

Lake County Republican Central Committee

Wednesday, 5 November 2025

Polson Rural Fire Hall

Captains present:

Mary Lee & Doug Syme; Ellen Wicklund; Micah Robertson; Ray Winn; Cynthia Waterman; Ron McClellan; Larry & Dorothy Ashcraft; Ron Tjaden

Visitors:

Max Kranz; James Compton (Member of communications committee for Flathead Republican Central Committee); Greg Hertz; Chris Adler (Ronan Mayor); Finley Warden (Candidate for HD 13); Laura Hancock

James C: There is much going on in the Flathead region as we all try to hold on to conservative values. Received 60-80 percent of Republican voters with the influx of people moving to the area.

Finley W: Running for HD 13 to represent Polson. He states he has been working with MTGOP as a field director. Running to be a conservative candidate. Passion for education. Involved in a national news story last October when I went undercover at the Teachers Conference.

Adoption of Agenda.

- Adopted by unanimous consent.

Approval and/or Amendment of 3 September 2025 Minutes.

- Adopted by unanimous consent.

Treasurers Report (5 Mins).

- September Beginning Balance- \$3,130.99
- Deposits
 - Lincoln/Reagan/Trump dinner- \$16,347.92
 - LCRCC- \$1,047.40
 - Equals- \$20,526.31
- Expenses
 - Lincoln/Reagan/Trump- \$6,354.52
 - LCRW (Dessert Dash 15%)- \$2,052
 - Other- \$321.73
- Ending Balance- \$11,798.06

Committee Reports (5 Mins Each).

- Finance Chairman.

- Not present.

- Congressional Committeewoman and Committeeman.

- Follow up on Protect Act.
 - Went to the senate side and then went to Indian affairs.
 - Chances of 34% of getting passed.
 - 14% of enactment.
 - LCRCC Chair was briefed by Congressman Zinke that this bill was going “nowhere”.

- State Committeewoman and Committeeman.

Not present.

- Technology Committee.

Not present

- Tiger Team - (Zoom Efforts)

- We took a beating nationwide yesterday in the elections.
- Discussed today about strategy.
- Discussed the “Leesburg Grid”.
- When Trump is not on the ballot, conservatives stay home.
 - The point we must hammer home for the mid-terms in 2026: **TRUMP IS ON THE BALLOT IN 2026** - even if not directly.
 - If we lose the House and Senate, we will lose the presidency.
 - If the Dems get the House, Trump *will* be impeached.
 - If they get the House and Senate Trump may be removed.
- Testing ZOOM.
 - Prefer face to face but need to make sure we can utilize technology effectively.
 - Doug: Was surprised by lack of participation even with it.
 - Ron: ZOOM frees up a lot of time for folks that would have to travel in and then be in town all day if there is an LCRCC meeting in the evening.
 - Larry: all municipalities are using it, and we are way behind if we are not using it.
- Do an operational check between now and the end of the year to make people comfortable with using ZOOM for LCRCC meetings.

- **Ron: Possible to use website to take a poll? Asking, can you use this?**

Elected Officials Reports/Comments –

Senate/House/Commissioners/Sheriff/Others (5 Mins each).

- **Senator Greg Hertz**
 - **It was a tough session.**
 - **Have been pretty upset with the Governor**
 - **Comment on the election.**
 - **Knew Va would go for Democrats.**
 - **They picked up 13 house seats.**
 - **Trump voters did not turn out in Va.**
 - **I am on the revenue committee and hearing about property tax.**
 - **The bills that passed—I opposed those, they were not good.**
 - **Many of you saw your taxes go up.**
 - **But about 20% saw them go up.**
 - **This was not a tax reduction but a tax burden shift.**
 - **If your taxes went down to \$100, someone else went up to \$100.**
 - **Met today with some lawyers to bring a lawsuit against the property tax bill.**
 - **The bill went from being three pages to fifty pages.**
 - **That is not legal per the State Constitution.**
 - **They also messed up multi-family apartment buildings.**
 - **About five other bills in the same situation, left with 5 or 6 pages, came back above forty pages.**
 - **Working with Goldwater Institute to protect property rights and help file lawsuits.**
 - **Will get a full report on what the tax reports did to specific home values.**
- **Tracy, any chance for a special session?**
 - **Greg: If we get HB 532 thrown out a judge cannot come in and start raising and lowering people's taxes.**
- **Tracy: We did not start talking about property taxes until the last few weeks.**
 - **Greg: That was strategy by Jones; held taxes bills till the end; did this so he can have leverage against other legislators and the governor.**
- **Linda Reksten**
 - **Brought my responses from the questionnaire by MTGOP. She distributed them to the people present, and will send it out.**

- Like to say I am unequivocally a Republican, but I am one that works with other Legislators, regardless of party, to get things done for Polson.
- Concerning the bill about staff development days that are tax funded;
 - We amended that bill to keep their union meetings apart from their 8-5 that they would be paid for working.
 - It was stalled in the Senate and did not come out.
- Rep Reksten just got back from a meeting on how to improve our math scores.
- She is also working with the committee 401(3)c working on the ice rink and they are ready to break ground.
 - Working to get a grant to go along with funds they have already raised to start this project.
 - The grant will handle maintenance that Polson does not want to cover.
- Working with Laura Dever to put together an information warehouse.
 - This came up about the communication problems in the city.
- Still involved with DOT about the casino.
- Would like everyone to read my responses to the questionnaire from MTGOP about my standing as a Republican.
 - Only one when the abortion initiative came up and I went to the churches to ask them to step up and help.
 - Found out two churches did not want to be involved in political issues.
- Do I make mistakes and do I vote on something I wish I did not vote on—sure, all Legislators do.
 - When looking at 1,000 plus bills, you will make mistakes.
- Tracy Sharp
 - On the Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC)
 - In January we will focus on the local CSKT water compact.
 - Working on a plan for testimony about the problems.
 - The water court judge will be there, and we need to testify and help educate people about what is happening with water.
 - Working to study the level of the aquifer in the Eastern part of State that is currently down 60 feet.
 - Studying the exempt well situation; this will be the most difficult issue the WPIC will have to deal with.
 - They talked about cloud seeding.

- There is a desire to study doing so to produce more snow in Montana for snowpack in the mountains.
- They want 4 million just to do a test, but this is already being done in something like 11 to 14 other States as a matter of routine.
- Rep Sharp doubts a “study” is needed.

Unfinished Business

• Bylaws Update and Possible Completion

- Much work has been done on this over the past few months.
- Tiger Team has been working on mistakes and keeping the pages down.
- It is nine pages—8 being the meat of the bylaws and the last page just standing rules.
- Larry Ashcraft motions that we approve the lake county bylaws as read.
- Seconded by Ron McClellan
 - Discussion.
 - Could the LCRCC get minutes of the Tiger Team meetings? An amendment is being drafted to these bylaws to have minutes taken when the Tiger Team is acting as the Executive Board, but not for regular non-Exec Board routine operations.
 - It was noted that today there is Artificial Intelligence technology that takes minutes.
 - What would then happen with the notes?
 - The original reason for Tiger Team is to brainstorm and find directions to make proposals to the LCRCC to make the decision.
 - Anything that is policy issue must be brought to the LCRCC for a vote by the Precinct Captains.
 - Ron Tjaden stated that he firmly believes the team has been a major asset.
 - But what will happen when Tracy is not the chairman? Not sure every chairman would keep up that weekly commitment.
 - Vote taken
 - All in favor

- **Bylaws approved unanimously.**

New Business

• Polson Mayoral Race

- We need to assign someone to keep track of the races.
- We got too far behind, and we might have been able to help with more time.

• Zoom and AI in our (LCRCC) Future.

- Tiger Team has been encouraged to play with AI to be familiar.
- Perplexity is recommended.
- If we do not get some handle on it, we will fall way behind.

• Max Kranz Campaign for Precinct Seat (followed by vote).

- I have lived in Charlo all my life.
- Family came here in 1888.
- Heavily involved in the water compact because we run 1,000 acres.
- Passionate about positive change for the county.
- Worked in building from Missoula to Whitefish and spent a lot of time dealing with building codes.
- Believe in Skill USA, gets high school kids into hands-on skills and trades.
- He is a “modern” Republican and is involved in environmental causes.
- Not afraid to go up against the County Commissioners.
 - There is the issue in front of my lot running an “illegal” junk car operation.
 - When brought up the commissioners said, “he has a license”.
 - We need to step up and do a better job.
 - Why is my property being brought down because of other people not taking care of their property?
- Do we need large boats and have our lake look like lake in Idaho?
- Need to listen to people on both sides and see what is best.
- Try to convince them as best you can if it is based on common sense.
- Like the tax resolution trying to be passed recently.
 - A \$15 dollar permit for every time a certain amount of property work is done.
 - We do not need to become a county that has to have an inspection of every little thing you do on your property.
- A secret ballot vote was taken.
 - Counted by Tracy Sharp.

- Ray Winn was the observer for Max Kranz.
- Vote was counted and Max Kranz was elected for Charlo Precinct Captain; vote was not unanimous, but Mr Kranz won by a majority.

Announcements

• Lake County Republican Women

Meeting on Monday, Tracy speaking about orphan precincts, voting record in MT and how pathetic it is, and we need to get people out to vote.

Xmas party for all groups at the mission bay club house on Dec 27th at 5pm; potluck

First Monday of December Tracy is again speaking about Dark Money.

• Pachyderm Club

- Next meeting is on November 14th at 12pm at the Polson Rural Fire Station (25 Regatta Rd Polson.
- The speaker will be Larry Ashcraft, member of the Polson Local Government Review Commission.
- Mr. Ashcraft will be providing an update on the commission's findings and what the next steps will be.

• Public Announcements/Guest Comments

MTGOP Winter kick-off February 6-7th.

Find someone in the ranks to look out for all races large and small. Then gather information on which candidate to endorse.

Adjournment