

MONTEZUMA COUNTY BOCC 5/15/17

The following is a summary of some of the actions in the County Commission meeting that may be of interest to some of you. They are not “minutes” and may include this observers personal viewpoints in discussion, usually in italics.

Echo Basin received approval for a liquor license transfer to a new owner. The new owner was asked if he was going to open the restaurant to the public again? The new owner indicated they were planning to do so, but wouldn't be ready this summer, probably next year.

ROAD dept. is busy with applying Mag Chloride and some small gravelling projects. Road CC is being graveled and then it will be paved. Road 25 pavement overlay is to be completed tomorrow (Tuesday). (*I drove that piece this afternoon and it is indeed about done, and looking real nice*).

Federal Agencies BLM, Canyon of the Ancients Monument indicated that the work right now is focused on sending in data and info for the New Secretary Zinke to make reviews of the National Monument status etc.. Next they are finally getting close to completing the range analysis for the two grazing allotments. When complete then they will have scoping meetings to include groups like Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Grand Canyon Trust, and Native Tribes. *It is interesting to note that Ms. Heaton said this is the FIRST grazing plan the BLM will be doing for a National Monument, which may explain why it has taken 17 years to get this far.* Concern was asked about progress on parking lot at Sand Canyon. Answer was that they have a new “special projects” person now that will be trying to expedite this project.

Forest Service, Mr. Padilla said they will be making project proposals to expand Boggy Draw Trail system by 20-30 miles. This will take time as usual EA and NEPA system will have to be followed. He indicated that the State Div. of Parks & Wildlife (DPW) is requesting studies and consideration for controls over trails in Sage Hen and McPhee Overlooks, which are considered Elk and Deer wintering areas. The Taylor Mesa Forest Health project will have to be separated into two parts due to requirements for Historic Preservation surveys, causing further delays in getting needed work done. They will also be preparing a Prescribed Burning plan for the Ponderosa pine areas, which will also require Historic Preservation surveys. The Rico/Dolores West Travel Management Plan will be re-opened for public review soon.

ROAD X closure issue was discussed with the Forest Service regarding their participation in controlling lake access and especially in keeping open access to the Sage Hen trail head. The Forest Service understood the importance of the controls and would work with BOR, DWCD and County. The County Lands personnel had prepared some possible options that involved fencing the south side of Road X down below the Trail Head and Corrals. Parties will all be working to have good input for public hearing that may need to take place.

SHERIFF presented an analysis and graphs on crime statistics in Montezuma County and in comparison with some similar Counties of similar size and population. While Montezuma County is comparatively a safer place than others in Colorado, we are still experiencing rise in property crimes like thefts and burglaries. Most of the crimes are drug related.. Persons breaking in for known prescription drugs, or to secure funding to purchase drugs. Veterinary drugs on the farm and ranch are fair game as well. If you have un-

needed drugs, take to the Sheriff office for them to incinerate them, a good crime prevention action. The drug issue is changing a little. While there is still Meth, now they are seeing a rise in Heroin and Fentanyl (one of the strongest Opeids) uses. Users are able to secure many of these over the internet. The Sheriff's office has 15 patrols, which must cover for 3 shifts, staff on sick leave, vacation, court duty etc. leaving pretty short staff to cover the 2,030 square miles of the unincorporated County to answer calls for the 14,125 residents. Records show that the average response time on a high priority call is about 20:48 minutes. Non-priority calls would be 1+ hours. *Have to remember how long it takes one of us to travel into town from far corner of the County and keep your place of low interest to criminals and have good neighbor watches, etc. the Sheriff can't do it all for you.* Be on the alert and report suspicious activity to the Sheriff.

Road BB Intersection The State CDOT just sent in the official notice that that they will in fact leave the current BB/491 intersection travel pattern as it is. They will install the new traffic warning signals that alert travelers in both directions when a vehicle is in the danger traffic pattern of the intersection, to slow and be prepared to stop. The money programed for the previous right in /out changes will be used elsewhere on other projects. Their reason for the decision cited the recommendations and work of the County BOCC and staff in accord with the locals affected. *This is a good example of turning the Constitutional ship around to using our representative governing system. The BOCC is our local legal government representative acting on behalf of all of the County. The State is starting to recognize this apparently.*