**BIGFORK LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Draft Minutes Thursday August 28, 2025**

**4:00 PM Bethany Lutheran Church – Downstairs Meeting Room**

Chairwoman Susan Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

**Present:** Committee member attendees: Richard Michaud, Shelley Anderson, Susan Johnson, Dan Cotman, Laura Perry, and Chany Ockert; absent was Jerry Sorensen; Public: 3 members; Flathead Planning and Zoning: None.

The agenda was approved (m/s, Anderson/Michaud), vote unanimous.

Minutes of the July 31, 2025, meeting were approved (m/s, Anderson/Johnson), vote unanimous.

**Administrator’s Report and Announcements:**

Sign-in sheet passed around. Approved minutes and documents are posted on the County website: flathead.mt.gov Click on Planning and Zoning/Meetings and Boards/Bigfork Land Use Advisory Committee.

The Commissioners passed a resolution to approve the zone change on the Sandy Road property.

**Public Comment:**

None

**Application:**

None

**Unfinished Business:**

Bigfork Neighborhood Plan

The committee discussed the need for statistical information from the Sheriff’s Office and Highway Patrol on calls for service, crime statistics, and if calls are responded to. Appropriate responses are related to adequate staffing.

Ockert discussed how non-profits can change their focus so we should limit our discussion under Local Government.

School enrollment can fluctuate from the beginning of a school year to the end of the school year based on several factors. Additional information is being gathered. The Bigfork School District has reached its bonding capacity.

The types of assisted living facilities need to be referenced.

The inventory of businesses in the Village and in the Highway 35/83/82 corridor is nearly complete.

The committee discussed the need to identify vacation rentals. With the new state tax law in 2026, it is not known if the tax roll will differentiate between second homes and short-term rentals. Perry will look at the Farm Package method to identify second homes and short-term rentals.

Ockert suggested adding to the Housing section information on the NW Montana Community Land Trust and delete agencies in Appendix A that no longer exist.

Ockert suggested that we as individuals send thank you letters to MDT for the stoplights at Highway 35/82.

The committee briefly discussed the recent purchase by the Community Foundation for a Better Bigfork of downtown property to protect the property from high density development.

**Public Comment:**

Jeremy Patton, Bigfork Fire Chief indicated that MDT is considering two roundabouts for the Highway 35/83/82 corridor.

**New Business:**

None

**Adjourn:**

Perry moved and Michaud seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously at 5:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Anderson, member and acting recording secretary