

Commission Proceedings

05/06/2026

The Board of Carter County Commissioners met in regular session on Wednesday, May 06 2026, in the Carter County Commission Board Meeting Room of the Carter County Courthouse at 214 Park Street in Ekalaka, Montana. Pam Castleberry, Vice Chairman and Dan Dinstel, member were present. Rod Tauck, Chairman, was absent.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

Public comment: Deputy Clerk and Recorder Dana Eshelman presented the unofficial results for the 2026 school district levies. The results for high school general fund were 426 for 195 against and 13 provisional votes. Grade school general fund results were 234 for 126 against and 13 provisional votes. The high school levy was for \$8,243.50 and grade school levy was for \$40,985.05. There was a 50% voter turnout.

Clerk and Recorder Judy Wright joined the meeting to provide an update on the courthouse security system. Judy and Dana left the meeting.

Commissioner Dinstel provided an update that the electrical power poles have been installed at the Boyes Road shop.

Carter County Attorney Corbit Harrington and County Attorney Assistant Stacey Ashbrook joined the meeting to present the attorney's office 2026-2027 Fiscal Year budget. Stacey also requested the commission consider moving her position to full time. This would allow her to provide more assistance with contracts, keep the attorney's office open full time and possibly becoming a victim advocate. The commissioners requested more information on the hours of the victim advocate position and they will take the change in the position from part time to full time into consideration.

Superintendent of Ekalaka Public Schools James Kapptie and Stacey Ashbrook joined the meeting to share what they learned from attending the Building Assets and Reducing Risk (BARR) conference in Palm Springs Ca. The Ekalaka Public School system participates in the program that trains teachers and staff in the program to decrease behavioral issues, unexcused absences and increases grades by insuring connections between students, teachers and staff. This program ties in with the County youth advocacy group that the Carter County attorney's office is a part of. The guests left the meeting.

Commissioner Dinstel moved to approve the consent agenda including the commissioners' proceedings for 4/30/2026 and the old airport property grazing lease advertisement for 2026-2027. Commissioner Castleberry stepped from the chair and seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the motion carried.

Commissioner Dinstel moved to change the commissioners meeting date from June 16th to June 18th as the commissioners will attend the Oil and Gas Counties meeting set for June 15th and 16th in Shelby Mt. Commissioner Castleberry stepped from the chair and seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the motion carried.

The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:00 pm. and was called to order at 1:00 pm.

The bid opening for the roof repair of the event center, museum storage building and the Cupola on the courthouse building. Guests to the meeting was Jon Shively of Picture-Perfect Services. The county received 3 sealed bids for the project.

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Griffith Steel- Baker Mt. \$77,900.00 total bid for all 4 buildings

Picture Perfect Services-Ekalaka Mt. \$188,399.27 total bid for all 4 buildings

Gardener Services-Ekalaka Mt. \$100,670.00 total for 3 buildings. The cupola on the courthouse was declined from this bid by Gardener Services.

The commissioners will review the bids and release their findings at the May 13, 2026 commissioners meeting. Jon requested clarification on the gauge of steel on the bids and requested contact information on the upcoming old hospital mitigation and demo bidding process. Jon left the meeting.

Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) District Field Officer Dale Butori, Carter County DES Coordinator Georgia Bruski, Carter County attorney Corbit Harrington and Clerk and Recorder Judy Wright joined the meeting. Dale stopped into the meeting to check in with the county on any issues and discuss training and EMPG grant funds. Dale and Georgia left the meeting.

Clerk of District Court / Superintendent of Schools Tracey Walker joined the meeting with the 2026-2027 Fiscal year proposed budget. Other guests included County Attorney Corbit Harrington and Clerk and Recorder Judy Wright. Tracey requested an increase in salaries to cover the increase in health insurance costs. Tracey asked about the plans to repair the ceiling the courtroom. The commissioners have not made final plans for the repair at this time. Commissioner Dinstel move to approve the Elementary District 1 request for isolation. Commissioner Castleberry stepped from the chair and seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the motion carried. Tracey left the meeting.

Bridger Pipeline meeting with Ken Dockwiller, Devin Cook and Zac Weis with Bridger Pipeline LLC, Sioux Ranger District Ranger Kurt Hansen, Carter County Extension Agent Amanda Williams, Deputy Clerk and Recorder Dana Eshelman, Attorney Harrington, and DES Coordinator Georgia Bruski. The representatives from Bridger stated that the pipeline is proposed to be 645-mile crude oil pipeline from the us /Canadian Boarder to the Guernsey Wy. Storage facility. The pipeline will travel through nine (9) Montana counties including Carter County. Bridger is currently working to have the Environmental Impact Statement complete by the fall of 2027 and the pipeline operational by the fall of 2028. There was discussion regarding a road use plan, weed control, water crossings, and road encroachment as well as fire mitigation and security along the pipeline. Ken Dockwiller, Devin Cook and Zac Weis with Bridger Pipeline LLC, Amanda Williams, Deputy Clerk and Recorder Dana Eshelman, and DES Coordinator Georgia Bruski left the meeting.

Sioux Ranger District, Ranger Kurt Hansen provided an update on current Forest Service projects including partial funding for the Boxelder Creek Crossing, still short \$200,000.

The road clean up contracts are in progress and the comment period for the Chalk Buttes fire mitigation project is open until May 16, 2026. Kurt also provided an update including 2 seasonal fire crews on staff this year. The guests left the meeting.

Commissioner Dinstel moved to accept the final review of the AWOS III for Boundary Electric. Commissioner Castleberry stepped from the chair and seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the carried.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Board of County Commissioners

Carter County, Montana

Rod Tauck

Rod Tauck Chairman

Attest:

Judy Wright
Clerk of the Board