

**Lake County Republican Central Committee**  
**Wednesday, 3 January 2024**  
**Polson Rural Fire Hall**

It was established that a quorum was present. An Invocation was given, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Roll Call and Introduction of Guests, Visitors, and Newcomers.**

Guests: James Brown, Dr. Annie Bukacek, Ray Winn, and Margaret Dore.

**Adoption of Agenda:**

The Agenda for the December meeting was adopted by unanimous consent.

**Chairman's Comments/Strategy/Direction**

- 2024 is here and is going to be a bear. It is time to stiffen our spines and fight to win.
- Districting and Apportionment has made our task that much more difficult.
- The GOP has not made things easier for us (the Speaker fights, approving the FBI building, funding the war in the Ukraine, doing nothing about our Southern border, and approving FISA into 2025).
- Many people may not want to go and vote because they are tired of the GOP and even the Montana GOP, but if they don't turn out and vote we could lose our local representation as well, and we can't have that. We must turn out the vote no matter how much the GOP and MTGOP are hated.
- Strategy time is over; it is now time for action.

**Approval and/or Amendment of 6 December 2023 Minutes:**

The Minutes of the December meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

**Treasurers Report**

- Balance of \$22, 717.63.
- PayPal "donate now" button is active on the website.
  - It was decided this is the easiest way to buy tickets for any of the events that will be held.
- Because the Republican Central Committee is a 501c3 organization, there is a means to bypass any fees that PayPal may try to enforce.
- Our Treasurer is searching for paperwork to prove exempt status.
- There were no objection to the Treasurers Report and it was approved by unanimous consent.

**Unfinished Business**

- A Draft Resolution of non/anti support of Gov Gianforte was tabled from the last meeting.
  - No action was taken on this business, and therefore it will drop from the next agenda unless a new motion is made.

**New Business**

- A Resolution of support for Donald Trump as GOP nominee for President was proposed.
  - The motion made by Dr. Ellen Wicklund and seconded by Ron McClellan.
  - Discussion:

- Ron McClellan in favor. “With the nominees that are running, Donald Trump is the candidate we need right now. That is until one of the other nominees may show themselves a better fit.”
- Susan Lake opposed. “Not sure the gain for jumping in before the primary.” Susan was not opposed to President Trump but believed an endorsement might be premature considering all the other issues we have to focus on right now.
- Linda Reksten in favor: “Definitely believes that Donald Trump is the only that can do the hard work needing to be done. Washington D.C. is an absolute mess and needs to be fixed.
- Voice vote was motioned by Larry Ashcraft and seconded by Linda Stewart.
  - Majority in favor.
  - Only one nay.
- Review of the new Precinct Map for Lake County.
  - This was done once the meeting was adjourned; the new map was posted for all to review.

**Guest Speaker – James Brown, President of Public Service Commission.**

- Dr. Annie Bukacek introduced the speaker.
- A brief history of Mr. Brown’s achievements in the private sector defending rights of Montana’s citizens (especially First Amendment rights).
- Mr. Brown spoke about the looming crisis of energy production in the state.
  - Under President Franklin Roosevelt’s administration, a great deal of legislation granting access to affordable food and energy was passed.
  - This same administration built a system of energy and storage that we have benefitted from and are still using to this day.
  - The Biden Administration has from day one has been changing energy policy, and has advanced Green Mandates, the Green New Deal, and other executive orders to remove fossil fuels by 2050.
  - They have closed many gas and coal mines and now want to breach several dams that produce power for large sections of the nation; E.G. the leaked agreement to breach Snake River Dam.
  - It is the job of PSC to balance relationships between utility companies and utility customers.
  - Does not regulate energy Co-Ops.
  - Mr. Brown is warning us that energy production in Montana is in trouble.
  - In 2023, we had extreme cold weather and several locations had power go down.
  - If not for locations still utilizing coal powered productions, there would have been rolling blackouts in different regions of the State right when the weather was the coldest.
  - Montana has been an exporter of energy, but with new regulations in place Montana is set to be a importer of energy in ten years, or perhaps sooner. Competing for energy on the open market where such energy is becoming increasingly scarce will cause prices to rise considerably.
  - Takeaways.
    - Power grid problems are growing; once Colstrip shuts down (possibly as early as 2025), we will have trouble meeting Montana’s energy needs—particularly during high-demand periods.
    - We are prematurely retiring needed energy resources, and there is nothing to replace them.
    - Regulator issues ham-string our ability to build new power generating structures.
    - Wind and solar power are ridiculously inadequate to the task; particularly during severe winter periods, which has been demonstrated globally. They are not reliable.
  - Question: Why is Mr. Brown hesitating to announce run for state auditor?

- Mr. Brown states his decision is based on the decisions of other candidates that have not made their full intentions known yet. Mr. Brown is happy in his position as President of PSC and would like to stay there, but if vacancies arise in different positions, he does not trust others who might attempt to grab these positions.
- Question: “Will the Held vs. Montana case have an effect on your office?”
- Mr. Brown’s Answer: “Yes. This ridiculous case which should have been thrown out for stupidity had the court not been politically biased will force any new business coming to Montana to endure a new burden of assessing “global warming” or “climate change” before doing anything. And all of this despite the fact man-made global warming is a hoax and is not supported by any serious research on the topic, but is instead now a religious-like cult.

### **Elected Officials Reports/Comments – Senate/House/Commissioners/Sheriff/Others**

Senate: Senator Greg Hertz

- Involved in winning two cases dealing with election lawsuits.
- Legislatures have mentioned wanting to create new courts to handle election and Constitutional issues in order to bypass our ridiculously leftist and political Montana Supreme Court.
- Concerning the special session that failed, Senator Hertz spoke to the governor and there is support for a special session to deal with property tax issues.
- Hertz serves as chair of the Legislative Committee to find candidates to run for offices that are open.
- Senator Hertz also serves on the Montana EPA task force.

House: Representative Linda Reksten

- Rep Reksten has filed to run again. She actively solicits feedback to include speaking with Ed Meese of Polson to find out what the local issues Polson faces are.
- Her strong area is education. She intends to build upon her efforts to get schools to change teaching methods.
- Rural schools are not pleased about creating more choices for parents and are worried they won’t be funded properly. Linda, however, believes what we are doing now is clearly not working and students are regressing, which is documented. Montana needs to try something different.
- Rep. Reksten is working on an educational data system for the entire State.

House: Representative Joe Read

- Joe serves on State Tribal Interim Committee, which has changed staff and Joe believes now is a dysfunctional committee.
- Joe will be running for House District 91.
- There were some conversations about Senate District 46, which thanks to Districting and Apportionment now leans Democrat. Nothing was resolved and the Republicans need a candidate for that District. Chairman Sharp is working with the Missoula Republican Central Committee to find a candidate.
- Joe believes the State Constitution is a document sorely in need of a rewrite. Many Republicans support a rewrite that leaves lawyers out and is a ‘we the people’ authoring instead.

Commissioner(s): Gale Decker

- Gale announced he will be running again for Commissioner. This announcement was met with enthusiastic applause.

- Lake County update: PL280 lawsuit—the County will be appealing the District Court decision to not mandate the State fund PL280 to the Supreme Court. The expectation is that our disastrous, leftist Montana Supreme Court will not overturn the District Court’s decision.
- The County has settled lawsuit with the inmates filed against the County jail.
- The County will build an outdoor exercise ground for the inmates. This will be built on west side of the courthouse.
- An annex will be built and the election’s office, Lake County Planning, G.I.S, I.T., the Superintendent of Schools will move there.
- The 46 Counties that opposed the 95 mills issue lost in court. The County will be forced to send out amended tax information.
- The County is working on its water court objections and there are no updates on that issue at this time.
- Others running in upcoming elections:
  - Kendra Steele.

## Announcements

- Lake County Republican Women
  - Republican women taking a break, next meeting will be to plan for Republican kick-off in March.
- Pachyderm Club
  - Next meeting is January 12th, Sherrif Bell and Polson Police Chief George Simpson will speak to the group about updates on P.L. 280 and crime stats for the County.
  - The board meeting is January 12th at 11 am.
- Public Announcements/Guest Comments
- Tracy spoke to the governor about P.L. 280
  - The Governor said his main lead is Lieutenant Governor Juris and that they are working on various ideas to support the county now. Chairman Sharp remains highly skeptical.
  - We support the Petition for Constitutional Initiative 93 (CI-93) to get on the ballot.
    - This allows hunting on your own private property.
    - Needs 30,000 or majority of counties to get on ballot.
  - In April, we will host with Sanders and Lake Counties, the *Northwestern Candidate Forum Marathon*:
    - On April 18th through 21st, candidates will come to speak in the Northwest at Eureka, Plains, Kalispell, and Polson.
    - This will allow the candidates to hit the maximum number of people without having to scurry from one edge of the state to the other.
    - The 18th may be Eureka (they don’t know yet, but that date is reserved for them).
    - On the 19th, the forum will be held in Kalispell.
    - On the 20th, the event is being held in Plains.
    - On the 21st, we will host at the Ronan Community Center.
- GOP Winterfest, Feb 9-10, GOP kickoff in Helena.
- Margoret Dore and election integrity
  - People will show up with mail in voting; they fill out the ballot and take it away.
  - While some truly hate mail-in ballots and ballot harvesting, we currently operate and compete against the Democrats on this playing field. We will have to “bank” or “harvest” ballots whether we like it or not, and all ballots should be turned in directly at the Elections Office.
  - Otherwise, people absolutely must go to the polls.
  - We cannot concede this ground to the Democrats and expect to compete—tragic though it is.

- Larry Ashcroft
  - Encourage people to sign up for election judge.
  - Chair, Tracy Sharp, needs to know who is signing up for election judge and/or poll watching since he is obligated to provide a list of eligible and trained personnel to the Elections Office by law.

## **Adjournment**