this area.

20:23

These are wild horses, offspring of incomplete capture of free range rodeo bucking stock removed many years ago.

20:32

For you and your family safety, it's important not to try to approach, feed or pet wild horses and their Colts.

20:42

They may bite, charge or kick and frighten or otherwise feel threatened.

20:48

As with any wild animal, don't feed grass clippies or any other yard waste as this acts as an attraction and can cause sickness in the animals they represent.

21:04

Part of the history of this area.

21:05

Please enjoy at a distance And then I had some suggestions too for management encouraging cat trapping and capturing of ex's population to be sold at the Miles City Bucking Horse Auction.

21:18

Install information safety information signs in the area and the last one is homeowners are decided to fence their properties.

21:27

Temporary electrical fencing me be effective to them.

21:32

Thank you.

21:34

Thank you.

21:40

Marianne Bongiorno.

21:42

I didn't plan on it, but since this is right up my alley and I live out across the river, is that we talked about the horses in the residence.

21:51

What about the land?

21:52

Is that a herd district or open range?

21:54

What is it?

21:55

So typically we don't do back and forth in this, it's just public comment.

21:59

But pretty much all this area is, is private land.

22:02

It's private land even between the MPG and the homes.

22:10

Another I, I don't know of any, I don't know of any public land up there.

22:13

But really, Oh no, no, I'm not talking about.

22:15

I think we should end the end and just just say your thing because that's what we're supposed to do.

22:18

OK, here's what I would say If, if the land is indeed, it's not a matter of it being public land.

22:25

If the land is indeed a heard district or courses are considered livestock, then there are statutes and regulations regarding that.

22:35

Because if the horse is considered these feral horses livestock and sometimes in the state of Montana they are and sometimes they're not, just depends.

22:42

But if they are, then there are other regulations about their what they can and can't do.

22:49

And that's all I wanted to point out because her districts are common and so is open range throughout the West.

22:55

So we'd have to maybe determine the actual land that they're running on before we move forward with resolution.

23:04

OK.

23:05

Thank you.

23:10

Whoever would like to speak, come on up.

23:17

Hi.

23:17

My name's Millie McCormick, and I've lived up Miller Creek 5 miles.

23:22

Lost my loop since 75, and we've enjoyed the horses.

23:28

It's going to make me emotional.

23:31

We had horses ourselves and never had a problem out riding the.

23:37

It's just enough range out there that they'd stay away.

23:40

They'd stay on the mountains on either side.

23:45

So to see him and that they might be gone is pretty hard to see.

23:50

And I know people don't want a fence, but fence, If you don't like the horses, put up a fence and just please let him stay there.

24:02

Thanks.

24:02

Thank you.

24:14

Good afternoon, I'm Madeline Stevenson.

24:17

I am a local born and bred Mazzulian and a 6th generation Montanan and my parents live up in Miller Creek and I'm currently volunteering at the carousel and I volunteered at River Pines Horse Sanctuary in the past.

24:29

I also spent a whole month last summer volunteering at Return to Freedom in California, where they rescue and rehabilitate wild horses and who are separated from the families across the West from costly and deadly roundups.

24:42

In short, I love Missoula and the horses with all my heart.

24:46

I take the current stance with America's wild horses seriously, or feral in this case.

24:50

As a community, I believe we have a a proper way to coexist with the wild horses as well as find educational methods that spend as little money as possible, all while keeping folks educated and horses safe and happy.

25:04

Low levels of interference with spending should begin with wild horse crossing signs all over Miller Creek.

25:09

I'm willing to volunteer my time collaborating with fellow enthusiasts and experts to build an educational seminar for both students at Jeanette Rankin and neighborhood groups on how to live with these wild horses with respect and ease.

25:22

If we can get more organized and informed, I believe this can happen.

25:25

It's important to maintain Missoula's integrity as a community that practices conservation and local history of these horse and these horses are a reminder of that.

25:35

But in summation, I understand that fencing is not cheap.

25:38

I understand that it's difficult to restrict these animals from being on private property.

25:45

So that is a problem.

25:48

But for what it's worth, I think right now we just have to take a very subtle approach on this and just grow more educated on this as we work together as a community because there's a lot of multi, it's a multi faceted issue.

26:01

There's a lot of things to discuss here with land owners with if it's private lands, if it's roaming lands, free roam lands, excuse me.

26:10

And it's important to be cost effective with this because we already are pretty neck deep in spending as it is with roundabouts, with helping with the homelessness, with helping with housing, gosh, with zoning.

26:24

There's so many different things to address.

26:25

But because of this, I think with the horses, less is more.

26:29

And I understand as a community that can be kind of an issue.

26:32

People want this to be addressed with ease and with, oh gosh, with sustainability and practicality.

26:38

But we have to focus on the budget.

26:41

We can't be biting off more than we can chew, especially if this is a topic that we don't really know what to approach with right now.

26:48

So thank you for your time and thank you for bringing in this issue to the public.

26:51

I appreciate it.

26:52

Thank you for coming.

27:04

Hi, my name is Lauren Mill.

27:08

I live with my wife in Upper Miller Creek.

27:10

We've lived there since 2016.

27:14

I listened to the description of the threats that they pose and I, I, I hope that you bring a healthy skepticism to that because they're able to cite exactly 2 incidents.

27:30

Those are the only two in the time we've lived there and keep it in perspective.

27:37

I'd like to know how many deer car vehicle collisions there have been on Upper Miller Creek Rd.

27:42

in that time.

27:46

So y'all we're, we're not going to do any of that.

27:48

No yelling or clapping.

27:51

Just be chill that everybody speak their mind because we don't want anybody to feel intimidated to speak their truth.

27:57

That's what that's about.

27:58

It's not like you're disturbing me and Dave, just we want to let everybody have the free opportunity, clear opportunity to speak their truth.

28:05

But can I reclaim some more?

28:06

We'll give you some more seconds because I ate your time.

28:09

Please continue this distinction between feral and wild.

28:14

Yeah, that's a that might be a legal distinction.

28:17

There's they live wildly for in all practical terms, they are wild animals as much as the bears and the Cougars that also roam the area and pose A theoretical threat to everyone that lives there.

28:31

We take, we take responsible, reasonable precautions.

28:35

And I can't help thinking that a lot of this is just because some people don't like a minor inconvenience of a little horse poop in their lawn, and they're trumping up this threat argument in order to to, to make what sounds like a more valid case.

28:53

We've lived there.

28:54

All these, we have those horses roam on our property all the time.

29:01

If you try to approach them, they run, they pose, they pose no threat whatsoever.

29:07

We roam.

29:08

We roam our 10 acres without any fear of the wild horses, and they're a wonderful part and a unique part of this unique neighborhood in Missoula.

29:20

And to remove them is, you know, it would be like a big, you know, taking a big gouge out of a mountain or rounding up the deer or doing any one of a number of other things to the natural environment that exists there.

29:37

Whatever their heritage, right now, they live wildly and we want them very much to stay a part of our lives.

29:48

Thank you.

29:50

Thank you.

29:59

Good afternoon.

30:00

My name is John Fosside.

30:02

I live on Miller Creek and right my property is right where the old rodeo used to be and there's some talk that these horses are descendants of that old rodeo when a portion of them in the valley area.

30:20

I've enjoyed the horses for the last five years in my backyard, sleeping, doing what horses do in the wild.

30:30

Also I have had 0 complaints of them destroying my property.

30:38

My neighbors enjoy them just as much as I do.

30:42

As far as a danger to this community, they're wild animals like the gentleman just said.

30:50

You wouldn't approach a wild animal and have your kid pet them to.

30:54

They're not pets.

30:56

Any altercation between the horses and humans is more than likely the humans fault and not the horses.

31:03

I think the example of danger to motorists, the road that that driver hit that horse is a 35 mile an hour speed limit.

31:18

I dare say that that motorist, I have no proof of this, but was not going 35 miles an hour.

31:26

I don't see how you could ever hit a horse.

31:29

It seems unrealistic that someone would be so out of control with their auto that they would hit a horse.

31:38

I do say I know other communities in the country have horses within their residential areas.

31:47

Chickadee Virginia I visited and the horses in that community are regulated by the community.

31:56

The emphasis is put on the population and not trying to get rid of the horses.

32:06

Government is involved with inoculating the horses so that they don't pose a health threat.

32:14

Another community as the Outer Banks, North Carolina, they have managed herds that the government, local nonprofits as well, manage those horses by inoculating them yearly and managing the population.

32:34

So I concur with the gentleman in front of me, in front of me that we should live with the horses.

32:42

Anybody who gets hurt by the horses should just, they should stay away from the horses.

32:47

The horses do their own thing 24 hours a day, 12 months out of the year.

32:52

Thank you.

32:53

Thank you.

33:02

Good afternoon.

33:03

My name is Sean Hesterman.

33:05

I live up in the Miller Creek area and I have not, I've talked with quite a few people about the horses and I've not talked with one person who thinks they're an issue.

33:15

We think the issue is with the people.

33:18

I, I agree with some of the, the speakers right before me that these are wild animals.

33:25

I mean, think of all the people in Yellowstone that we all make fun of because they go up and try to pet the Buffalo.

33:30

This is no different.

33:32

1500 LB animal that's wild is wild and it's dangerous.

33:38

And so I agree with the previous guy that if there's a problem with people and horses, it's because of the people.

33:44

It's not the horses.

33:47

Horses don't run into the road and jump in your car or at your car like deer do.

33:54

They don't damage your landscaping to the extent that deer do.

34:00

They don't require you to put up fencing around your landscaping or your property.

34:06

They're not aggressive towards you.

34:08

I don't know where this aggressive stallion thing came from unless somebody they were doing the wrong thing.

34:16

The person most likely addressing specifically part of your proposal for private capture, I think that's really, really dangerous because people don't know what they're doing and they could get hurt.

34:30

I think that's setting up that.

34:32

That's just not good.

34:37

And I agree that the financial impact that deer have in our community versus the financial impact that these horses have is tremendous.

34:46

The deer cause us to put up fences.

34:49

The deer damage our landscape.

34:52

The deer run into our cars.

34:53

The horses just don't do much of anything.

34:57

They're gorgeous to watch.

34:59

They leave everybody alone.

35:01

They just kind of walk around and I don't think that that's a good use of our public time and money to address the horses.

35:10

I don't think the horses are an issue.

35:13

Thank you.

35:14

Thank you.

35:21

Good afternoon.

35:23

My name is Darren Brady.

35:24

I'm a resident of Jaden Lane.

35:26

First, I'd like to say I see a lot of familiar looking faces.

35:29

I don't know you by name but it's nice to see the people from the neighborhood out about.

35:32

I just want to share a a personal experience with the horses because I love their presence and think they make just a magical addition to our neighborhood.

35:41

I've lived up in Jane Lane for about 5 years now and routinely walk my dog at all hours of the day off leash.

35:47

I encountered these horses I would say on average once a week.

35:51

Never once had they acted aggressively or threatened to us in any way shape or form.

35:56

During that time, I have had to duck and cover being chased by deer into my garage.

36:01

The horses are perfectly, perfectly polite.

36:03

Gentlemen and ladies, Montana is a special place.

36:07

We are fortunate to live here.

36:09

It's a rugged and wild place, and that's what makes it one of the last best places.

36:13

And examples like the Miller Creek horses add and build to that wonderful tradition.

36:19

They've been there for 126 years, and I hope to see them there 126 more.

36:23

Thank you.

36:24

Thank you.

36:32

Hi, my name is Nan Condit and I am the person that saw the stud get hit in front of my house September of 2025.

36:42

The man was speeding at a probably 55 miles an hour.

36:46

The stud had been down our driveway.

36:48

I shushed him out.

36:49

I First of all I also have to preface I am a lifetime horse owner lover.

36:54

I've bred horses, trained horses.

36:56

I love their presence there.

36:58

I think what we're talking about here is a herd that has become accustomed to living in a neighborhood.

37:04

And I think there I think we need to consider the herd that's in the lower neighborhood right now, separate.

37:10

I see the upper ones up on MPG and up behind our house.

37:14

They are living well and fine as wild horses should.

37:18

But I will tell you with this horse collision, my biggest problem, the I watched this horse get hit.

37:23

I was waving at the guy.

37:24

I saw him come around the corner and he was gunning it and the sound.

37:30

I have never shared this video.

37:32

A neighbor of mine has a video of this horse's shattered leg.

37:34

I will not share it on social media, but I can tell you the trauma is real.

37:39

I called Jeremiah Peterson, who's a friend.

37:41

I said I need hoops.

37:42

Can somebody shoot this horse?

37:44

He could not come.

37:45

He it wasn't his jurisdiction.

37:47

The Highway Patrol came.

37:48

He was a young man, 28 years old.

37:51

It was an hour and a half until he got approval to shoot the horse, of which he stood with the rifle on his head.

37:58

I had to tell him where to put the bullet.

38:00

He didn't know what he said.

38:01

I've never grown up with horses.

38:03

I don't know what to do.

38:04

It was the collateral damage.

38:06

And I know it's a this is tough.

38:09

I think these horses, they need a place up there.

38:12

But we also need to figure out a process because this will happen again and a person is will get killed or another horse will die.

38:19

I mean, it's just this is a complicated issue.

38:22

I think there's a way we can have them leave live reasonably in response to the ladies.

38:29

There is, we do have a couple people up there that can safely manage the gather up these horses.

38:35

I think few of us know who those are.

38:37

We can do that.

38:38

We know right now with the resolution they could round them up.

38:41

They have to go to Department of Livestock.

38:42

What will ultimately happen, They'll go to slaughter because most people probably won't want to claim them.

38:48

So anyway, if somebody wants to talk to me about it privately, I'm happy to.

38:52

This is, again, it's very complicated, but we need to also establish some sort of policy about what happens when this does happen.

39:04

And these horses, we'll get down on Hwy.

39:06

93 and when a car that's coming 60 miles an hour and hits, hits one of these horses, it is not going to be pretty.

39:13

This horse totaled this guy's truck.

39:17

And I, I told him, I said, Sir, you were speeding.

39:21

He said, no, I wasn't.

39:22

But his, his truck tells a story.

39:24

Anyway.

39:25

I, I feel very strongly about it.

39:26

I love the horses, but we need to come to a, to some sort of conclusion to fix the problem.

39:33

Thank you.

39:42

Hello, my name is Jenny Johnson.

39:45

I think we can all agree that we love the horses.

39:49

I have owned horses.

39:50

I worked for veterinarian hospitals.

39:53

I've seen horses injured and sick and, and I I know I, I am very protective of my own.

40:02

The herd in Miller Creek has no one to care for them.

40:09

It's not so much that they're in someone's yard, they're possibly dangerous.

40:18

The the issue is more when a horse is injured, when something happens, who do you call?

40:26

It's difficult enough to get deer taken care of.

40:29

If you have a deer that's wrapped in wire, it's difficult to get anyone to help that deer.

40:35

This is a horse that is so much bigger and it requires people with knowledge to come in and help.

40:43

And there is no overseeing group.

40:47

If there was an organization, and there are plenty of people get organized, figure it out, I I would really avoid the roundup.

40:59

In a general roundup, let's round up the herd.

41:02

Let's thin the the herd and deal with the livestock and send them to a sale.

41:10

As Ann said, they will go to slaughter.

41:12

I have show horses that are ending up in the slaughter pipeline, so we don't want those horses to end up there.

41:20

But these stallions, these Colts, they need to be castrated.

41:24

Let's keep the herd thin and that requires management.

41:28

So it's all about the horses get educated form a group.

41:36

Let's think about their their safety and not so much focus on well, they're pretty in their in our yard are very fertilized yards, which is very dangerous for the horses metabolism.

41:48

I have a horse that's got Cushing's disease because she was on irrigated pasture, not someone's fertilized yard.

41:55

So there's there's a lot of information out there, but I think if the community can just think about the welfare of the horses and how we can help those horses while still being able to enjoy them.

42:09

I think the lower Miller Creek.

42:10

I agree I'm won't be surprised when that herd ends up on Hwy.

42:16

93 so but thank you very much.

42:19

Thank you.

42:25

Hi, I'm Ann Benninger.

42:27

I have a one of the Facebook pages called the wild horses of Miller Creek and my name is Annie Montani on there.

42:33

If anybody is knows that that page and I've talked to literally hundreds of people and almost all of it's positive.

42:41

We want to keep the horses and we recognize that is a complicated issue because there's no management agency.

42:48

And I've also talked to so many people have reached out to me and said we want to form a community organization to look after these horses and to deal with the concerns that the public have that where the horses are a nuisance or a problem or they're afraid of them or they're doing damage.

43:04

And then also do have an educational component and where we go into the schools and we educate in neighborhoods, Flyers, whatever we need to do.

43:15

And also we have had a sign company come forward and say that they would like to make signs, you know, to the regulation and also to make sandwich boards that maybe we move around as we figure out how to deal with the horses moving through neighborhoods.

43:32

Anyway, the interest is that the people in the community, they want to help.

43:36

And I think that we can do this.

43:39

I think there's so much interest and people have time and people have resources and people have experience.

43:45

There's been veterinarians that have come forward and said that they would help.

43:50

And so that's what I want to do.

43:51

And so I'm hoping people will join me.

43:55

Thank you.

44:10

I think you just turned it off.

44:11

Oh great, good afternoon.

44:14

First of all, just to preface, I am on vacation and here as a resident of Miller Creek.

44:21

I was born and raised in Missoula, My name is Sharmel Owens.

44:25

I currently sent you a petition with over 1200 signatures to each commissioner to let you know that there are a lot of people in Missoula that are behind these horses and would really prefer education to our young people about the horses.

44:47

They would also like to express that these horses have been around in the 13 years that I've lived in Miller Creek.

44:56

They've been a joy.

44:57

My granddaughter was the one that actually really motivated me to do the petition because she was so sad when she heard that there was possibly going to be a roundup and the horses were going to be removed.

45:11

And I think, you know that many of us in Miller Creek could join together and could help to educate and place signs and promote good proper techniques around these horses to allow them to be here.

45:29

I've had them on my back deck pretty continuously in Miller Creek, and not one time have I encountered dangerous situations with these horses.

45:41

And I just want to double state here that the horse that was killed was a stallion from the upper group, not this group of 10.

45:51

It seems like this group of 10 has been the center of controversy, but that group of 10 was not one of the ones that was killed.

46:00

And so these horses have managed themselves.

46:05

But this year, since we have started talking about horses and roundups and whatnot, I have seen some pretty poor behavior in the Miller Creek neighborhood, such as rubberized pellets being used to scare the horses, horses being chased by 4 Wheelers.

46:25

And I don't think any of that behavior is adding to the conduct of these horses.

46:30

And so for their protection, I do think we need an education and management plan that educates them, put signs on the roadway and we help to manage them.

46:40

Thank you.

46:47

Hi, my name is Holly Michael and I live in the Miller Creek neighborhood.

46:52

And along the lines of creating a community that manages the horses, I think a proper resolution would be to designate the horses as a county heritage resource.

47:05

By designating the horses as a heritage resource, it would allow a nonprofit group to form within the community that could raise money to help support horses management if like vaccinations are required or to to manage the size of the horse if birth control inoculations are used.

47:29

If you pay for signs and public education that it would allow fundraising and maybe grant writing proposals to protect a heritage resource of the county.

47:42

Thank you.

47:43

Thank you.

47:49

Good afternoon.

47:50

I'm David Aronofsky, retired general counsel and law professor at the University of Montana.

47:55

I am not a Miller Creek resident, but I have taken an interest in this from a, frankly, from a law professor standpoint because for 20 years I taught the legislation course in the law school and my students and I enacted over 130 statutes at last count, most of which are still on the books.

48:17

So I took an interest in the laws applicable to the horses and I saw a statutory mess.

48:24

To put it bluntly, that mess is reflected, no offense, in your draft resolution, which says it doesn't apply to estray horses but does apply to abandoned horses.

48:37

And yet the the 100% of the Miller Creek horses are estray 75 to 90% are abandoned.

48:47

You can't get it both ways, and I know there was no deliberate intent here to misstate the law, but you need to fix that.

48:56

I sent a fairly detailed comment the other night that I won't repeat here, but I've got some suggestions on what the county might consider doing.

49:06

First of all, you have a number of people, myself included, willing and able to contribute money to a management plan that keeps the horses alive, healthy, if possible, scientifically speaking, together.

49:22

And I I've got some doubts about the last because of the amount of acreage that is needed to sustain the horses healthily.

49:30

But I think maybe asking the community who's willing and able to step up and donate money for the management plan that was just referred to would not be a bad idea.

49:39

And if you want a charitable contribution, we can even give money to the county itself.

49:44

So that part's easy.

49:46

I think an interagency agreement with the Department of Livestock is absolutely essential.

49:52

I signed off on over 1000 of these in the 20 years I was AUM general counsel, and you all do it all the time.

50:00

So another interagency agreement that allows the state to delegate to the county certain state functions under state auspices.

50:08

Obviously that would be helpful here because it would give you some additional authority to take the the issue head on.

50:16

Three, I think I was disappointed not to see a management plan reflected in the draft resolution.

50:22

I think we need 1 and I think Missoula is in a unique place to design one with the help of the community.

50:30

Let me add one other here.

50:31

I'm here to advocate for the horses.

50:34

My goals are in this order.

50:35

Keep the horses alive, keep the horses healthy and if possible, as I said, keep the the horses together.

50:44

So I would like to address one final point.

50:49

I'll be a minute, a second or two over my time.

50:51

I think we, I think we just I think we just hit it and we're really going to stick with the three minutes out of fairness.

50:56

But maybe you, David or Mr.

50:57

Yanofsky, maybe you could hand your question to somebody else and they could come around.

51:01

Thank you.

51:01

Hold the button, hit the greens buttons on.

51:16

You're all good to go.

51:17

Good afternoon.

51:18

My name is Madeline Spencer.

51:19

I live way back Miller Creek and I'm very happy to hear the support today for the protection and just leave the horses alone.

51:31

I would like to present a correction in the summary that I read online regarding the vehicle accident.

51:39

I'm so sorry if I I'm surely nervous.

51:43

You're all right.

51:46

Regarding the vehicular accident, you mentioned that the man was hospitalized.

51:51

That is incorrect.

51:53

That is my father-in-law, my mother-in-law and my 6 year old son were in the car and I want to apologize on their behalf because it is a great loss for our community and I don't want that to be misrepresented as a argument against preserving these horses.

52:17

They are a gift to the community.

52:20

My father-in-law is a menace on the road.

52:29

As a result of this accident and his lack of integrity in taking ownership for his part in the accident, he is no longer allowed to drive my son.

52:40

My family took this very seriously and it's caused great tension for us because of his lack of integrity and how it was handled.

52:54

I grew up around horses.

52:55

I love them.

52:56

I support our national parks, our natural resources.

53:00

And so a loss like this so close to home is particularly sensitive.

53:06

Also, I am very nervous.

53:07

That's the tears.

53:08

OK, so sorry, but I would like that corrected in future amendments that the IT wasn't the horse's fault.

53:18

And my father-in-law no longer lives here.

53:21

They moved very far away and he won't be a problem like in this way again.

53:31

So thank you.

53:33

Thank you.

53:46

Hello.

53:47

Good afternoon.

53:49

My name is Tammy Stott.

53:51

And I'm really nervous.

53:52

I don't do good at public speaking.

53:54

I'm just going to read my stuff.

53:58

So I live in Missoula, not at Miller Creek.

54:02

My family has been from Stevensville since the 1930s.

54:07

I want to begin by saying that I agree with the purpose of this resolution.

54:14

Public safety, humane treatment, and responsible management are important goals.

54:20

The County has authority under MCA Title 7 and the Department of Livestock has authority over under MCA Title 81.

54:28

That process is needed, but I am not here to oppose that.

54:33

I'm asking you to address 3 legal gaps before you vote because as written, this resolution could actually harm the horses rather than help them.

54:44

Capture and removal cannot be the only option.

54:50

1st the conflict between Section 2 and Title 81.

54:54

Section 2 states that this resolution applies only to the abandoned horses and does not apply to a stray livestock.

55:02

However, as an as the attorney David Aronofsky pointed out, most Miller Creek horses appear to meet both definitions.

55:10

Abandoned horses under MCA 81-4-5 O one and a straight livestock under MCA 81-4-6 O one.

55:21

That creates A jurisdictional conflict between the county and the Department of Livestock.

55:26

If a strays are excluded, then the herd may be excluded as well.

55:33

Please amend Section 2 to include the astray horses and in and require the County and the Department of Livestock to resolve that clown that conflict before a resolution takes place.

55:46

Second, MCA 27-30-20 four allows land owners to remove or destroy nuisances.

55:53

We recognize that land owners have that right.

55:56

However, Section 6 currently makes the Department of Livestock Sale Procedures the primary outcome that creates pressure towards lethal solutions instead of relocation.

56:08

Please amend Section 6 to include rescue placement and no kill options Speak and have that be prior prioritized.

56:22

We don't want any of these horses killed and if you take them to auction, their chances of being killed are very good.

56:34

I want them to have a chance.

56:36

Third, I'm very disappointed that there isn't a real management plan program.

56:43

I myself would donate funds and put sweat equity in to protect these horses.

56:48

I have no problem doing that.

56:51

Section 1 speaks about humane treatment.

56:53

Humane treatment should mean more than paperwork and removal.

56:58

Add coexistence measures.

56:59

Prohibit feeding, petting, and harassing these horses and actually enforce it.

57:04

Install Rd.

57:05

signage.

57:06

Designate a single agency to respond to conflicts of injured animals, like the Department of Livestock.

57:14

Establish a nonprofit our volunteer management program to monitor the herd, track health, and coordinate responses.

57:21

We also can consider targeted management tools such as removal of young stallions and fertility of the mares if necessary.

57:30

I'm not unreasonable.

57:32

The Western, the Western heritage and history of these herds actually matter.

57:39

More than 70 years, people and horses have coexisted here.

57:42

Experience shows that these roundups alone do not solve the problem of the horses long term, because there's more horses around, and if you remove these horses, more will come.

57:55

It's better to keep the horses that we know than ones that we don't know.

58:00

And more will come down.

58:02

Commissioners, I agree.

58:04

Not that a process is needed, but let us make this Miller Creek coexistence resolution, not simply a capture and remove resolution that does not resolve or mitigate this concern in the long term.

58:18

Use all of the tools available under Montana law.

58:23

Resolve the Estrella abandonment conflict, protect land owners and drivers, and persevere or preserve the horses as part of our community because so many of this community values and appreciates these horses.

58:40

This is not horses versus people.

58:42

It is Miller Creek community taking care of Miller Creek horses, which are beautiful and cherish livestock that roam free and make Montana the best place to live.

58:54

Thank you.

58:55

Great.

58:55

Thank you.

59:09

Good afternoon.

59:10

I'm Al Gilfillan.

59:11

We live close to the intersection of Miller or Linda Vista Blvd.

59:16

and Jack Drive.

59:18

We've lived there since basically that was the 1st St.

59:21

in the new subdivision.

59:23

We've watched that area grow immensely.

59:26

It's a community, it's a neighborhood.

59:30

The aspect that I would like to bring to everyone is not anything that's been addressed yet, but it's actually that these horses and deer and fox and raccoons, I think they all contribute to the safety of our neighborhood.

59:46

I watch little kids, especially now they've got those little motorized scooters they're busting around.

59:51

They have no clue what they're doing on those things and they are everywhere.

59:56

And pretty soon, instead of it being a deer or a horse, it's going to be one of our children or grandchildren.

1:00:03

Speed limit signs in that area seem to be more of a suggestion.

1:00:08

If you're not going 5 or 10 miles over the speed limit, you're getting honked at or flipped off or something.

1:00:13

So, you know, speed.

1:00:16

I think the more people that realize maybe they could total a car out driving around in a family neighborhood, maybe they'll slow down and pay attention to where they're, you know, what's on the road, what's close to it, 'cause God forbid someday it's one of our children or grandchildren.

1:00:33

So I really think that they contribute to the safety of our neighborhood.

1:00:36

Besides that, on this last Christmas, we had a large gathering at our house from out of town and we had eight of them in our yard for Christmas presents.

1:00:43

So it was beautiful.

1:00:45

And so I'd like to see see them stay there.

1:00:48

I think educating down at Jeannette Rankin with the young kids and on how to, you know, be around wild animals and those horses, I mean, we never see them run.

1:01:02

So they didn't they don't run out in front of cars.

1:01:05

So they're sitting on the side of the road and and that we just need to pay more attention to that and the safety of our neighborhoods.

1:01:12

Thank you, thank you.

1:01:21

Hello, my name is Carrie Schreiber.

1:01:23

I'm speaking in support of the horses and common sense solutions.

1:01:28

And then I'm sorry if I'm being redundant with things that have been stated earlier, but I called the old cowboy that brought me up and horses on the way here.

1:01:37

And he said the state brand inspector is the one that can determine whether or not they're abandoned livestock or if they were born wild and that they can be tattooed so that they're known to be wild Lord horses.

1:01:51

And that they are protected as other wildlife is.

1:01:56

We cannot legally be haunted or rounded up.

1:02:01

It sounds like it really should be in the jurisdiction of the state to look at a lot of this.

1:02:05

And my understanding is that the Linda Vista HOA does not allow fences in the front yard and Montana is a fence out state.

1:02:18

So when we're thinking about common sense solutions, why not have the HOA that's bringing it seems like a fair amount of this complaint to take care of that restriction that's letting people just handle the problem by fencing their front yards.

1:02:35

I mean, it seems really weird that we would be getting rid of wild animals rather than asking people that build a subdivision out in the country to just take reasonable measures and feeding the horses.

1:02:52

I I agree with also common sense that people shouldn't be working at habituating them.

1:02:56

That doesn't work either.

1:02:57

So I I do hope that you all come up with a management plan and hopefully it would be too expensive to send them down to slaughter.

1:03:06

From what I've been hearing, there's just really one slaughterhouse that's being used in Mexico and Texas is where the feed lot is and that's from another old, grinky old rancher, not just sensitive folks like me.

1:03:20

So I, I do hope that you'll work on a management plan and some common sense solutions here.

1:03:25

Thank you.

1:03:26

Thank you.

1:03:33

OK, if there's no more folks in the room, we'll go to folks online.

1:03:37

So for you all online who have your hands up, we just have typically 2 initials, sometimes one initial.

1:03:44

So we don't know who you are.

1:03:46

Could you OK, could you please make sure and say your name if I don't see it, say your name.

1:03:52

And you might want to break out your phone and set your stopwatch for three minutes so you'll know where you are.

1:03:58

We have a clock here in the room and we'll have to cut you off.

1:04:01

But if you can cut yourself off, that'd be more polite.

1:04:03

So we'll start with WT, which looks like William Taylor.

1:04:07

That's me.

1:04:08

William Taylor.

1:04:09

Thank you.

1:04:10

And I started my timer here, so I'll.

1:04:11

Excellent.

1:04:12

Thank you.

1:04:13

Under the radar.

1:04:14

I'm William Taylor.

1:04:15

I'm associate professor and curator of archaeology at the University of Colorado, and I specialize in the study of horse domestication and the kind of the ancient ecology of horses in North America, their history in Montana and beyond.

1:04:34

And I, I was born and raised in Missoula.

1:04:37

Folks are over in orchard homes.

1:04:39

Actually, I know many of the folks in the audience here, but I wanted to touch base on some of the just the historical and archaeological facts at play 'cause I think they're kind of misconstrued in a way that could be important, whether that's legally or logistically.

1:04:53

I saw in the in the presentation the comment about feral, the distinction between horses whose ancestors have never been domesticated versus those that are a descendant of, you know, those that once were.

1:05:06

There are no such meaningful distinctions in North America today.

1:05:10

Every animal in North America outside of a few handful of zoos is a descendant of a horse that was domesticated at at some point.

1:05:21

So, so I'm not sure what the distinction here is it, it probably pertains to the, the local history of of Miller Creek.

1:05:28

And it sounds like there's some stories around the rodeo.

1:05:32

What I will point out is that, you know, the 1900s in terms of the history of Missoula, that's very, that's a very early days in terms of when we have high quality written records.

1:05:44

And I would be very skeptical that we actually have a solid understanding of the origins of that herd and their sort of relationship to that question of are these escaped recent livestock?

1:05:58

Our research has shown that basically by the early to mid 1600s, you had domestic horses in the areas near western Montana.

1:06:07

Today you've got historic records that that demonstrate these, you know, a century or more before Lewis and Clark, you had horses in this region.

1:06:17

And I think tribes need to be consulted.

1:06:20

I think it's important to recognize that before European folks were around, horses in this area would have been both wild and domestic, some living free range, others living more structured lives and probably living alongside each other for several centuries.

1:06:35

I don't think, I think we need genetic research.

1:06:37

And I'm happy to help with this if you really want to pin down the nuances of feral domestic recent, I, I think more historical research needs to be done.

1:06:48

And it's important to note that basically all these animals are connected to a Pleistocene ecology that goes back to the last Ice Age here, you know, 1214 thousand years.

1:06:59

Horses are part of that landscape.

1:07:00

So I encourage working with tribes.

1:07:03

I encourage finding some infrastructure and especially pinning down that historical and and genetic background because it it doesn't sound correct to me.

1:07:13

Thanks a lot.

1:07:16

OK M, please say your name and you get 3 minutes.

1:07:25

OK, this is Matt Larson, thanks for allowing me to speak.

1:07:28

I'm a fifth generation Montana and I grew up South of Lolo, just South of Travellers Rest.

1:07:34

And I wanted to double down on what was spoken on just before me by the previous comments.

1:07:38

Or I can recall growing up capturing these horses and rounding them up and returning them to the former owner who is now, I think moved to like Canada somewhere.

1:07:52

But definitely wanted to double down on the historic precedents of the, the, you know, equine species in general in this area.

1:08:00

And I think it's, it's even documented in Lewis and Clark's journals that they bought horses in this region when they stayed here, traveling through from, from the native, native people of the land.

1:08:12

So I, I wanted to encourage the council to make this more than just a can capture transfer type of agreement.

1:08:22

Make it more holistic.

1:08:24

It sounds like there already are private land owners that are engaging in kind of euthanasia and like management of these herds and greater pieces of lands around the surrounding kind of Missoula area.

1:08:38

So I think a coordinated effort could be much more effective to kind of keep the public safe from these these wild animals.

1:08:48

And I think, yeah, it is pretty standard.

1:08:50

And I, I do kind of double down on what was said about the homeowners associations and these new developments.

1:08:56

Solving the problem by just building fences is not a not act, you know, equitable or, or sustainable.

1:09:05

So thanks for allowing me to speak.

1:09:09

Hey DC, you have 3 minutes.

1:09:12

Deb Cole.

1:09:13

Yes, this is Deb Cole.

1:09:15

I just have a couple of comments.

1:09:18

We my husband and I have lived in our home by the 1st roundabout on Miller Creek for 44 years and we have never ever had a wild horse on property.

1:09:31

So I it's very unlikely for them ever to get down to Hwy.

1:09:35

93.

1:09:36

I don't think that's a part of their range.

1:09:40

I know they have been by the Linda Vista Golf Course and the dog there, but they have never come down here.

1:09:48

And I think the biggest problem is that the developers that are building homes on their range need to take some responsibility.

1:09:57

The developers charge the people for roads.

1:10:00

They should also be charging them for care of the horses.

1:10:05

People that are moving there should pay a fee.

1:10:08

The Realtors should people that when they live in this area, they're gonna have fox.

1:10:14

They're gonna have coyotes, lions, bears, wild horses.

1:10:21

I also think that the city, I wonder what their responsibility is, what they're gonna do.

1:10:26

I think they should allow people to be able to fence out.

1:10:31

And I think in some cases with the wild horses, it's important to let nature's take its court.

1:10:38

Like the foal that was abandoned by the herd, there is obviously something with the foal.

1:10:45

People picked it up, took it to the vet, it eventually died.

1:10:47

Anyway, the herd knew that it was not survive and they left it.

1:10:53

I think that should have been done.

1:10:55

And then a big question is what number is acceptable for the number of horses to keep in the herd?

1:11:04

What 'cause obviously with several, there are several stallions you're gonna have.

1:11:12

I think there's two folds now probably, and there's another one due.

1:11:15

So if you've heard by three to four horses a year, something needs to be done about that.

1:11:20

But I really, really hope that the county will keep the horses wild.

1:11:26

Thank you very much.

1:11:27

Thank you.

1:11:32

Could we have anybody else online or in the room?

1:11:38

OK, then what What I'd like to do is a little a 5 minute break and then we'll come back and we'll do commissioner questions.

1:11:51

Sorry, I'm at work, so I'm just going to keep brief.

1:11:53

I normally don't speak at these things.

1:11:56

Yeah.

1:11:56

Tell us who you are, ma'am.

1:11:58

I'm Sheila Cushing.

1:11:59

I live up on the hill by like the den.

1:12:04

Sorry.

1:12:05

Like I said, I'm at work.

1:12:07

I have not lived in Montana for long.

1:12:09

I've only lived here for about two years.

1:12:11

I'm originally from New Jersey.

1:12:13

But my biggest Welcome to Montana moment were were those horses.

1:12:16

I have personally loved those horses so much.

1:12:20

So I think it would be a real, real upsetting moment if we move them.

1:12:27

We just leave them alone.

1:12:29

I mean, personally, it's no different than like, a bear or a deer, like being on your property.

1:12:35

So, yeah, that was all just in my piece.

1:12:38

Leave them alone.

1:12:42

OK.

1:12:42

Thank you.

1:12:44

Anybody else in the room or online?

1:12:48

I don't.

1:12:50

I'm Amber Phillips.

1:12:52

I live Upper Miller Creek.

1:12:54

In the process of living listening to this conversation.

1:12:59

I literally had the horses walk through my front yard.

1:13:03

I love the horses.

1:13:05

They're wild, they're part of our environment back here.

1:13:10

I do believe that we need some way to help them, manage them, take care of them, but the idea that they might be rounded up and slaughtered absolutely devastates me.

1:13:22

They are such a joy to watch and enjoy and I really hope that we can come to some ability to take care of them and not just remove them.

1:13:34

So thank you.

1:13:37

Thank you once again In the room or online.

1:13:49

OK, then we're going to take a 5 minute break.

1:13:51

We'll come back and we'll do commissioner questions and carry on with the process.

1:13:56

OK, thank you.

1:14:00

I'm on the other side of the framework.

1:14:48

Me.

1:15:35

Hello.

1:19:56

Hello, hello, hello, hello.

1:20:41

Hello.

1:20:43

Hello.

1:20:45

Hi, can you hear me?

1:20:51

Phone number ended in 92.

1:21:15

If you can hear me, they're taking a 3 minute break and they'll be back in a few minutes.

1:21:49

OK Welcome back everybody.

1:21:51

Hope you enjoyed that break.

1:21:53

If y'all are involved in conversation, I would encourage you to take that into the hallway and we're going to carry on with our next hearing.

1:22:02

OK, so Next up is Sam Scott to talk to us.

1:22:06

It's got 2, two different tax abatement issues.

1:22:09

So please take it away.

1:22:10

Sam.

1:22:12

Good afternoon, commissioners.

1:22:14

Sam Scott with the clerk and treasurer's office.

1:22:16

And hang on, Sam, I'm sorry I screwed up on me.

1:22:20

I said we were going to do commissioner questions after this.

1:22:23

I conferred with Chris.

1:22:24

We're not doing that because this is going to stay open for a month.

1:22:27

We're just going to keep collecting comment.

1:22:28

When we come back next time, we'll do commissioner questions.

1:22:31

So apologies on my part.

1:22:33

I messed up that on process.

1:22:34

Sorry to interrupt you, Sam.

1:22:35

Please carry on.

1:22:38

All good.

1:22:39

So again, Sam Scott with the Clerk and Treasurer's Office back in April, we initially opened some hearings on tax abatement, two different tax abatement applications for Montana Knife Company and we have postponed those hearings a few different times or tabled them ultimately to today.

1:22:58

And we have now received final word from the applicant that they would like to withdraw one of the two applications, which is the 1524.

1:23:09

Would you please mute out there?

1:23:11

Thank you.

1:23:12

152414 O1 new or expanding industry to property tax abatement, they would like to withdraw that that application.

1:23:20

So we have no action to take on that today nor in the future.

1:23:25

The other application however is a tax abatement application under 15/6 1:38 which is for manufacturing machinery, fixtures and equipment also known as Class 8 property.

1:23:38

They submitted this application on February 28th earlier this year for a project that commenced in January of 2025 and completed in December 20.

1:23:47

On December 24th of 2025 projects estimated cost was just under three and a half million dollars.

1:23:55

The statute allows for and excuse me if I if I misstate anything here before the the board to consider these applications and abate the value of the improvements over \$1,000,000.

1:24:11

Because the 1st \$1 million is exempt from taxation at either 100 percent, 90% or 80%.

1:24:21

There it is by default if you make no decision approved at 100%.

1:24:27

So any cost of this projects in excess of \$1 million, that value would then receive a tax abatement at whatever rate is decided today.

1:24:39

Sam, are we abating the actual taxes paid or abating the value?

1:24:44

The we are abating the actual value of with the property would been would then be valued at that.

1:24:52

That's what I that's what I meant, not the dollars, but the value of the property that's then taxed at a specific rate.

1:24:57

That's my understanding, yes.

1:24:58

OK, Thank you.

1:25:00

To jump forward real quickly, in 2024 you adopted this policy number 24-1 to guide your decision making on this space where in excess of that \$1 million amount, any equipment that was put into service between the values of 0 and \$10,000 would see even receive an abatement of 100%.

1:25:22

I have a typo here.

1:25:23

That next number is supposed to be 10,000 to 20,000 receives 90% and then 20,000 and \$1.00 and greater receives the 80% abatement.

1:25:31

The way this works is that the abatement is applicable for the first five years after the equipment is placed in service.

1:25:38

After Year 5, the exemption has been phased out at 20% per year ending at if approved at 100% year 10, it is fact taxed at its full value or if you're 9 if you if it's approved at a 20% abatement or you're 9 if it's approved at a 90% abatement.

1:25:57

Sam is new equipment is purchased after we do this is that new equipment also subject to the same law?

1:26:04

It would be a different application, but it but it's also yes, yes.

1:26:08

OK.

1:26:11

So with that said, as the project's estimated cost is 3 and a half million dollars, that's two and a half million that would be significantly greater than the 20,000 and \$1.00 that we have here.

1:26:24

So per Policy 24-1, if that's how you choose to move forward, this abatement would be approved at 80%.

1:26:31

All of this is contingent on the Department of Revenue making the determination that the equipment place and service is qualifying Class A property.

1:26:39

So the motion and resolution, if approved, reflect that.

1:26:44

Oh, I just want to add one thing about tax abatement and please correct me as a tax expert if I get this wrong.

1:26:49

A tax abatement does not mean this person just saves money.

1:26:52

And that's that, which is wonderful.

1:26:53

Everybody would like to save money.

1:26:54

What actually means is that the taxes they would have paid were it not for the abatement are now paid by others.

1:27:01

Is that correct?

1:27:03

That's my understanding as well.

1:27:04

OK, thank you.

1:27:05

I just wanted to be clear on that.

1:27:07

Could you say that again?

1:27:08

Sure.

1:27:08

So if somebody receives a tax abatement, they do not just save money, certainly they save money, but the money they would have paid in taxes were it not for a tax abatement is now paid by others.

1:27:19

So when someone enjoys A weighty tax abatement, that does indeed increase property taxes on everyone else by a small amount to cover the value of that abatement.

1:27:29

And and that's not to say anybody is doing the wrong thing by following the law or making this application.

1:27:33

I'm in no way saying that.

1:27:34

I just want to describe to the three people listening what the effect of an abatement is on all taxpayers.

1:27:42

This is not like getting a break on your income taxes.

1:27:44

You just pay less and it goes away.

1:27:46

If you get an abatement, you pay less and everyone else pays what you would have paid.

1:27:51

Thanks, that makes sense, sort of.

1:27:57

Should I try?

1:27:58

It looks like our attorney is looking quizzical over here, too.

1:28:01

I, I I can, I can, I can try again.

1:28:03

If you save \$100 on your property taxes, all the other property taxpayers cover the 100 you missed via an abatement.

1:28:11

That means everybody's taxes might go up by point 02 cents until that 100 is is recovered.

1:28:17

The abatement is not subtracted from the total taxes that all paid.

1:28:21

It's just subtracted from your bill.

1:28:24

What you would have paid is covered by everyone else's taxes.

1:28:27

So an abatement is a tax increase on everyone who doesn't enjoy enjoy that abatement.

1:28:33

But I thought this is about the value, not the dollar.

1:28:37

Exactly.

1:28:37

Well, Juan, there is a tax impact in reducing the, the, the, the value.

1:28:42

We don't know exactly what that is.

1:28:45

But if we reduce the value and maintain the same tax rate, there is a reduction in this person's taxes or this company's taxes.

1:28:51

And those dollars would have to be made-up by everyone else who pays taxes.

1:28:57

I can't say it any other way.

1:28:58

If I'm fast, not getting through, I'm family.

1:29:00

No, I, I, I, I'm following.

1:29:02

But I, I guess I can give up.

1:29:03

The value had been reduced so that.

1:29:06

Yes.

1:29:06

And a value reduction while maintaining the same rate equals a reduction in taxes.

1:29:12

Sam's even nodding.

1:29:14

Yeah.

1:29:14

OK.

1:29:15

And the tricky part with these types of exemptions is that we don't truly know the value that the Department of Revenue is going to apply.

1:29:22

So we can't say this or there is a specific dollar amount to this yet because while they claim a specific dollar amount of the project that may be what they spent, what the Department of Revenue is going to determine is the actual value of that equipment may be different.

1:29:35

And so we can't say exactly what the abatement equals, right?

1:29:40

So imagine there's a county out there, it's called arbitrary, capricious and unlawful.

1:29:45

And the three residents of this county are me, Dave and Juan.

1:29:48

And our total financial obligation in terms of paying taxes is 300 bucks.

1:29:53

Dave gets an abatement.

1:29:55

You don't have to pay your 100.

1:29:56

Now you're going to pay 50.

1:29:58

Juan and I are each going to pay 175.

1:30:03

We're covering your costs.

1:30:05

Your costs don't just go away from the total.

1:30:07

We cover your costs in our bill.

1:30:09

So a tax abatement means everybody else's taxes go up a teeny bit to cover what you would have paid in the lovely community of arbitrary, capricious and unlawful.

1:30:22

OK, Sam, so we don't really have a choice here.

1:30:24

We just follow the numbers.

1:30:25

Is that correct?

1:30:28

The policy says you can always choose something different than the policy, but the policy, this would be our policy that we adopted.

1:30:35

So it'd probably be best to follow our policy.

1:30:38

I do have a question.

1:30:39

So as far as depreciation goes, presumably that would be factored in over the decade that this is in effect or how does that work?

1:30:51

So again, I am not an expert in the actual evaluation of this type of equipment, but my understanding is that this type of equipment is often devaluated to such a point at the end of the 10 years that it's not taxed at all at that point.

1:31:04

Or if it is, it's at a very small portion of what it was at the start of the OK.

1:31:10

It was placed in service.

1:31:12

So the tax shift is magnified in some sense and at the end of 10 years you may not get any revenue.

1:31:20

So, OK, there is a motion.

1:31:23

I'm ready to make a motion if unless there's oh public comment, I guess.

1:31:27

Thank you.

1:31:28

I would anybody like to speak on this?

1:31:32

Marion says no.

1:31:33

OK, OK.

1:31:36

I would move to approve a tax abatement on the qualifying Class 8 property owned by Montana Knife Company at 80% during the initial five year assessment.

1:31:45

Contingent on the determination of eligibility of the equipment by the Montana Department of Revenue.

1:31:52

Second.

1:31:54

OK.

1:31:54

Once again, I'll call for any public comment.

1:31:59

OK.

1:31:59

All in favor.

1:32:00

Aye, aye, aye.

1:32:01

Thanks, Sam.

1:32:01

Thank you.

1:32:05

OK.

1:32:05

Next up is a resolution on flood pain, flood plain fee revision from Matt Heimel.

1:32:20

OK.

1:32:20

Good afternoon.

1:32:21

I'm Matt Heiml with Planning, Development and Sustainability.

1:32:23

I'm the floodplain administrator and a county planner.

1:32:27

And I will share a brief PowerPoint about our proposed adjustment to floodplain development permit application fees and there we are.

1:32:45

OK.

1:32:50

So Missoula County is a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program, and as such, we have flood plain development permits to review any new development in the regulated flood hazard area.

1:33:02

State statute authorizes local governments to regulate, establish, and change fees, rates, charges, and classifications that are imposed for services as long as those are reasonable and related to the cost of providing the service.

1:33:15

Also, the administrative rules of Montana under floodplain management provide that the floodplain regulations may include the imposition of a reasonable application fee for the processing of permit applications, and the Missoula County Floodplain Regulations further authorized the collection of fees to cover the review cost.

1:33:33

Floodplain review services in the county do benefit property owners, developers, and the general public alike.

1:33:39

Some examples of those of how public how floodplain reviews in the public interest include we're minimizing impacts from flooding.

1:33:46

We provide the public knowledge of flood hazards.

1:33:48

We are evaluating the cumulative impact of any development in in the floodplain to make sure that there are no adverse impacts caused by changes in flood depth or velocity or erosion forces around the river.

1:33:59

For example, a floodplain review can reduce private and public flood losses.

1:34:04

We minimize risk to public health, safety and property in times of flooding and of course we maintain compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program or NFIP standards and a minimum state standards.

1:34:17

We were reviewing floodplain development review fees and the planning, development and sustainability of department determined that fees for some projects are higher than necessary and staff is recommending lowering certain small scale permit fees to better reflect the cost of floodplain review for per for floodplain permits and those will just be under a few small scale permit types.

1:34:41

So this is a list of the floodplain review fees that reflect the July 1, 2026 fee schedule, which accounts for an inflation.

1:34:58

All of these bold fees would be the small scale types and without this amendment those would all be slightly over \$1000.

1:35:09

We're proposing to break these out into several categories based on where certain projects can be classified in the floodplain regulations so that these fees would closely reflect the amount of time it takes for staff to review that that that permit including the public notice.

1:35:31

These these fees are based on some comparisons to zoning compliance permit fees as well with some modification.

1:35:38

So for example, the accessory structure fee listed here is twice that of a zoning compliance permit of application based on the review time and the documentation and long term record retention and inspections that are necessary.

1:35:52

So in general, we're proposing reductions and few more categories for small, small scale permit types.

1:36:04

Thank you.

1:36:07

Any public comment on this, Marian, come on up.

1:36:14

Marianne Bongiorno, I'd like to support the agricultural and residential accessory structures reduction fee.

1:36:24

I'm not clear on the other ones.

1:36:26

I don't have any questions.

1:36:27

I need time to look at it.

1:36:29

And I am supportive of reviewing all the current fees and including the land use fee, which is one that just absolutely perplexes me when I own my land.

1:36:42

Why am I giving someone money to use my land?

1:36:45

But I'll circle back around on that one and I will like to study the rest of these.

1:36:51

I'm only speaking to the \$230.

1:36:54

Thank you.

1:36:55

Thank you.

1:36:59

Dave, do you have any questions?

1:37:01

I have no questions.

1:37:02

This seems like a prudent approach.

1:37:04

Yes, I agree.

1:37:07

I do too.

1:37:08

And I think, I think the land use fee, well, Matt can probably talk about that is just to determine like where your land is, is it in floodplain?

1:37:17

Is it not?

1:37:18

I mean, I thought that was what that fee was for, was for Matt, would you mind speaking to land use fee?

1:37:26

We have, we have a fee schedule.

1:37:28

Kevin might be able to, I think he's on.

1:37:30

Sorry, Matt, go ahead.

1:37:32

The planning development, sustainability department has a fee schedule for land use review.

1:37:37

It's a pretty broad spectrum of fees within there.

1:37:41

There are land use and zoning compliance permit application fees.

1:37:46

We will generally refer to land use, zoning compliance, LZ are all terms that will come up in our permit review.

1:37:55

When we are reviewing a permit application for development on zoned land.

1:38:00

We do require a zoning compliance permit and our permits within the county do group together land use and zoning compliance.

1:38:10

And if land is unzoned, what what happens then?

1:38:13

If land is unzoned, we review land use based on whether there are subdivision conditions or other issues related to say floodplain or or shoreline for for example.

1:38:23

But there is no fee for a land use zoning compliance permit on unzoned land.

1:38:29

I see.

1:38:29

That makes sense.

1:38:30

No, I, I should correct there.

1:38:31

There's no fee collected from the planning department, but that may still need to go through floodplain sanitation, other items.

1:38:39

OK.

1:38:40

Looks like Matt, that's a question.

1:38:42

You have 3 minutes, Matt.

1:38:46

Thank you.

1:38:46

Matt Slarson, I was wondering about the CRS classification.

1:38:52

I guess there's like Class 7 classification for the insurance that people can carry for the floodplain, which gives them like a 15% discount.

1:39:03

I guess I'd like to just address like the county's greater approach or just lack of any approach in like the whole green lawn thing, especially as we're expanding housing and parks and data centers and, you know, all this stuff that's going to affect the amount of water that we're literally sucking out of the ground.

1:39:29

So just wondering if there was any sort of landscape conversion incentives within existing authority that we can do like MCA Title 15, but the county like you can do this kind of goal with like a turf replacement and 0 scape rebates funded through the general fund or open space levy, permit fee reductions for floodplain compatible and low water projects and subdivision slash zoning incentives.

1:40:01

Such as density bonuses for drought tolerant landscaping and riparian setbacks.

1:40:08

I just wanted to ask the staff to include a fiscal note on a pilot rebate program in the next budget cycle to like kind of just start rewarding maybe from the county tax perspective, like the the water consumption that people are engaging in as homeowners or subdivisions or whatever.

1:40:29

Thank you.

1:40:30

Thanks for your thoughts, Matt, anybody else like to speak on this?

1:40:40

Sure.

1:40:40

There's there's what we'll do.

1:40:43

This is because there's nobody else here.

1:40:44

I I won't belabor it.

1:40:47

I'm I'm listening to that.

1:40:49

Matt, this is Marianne Bondjorni.

1:40:52

So the idea would be to a possible pilot program for rebate for those people who are being proactive about living on the floodplain.

1:41:02

Is that so?

1:41:03

Man, I have no idea.

1:41:04

I think you'd have to go back and forth with Matt's on this and that, and this isn't the time for that.

1:41:08

But I'm sure that he'd be willing to chat with you.

1:41:11

OK.

1:41:11

We do have a did did we do?

1:41:17

Unless anybody else would like to speak.

1:41:22

OK.

1:41:22

I would move to approve the resolution to enact revised floodplain fees for services rendered by the Missoula County Planning, Development and Sustainability Department.

1:41:31

Second.

1:41:32

OK, Do we have any more public comment on this?

1:41:36

OK, All in favor.

1:41:38

Aye, aye.

1:41:39

Thanks everybody.

1:41:40

And that will be our meeting.

1:41:42

Thanks a lot.