

The Board of Carter County Commissioners met in regular session on Friday, July 31, 2026, in the Carter County Commission Board Meeting Room of the Carter County Courthouse at 214 Park Street in Ekalaka, Montana. Rod Tauck, Chairman, Pam Castleberry, Vice Chairman and Dan Dinstel, member were present.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am. There was no public comment.

Commissioner Dinstel moved to approve payroll in the amount of \$347,639.11 and claims in the amount of \$209,936.78 Commissioner Castleberry seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the motion carried.

United States Forest Service District Ranger Kurt Hansen joined the meeting with Carter County Sheriff Neil Kittlemann, Attorney Corbit Harrington, Clerk and Recorder Judy Wright and Conservation Core intern Rit Jones. Hansen and Kittlemann discussed the drought conditions and Stage I fire restrictions for the Sioux Ranger District and Carter County. Commissioner Castleberry moved to approve Resolution 07312026-01 placing Carter County in Stage I Fire Restrictions effective August 7, 2026. Commissioner Dinstel requested the motion be amended to include the public notice in the Ekalaka Eagle published Friday August 2, 2026. Commissioner Castleberry amended the motion as stated. Commissioner Tauck seconded the motion. There was no other public comment and the motion carried. Sheriff Kittlemann and Judy left the meeting.

There was discussion regarding the use of the County Secure Rural Schools (SRS) funding for the Boxelder Creek low water crossing on Snow Creek Road. The transfer of funds would require a contract between the Forest Service and Carter County.

Kurt Hansen updated the commissioners on the continued storm clean up in the Ekalaka Hills and Long Pines as well as the Chalk Buttes fuels reduction and forest management plan. The comment period for the Chalk Buttes project is open until September 14, 2026.

The meeting broke for lunch at 11:58 am as was called to order at 1:09 pm.

Clerk and Recorder Judy Wright and Deputy Clerk and Recorder Dana Eshelman joined the meeting with the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year budget amendment Resolution 07312023-02 increase Emergency Disaster fund 2260 from 0 to \$323.27. The \$323.27 is needed to close out the fund. The museum fund 2330 budget increase from \$605,000. to \$616,932.12 to cover a shortage that happened when the payroll was increased for an employee that was not budgeted for. Sheriff weapons and Uniforms fund 2288 budget increased from \$110.10 To \$115.10 so that the fund can be closed out. Commissioner Dinstel moved to adopt Resolution 7312023-02 to zero out budget line items specified in the Resolution. Commissioner Castleberry seconded the motion. Judy commented that she advertised the budget amendment in the paper and received no public comment.

Commissioner Castleberry stated that she received notice that the Clerk of District Court will be out of the office for an undetermined time, but will return to work monthly when she can.

Commissioner Castleberry moved to accept Resolution 07312026-03 to amend the travel reimbursement mileage rates for the remainder of calendar year 2026 from 72.5 cents end to 76 cents per mile. Commissioner Dinstel seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the motion carried. This increase was enacted by IRS in response to higher gas prices.

Commission Proceedings

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Commissioner Castleberry moved to hire Janet Green as the Public Health / Community Health Nurse for 8 hours per week to work with Public Health Nurse/ Public Health Officer Kirstie Nelson and help with the Tobacco program and to fill in for Kirstie when she can't be in the office. Pay will be \$45. per hour. Commissioner Dinstel seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the motion carried.

The commission agreed to cancel the August 05, 2026 commissioners meeting.

The commissioners placed a call to Brennan Ogden of Verkada to discuss the license agreement for the security cameras. Clerk and Recorder Judy Wright joined the meeting. The County previously paid for a license fee for the panic buttons. There will not be an increase in fees for the cameras as they have been included in the licensing for the panic buttons. The call ended with Brennan.

The commission reviewed the courthouse sidewalk bid document that will be advertised in the Ekalaka Eagle. The sealed bids will be due and opened at 1:00 pm September 9, 2026.

Commissioner Dinstel moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Tauck seconded the motion. There was no public comment and the motion carried. Commissioner Tauck left the meeting.

Dahl Memorial CEO Darrell Messersmith come in to discuss the bid ad for the interior repair of the hospital building.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Board of County Commissioners

Carter County, Montana

Rod Tauck

Rod Tauck Chairman

Attest:

Dana Schelman

DEPUTY

Clerk of the Board