**BIGFORK LAND USE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Draft Minutes Thursday September 25, 2025**

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

Chairwoman Susan Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

**Present:** Committee member attendees: Chany Ockert, Laura Perry, Susan Johnson, Shelley Anderson, Dan Cotman, Jerry Sorensen and Richard Michaud; absent was None; Public: 6 members; Flathead Planning and Zoning: None.

The agenda was approved (m/s, Sorensen/Ockert), vote unanimous.

Minutes of the August 28, 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.

**Public Comment:**

None

**Application:**

None

**Unfinished Business:**

Bigfork Neighborhood Plan

Sorensen stated that BLUAC needs to understand Bigfork Water and Sewer’s (BWS) water and sewer capacity in order accurately develop a future land use plan for Bigfork. Tyler Hantz, manager, was introduced and he presented the Bigfork Water and Sewer District Wastewater Treatment Facility Capacity Analysis prepared by Morrison-Maierle of Kalispell, MT. (The report is attached to the minutes)

Hantz stated that this report is only for wastewater; the water supply is analyzed separately every three years. BWS is operating at near capacity for wastewater management. Sludge treatment could be halted to increase treatment of sewage inflow, but the sludge still needs to be processed and disposed of. The plant lift station has operated at 135% of capacity during the 4th of July timeframe. To mitigate treatment backup, BWS cleans all operating equipment in advance of the anticipated usage increase. In spring 2026, the west trunk sewer project will begin to increase capacity. Only one hookup will be allowed per lot, and the trunk line capacity will be increased from 8 inches to 16 inches. BWS will rehab existing infrastructure to protect Flathead Lake. Developers will be required to submit a capacity study and will pay a “Plant Investment Fee” based on the required meter size needed for the proposed project. Rates for new development have been increased as existing rate payers should not pay for new developments. Developers are required to annex their project into the BWS District, but they cannot annex, if there is no capacity. BWS has upgraded the Sunset trunkline but a second trunkline under Bigfork Bay is required to provide water to the south side of Bigfork. Hantz stated that summer water use for irrigation increases water demand by approximately 1,233%. There are no PFAS in the water system. Of the two projects still being developed, at The Fort (Hwy 83 by the green cans) the hotel project needs to replace the 1-inch sewer line with a 4-inch line, and The Settlement residential subdivision needs to add a lift station.

Hantz can be reached at [manager@bigforkwater.com](mailto:manager@bigforkwater.com) and the BWS website is [www.bigforkwater.com](http://www.bigforkwater.com).

Public Comment:

None

Ockert asked if our minutes can be submitted to the Planning Board. She discussed the temporary stop lights at Highway 35/82 and proposed a letter to MDT from BLUAC suggesting that they become permanent. Anderson moved and Johnson seconded the motion to send a letter to MDT; motion passed unanimously.

Perry stated that she has received data on owner occupied and non-owner occupied properties and will prepare an analysis of the information.

**New Business:**

None

**Adjourn:**

Perry moved and Anderson seconded the motion to adjourn at 5:07 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Anderson, member and acting recording secretary