The Board of Fremont County Commissioners met in Regular Session at 9:00 a.m. with the following members present: Chairman Larry Allen, Vice-Chairman Mike Jones, Jennifer McCarty, Clarence Thomas and Ron Fabrizius. County Clerk Julie A. Freese and Civil Deputy Attorney Nathan Maxon were present.

Jennifer McCarty moved, Mike Jones seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer McCarty moved, Clarence Thomas seconded, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held August 22, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer McCarty moved, Clarence Thomas seconded, to accept the bills for payment. Motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer McCarty moved, Ron Fabrizius seconded, to accept a Title 25 invoice in the amount of $3,450.00 from Fremont Counseling Service for July patients. Motion carried unanimously.
The following items in the Signature File were reviewed: 1) Abatement Summary cover page; and 2) Notice of Valuation Change just received from the Department of Revenue indicating the Mineral Tax Division discovered they only allocated volumes and values from Contango Resources, Inc. to Fremont County and should have divided it with Natrona County, which will result in a reduction of $9,338,257 taxable value of natural gas production to Fremont County. She expressed concern that the County had just approved their 12 mill levy and this amount will result in a valuation decrease to Fremont County of $112,059. Those special districts being affected will have to be notified as their budgets will be reduced. She is waiting on a phone call from the Department of Revenue asking if the County could expect other such decreases and negative budget impacts as this is very frustrating. In another matter, she stated that the Contango Resources, Inc. 2022-31 tax protest appeal of the State Board of Equalization’s decision has been submitted to District Court and subsequently approved by that Court to issue an Order Certifying the Case to the Wyoming Supreme Court.

Karen Wetzel referenced the public statements issued the previous meeting by the Commission and County Clerk regarding Administrative Secretary Becky Enos as related to the recent Library Board vacancy and appointment process. She felt the statements did not reference Director Marple or Board Member Cook’s involvement. She referenced the angry comments several meetings ago made by Commissioner Thomas that the Commission had no prior knowledge of the FOIA request. She felt that the County Attorney and Administrative Secretary were at fault for not sharing that information. She stated that their concerns earlier expressed to the Library Director were not acted upon so their next step was to express them to the Commissioners directly. She closed her statement by indicating she expected no results from the Commission and Clerk as they “stick together like glue”.

Treatment Courts Director Cassie Murray requested authorization to refill a recently vacated Adult Case Manager position within the Court Assisted Supervised Treatment program. Mike Jones moved, Jennifer McCarty seconded, to authorize refilling the position at a salary not to exceed $56,883. Motion carried unanimously.

Building Maintenance Supervisor Mike Meeker requested authorization to refill a Custodial position recently vacated. Mike Jones moved, Jennifer McCarty seconded, to approve refilling the position at a salary of $37,800. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Health Nurse Manager Jeanna Stewart joined Certified Prevention Specialist Tauna Groomsmith who provided a program update.

An interview was held with Stacey Stanbury to fill a vacancy on the Fremont County Museum Board. Later in the meeting, Jennifer McCarty moved, Ron Fabrizius seconded, to appoint Stacey Stanbury to a
vacancy on the Fremont County Museum Board with term expiration June 30, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

County Clerk Julie Freese presented a preliminary budget hearing.

Commissioner meeting reports were given:

A presentation from the Riverton Trails Committee was held. Present was Randy Lehman, Trails Committee and Wyoming Pathways Liaison; Devon Kellerhall, Riverton Chamber Secretary; and Executive Director, Wyoming Pathways, Michael Jusiek. Transportation Superintendent Billy Meeks was present in the audience.

Transportation Superintendent Billy Meeks was joined by Terry Zink, Apex Surveying, Inc., to state the Riverview Cutoff Widening and Overlay Project was substantially completed August 31, 2023. There is a 30-day time frame to finalize the punch list (guardrail, reflectors and one sign). Mike Jones moved, Jennifer McCarty seconded, to approve the Certificate of Final Completion effective August 31, 2023. Motion carried unanimously. It was noted that the project came in under budget.

The draft Fremont County Board Appointment Procedure was reviewed and one amended suggested by Vice-Chairman Jones. Mike Jones moved, Jennifer McCarty seconded, to approve the Procedure as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Larry Allen reviewed a Priority Ambulance update on recent negotiations with the United Steelworkers Union pursuant of a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for Frontier Ambulance. The union’s best, and final offer, would increase Priority Ambulance’s operating expenses significantly in 2023, and because of cost-of-living increases built into the wage scale, there would be increased operating expenses each of the two subsequent years of the contract. For them to continue operating in Fremont County, they would need additional funding of $386,796 in the first year of the CBA and an estimated increase of an additional $11,500 per subsequent contract year for cost-of-living increases. The Commissioners request the Civil Attorney review the information and draft an agreement for review at the next meeting.

Applications have been received for the EMS Advisory Committee. Chairman Allen asked each Commissioner to designate two applicants from each district for appointment to the Committee. Names will be finalized at the next meeting.

A work session was held to review the status of grant funded projects (ARPA #1 and #2 and LATC). Committee members Julie Freese and Jim Anderson were present and an updated spreadsheet was distributed. LATC projects not yet authorized was the focus of the discussion, totaling $4,735,410.

Dispatch Supervisor Carl Freeman and Deputy Chief Dan Oakley reviewed the Dispatch radios and paging project totaling $1,360,771. Mike Jones moved, Jennifer McCarty seconded, to authorize $1.4 million for the Dispatch Radios and Paging Project. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Thomas was absent from the remainder of the meeting.

County Clerk Julie Freese distributed a list of the Buildings projects that have been authorized with grant funding, the projected cost and priority rating of each. She will also ask that updates be given on authorized projects that the Commission has not received bids on yet by October 3rd. She will contact Undersheriff Mike Hutchison, also the Search and Rescue spokesperson, to get his recommendations on the Search and Rescue buildings in Dubois and Lander. An authorized LATC project for the Coroner/S&R/et al building purchase and remodel project in the amount of $1,500,000 was discussed. Mike Jones moved, Jennifer McCarty seconded, to proceed with a bid proposal of $650,000 for a building in Riverton. Motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, Mike Jones moved, Jennifer McCarty seconded, to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 1:05 p.m. and reconvene for a Regular Meeting at 9:00 a.m. on September 12, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.
A full detailed report (informational only) and the official minutes are posted on Fremont County's website (www.fremontcountywy.gov). The meeting can also be accessed via YouTube (Fremont County WY Government).

/s/  LARRY ALLEN, CHAIRMAN
FREMONT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST:

/s/  JULIE A. FREESE, FREMONT COUNTY CLERK AND CLERK OF THE BOARD