



LOCAL GOVERNMENT INTERIM COMMITTEE

69th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Mary Ann Dunwell
Forrest Mandeville
Jeremy Trebas
Daniel Zolnikov

HOUSE MEMBERS

Pete Elverum
Alanah Griffith
Shane Klakken
Greg Oblander
Courtenay Sprunger

COMMITTEE STAFF

Maxwell Parson – Lead Staff
Maddie Krezowski – Legal Staff
Jolanda Songer - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

January 22, 2026
Capitol Room 102 & Zoom
Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video recording of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of the meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <https://leg.mt.gov>. From the home page, select the "Committees" drop down menu at the top, then select Administrative or Interim, and the appropriate committee. The written minutes log can be located by expanding the accordion menu for the date of the meeting. Links to the audio/video files can be located by selecting the Video/Audio button on the same page, then the "past/current recordings" button. From there, use the calendar to select the date of the meeting you wish to view/listen to. The written Minutes Log, along with links to the audio and video recordings, is listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page. Each of the Exhibits is linked and can be viewed by clicking on the Exhibit of interest. All Exhibits are public information and may be printed. Please contact the Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for more information.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. Forrest Mandeville, Presiding Officer (R)
Rep. Alanah Griffith, Vice Presiding Officer (D)
Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell (D)
Rep. Pete Elverum (D)
Rep. Shane Klakken (R)
Rep. Greg Oblander (R)
Rep. Courtenay Sprunger (R)
Sen. Jeremy Trebas (R)
Sen. Daniel Zolnikov (R)

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Maxwell Parson, Lead Staff
Maddie Krezowski, Legal Staff
Jolanda Songer, Secretary

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

VISITORS' LIST ([Attachment 2](#))

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

09:03:49 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM. The committee secretary took roll.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH STATE AGENCIES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS

09:04:35 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville

09:05:25 Kayla Bragg, Executive Director, Montana Board of Crime Control (MBCC)

09:05:39 Criselda De La Cruz, Supervisor, Grant Programs, MBCC

[EXHIBIT 1](#)

Committee Questions / Discussion

09:18:29 Rep. Greg Oblander

09:18:49 Criselda De La Cruz, MBCC

09:21:04 Rep. Pete Elverum

09:21:48 Kayla Bragg, MBCC

09:25:57 Criselda De La Cruz, MBCC

09:28:49 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell

09:30:56 Criselda De La Cruz, MBCC

09:35:46 Rep. Greg Oblander

09:36:16 Kayla Bragg, MBCC

09:37:30 Sen. Jeremy Trebas

09:37:46 Kayla Bragg, MBCC

09:37:54 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith

09:38:29 Kayla Bragg, MBCC

09:40:05 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH STATE AGENCIES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS - Continued

09:40:56 Nicole Motzer, Director, Office of Research Development, Montana State University (MSU)

[EXHIBIT 2](#)

09:49:43 Scott Whittenburg, Vice President, Research and Creative Scholarship, University of Montana (UM)

Committee Questions / Discussion

09:58:46 None

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH STATE AGENCIES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS - Continued

09:59:04 Jim Auer, Food & Agriculture Development Specialist, Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA)

Committee Questions / Discussion

10:01:27 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
10:01:56 Jim Auer, MDA
10:02:57 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
10:03:10 Jim Auer, MDA
10:04:28 Rep. Greg Oblander
10:04:41 Jim Auer, MDA

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH STATE AGENCIES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS - Continued

10:05:36 Mitch Buthod, Bureau Chief, Planning & Modal Transportation, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)

Committee Questions / Discussion

10:12:34 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
10:13:05 Mitch Buthod, MDT
10:13:54 Rep. Courtenay Sprunger
10:14:21 Mitch Buthod, MDT

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH STATE AGENCIES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS - Continued

10:14:45 Denise Kelly, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Committee Questions / Discussion

10:16:23 Sen. Jeremy Trebas
10:16:34 Denise Kelly, DEQ
10:16:49 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
10:15:59 Denise Kelly, DEQ
10:18:21 Sonja Nowakowski, Director, Department of Environmental Quality, DEQ
10:18:52 Rep. Greg Oblander
10:19:06 Director Sonja Nowakowski, DEQ
10:19:34 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
10:20:05 Director Sonja Nowakowski, DEQ

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH STATE AGENCIES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS - Continued

10:21:04 Julie Murgel, Chief Program Officer, Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
[EXHIBIT 3](#)

Committee Questions / Discussion

10:35:19 Rep. Pete Elverum
10:36:04 Julie Murgel, OPI

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH STATE AGENCIES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS - Continued

10:37:12 Melissa Herrera, Housing Program Executive, Department of Commerce (DOC)
10:40:14 Stephanie Crider, Operations Manager, DOC
[EXHIBIT 4](#)

Committee Questions / Discussion

10:46:07 Rep. Greg Oblander
10:46:35 Melissa Herrera, DOC
10:47:06 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
10:48:17 Scott Whittenburg, Vice President, Research and Creative Scholarship, University of Montana (UM)
10:50:12 Kayla Bragg, Executive Director, Montana Board of Crime Control (MBCC)
10:51:08 Julie Murgel, OPI
10:52:07 Sen. Jeremy Trebas
10:52:37 Stephanie Crider, DOC
10:55:15 Rep. Greg Oblander
10:55:54 Denise Kelly, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
11:01:03 Mitch Buthod, Bureau Chief, Planning & Modal Transportation, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)
11:01:19 Larry Flynn, Deputy Director, MDT

Public Comment

11:04:20 Lorianne Burhop, Policy Director, Montana Nonprofit Association (MNA)

Committee Questions / Discussion

11:06:45 Rep. Shane Klakken
11:08:00 Jim Auer, Food & Agriculture Development Specialist, Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA)
11:08:26 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville

11:09:21 **Recessed**

11:22:42 **Reconvened**

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH TRIBAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS

- 11:23:12 Jordan Thompson, Acting Executive Officer, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)
11:33:31 Mitzi Racine, Grant Development and Compliance Consultant, Blackfeet Nation
11:36:41 Neal Rosette, Planning and Development Director, Chippewa Cree Tribe (CCT)

Committee Questions / Discussion

- 11:48:45 Sen. Jeremy Trebas
11:49:20 Neal Rosette, CCT
11:51:05 Rep. Greg Oblander
11:51:22 Neal Rosette, CCT
11:54:34 Jordan Thompson, CSKT
11:55:17 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
11:56:00 Neal Rosette, CCT
11:57:00 Jordan Thompson, CSKT
11:57:58 Sen. Jeremy Trebas
11:58:47 Neal Rosette, CCT
12:01:29 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
12:02:04 Jordan Thompson, CSKT
12:03:22 Neal Rosette, CCT
12:04:56 Jordan Thompson, CSKT

Public Comment

- 12:08:07 None

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: FEDERAL GRANTS MULTISTATE COMPARISON

- 12:08:40 Maxwell Parson, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

[EXHIBIT 5](#)

Committee Questions / Discussion

- 12:27:10 Rep. Shane Klakken
12:27:32 Maxwell Parson, LSD
12:28:42 Rep. Greg Oblander
12:29:03 Maxwell Parson, LSD
12:29:47 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
12:30:15 Maxwell Parson, LSD
12:32:22 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
12:32:53 Maxwell Parson, LSD
12:34:30 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
12:35:21 Maxwell Parson, LSD

Public Comment

- 12:37:33 None
- 12:37:58 **Recessed**
- 14:01:25 **Reconvened**

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 28: PANEL WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES ON FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS

- 14:02:26 Jennifer Olson, Government Affairs Director, Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT)
- 14:17:14 Sandra Jones, Mayor, City of Roundup
- 14:26:52 Holly Phelps, City Manager, City of Lewistown
- 14:33:41 Gail Leeper, Mayor, City of Drummond
- [EXHIBIT 6](#)
- 14:43:12 Robin Wight, Clerk, City of Drummond
- [EXHIBIT 7](#)
- 14:49:57 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville left the meeting and Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith assumed the Chair.
- 14:54:16 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville resumed the Chair
- 15:01:20 Melissa Gordon, Director, Grants & Community Resources Department, Missoula County
- 15:14:08 Kristen Galbraith, Director, Grants & Special Projects, Park County

Committee Questions / Discussion

- 15:22:27 Rep. Shane Klakken
- 15:22:48 Jennifer Olson, MLCT
- 15:24:46 Mayor Sandra Jones, City of Roundup
- 15:25:45 Holly Phelps, City of Lewistown
- 15:26:23 Mayor Gail Leeper
- 15:26:36 Rep. Greg Oblander
- 15:27:30 Jennifer Olson, MLCT
- 15:31:28 Mayor Sandra Jones, City of Roundup
- 15:31:36 Rep. Greg Oblander
- 15:32:46 Robin Wight, City of Drummond
- 15:34:19 Mayor Gail Leeper, City of Drummond
- 15:35:33 Rep. Pete Elverum
- 15:36:21 Robin Wight, City of Drummond
- 15:40:39 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
- 15:42:27 Melissa Gordon, Missoula County
- 15:44:41 Robin Wight, City of Drummond
- 15:46:28 Kristen Galbraith, Park County
- 15:47:27 Mayor Gail Leeper, City of Drummond

15:50:56 Jennifer Olson, MLCT
15:57:58 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville

Public Comment

15:58:32 Jason Rittal, Deputy Director, Montana Association of Counties (MACo)

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:02:23 Rep. Greg Oblander
16:03:15 Jason Rittal, MACo
16:03:53 Rep. Shane Klakken
16:04:23 Jason Rittal, MACo
16:05:01 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
16:06:24 Jennifer Olson, MLCT

COMMITTEE WORK SESSION

Interim Timeline Overview

16:13:13 Maxwell Parson, Lead Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 8](#)

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:19:31 Rep. Greg Oblander
16:20:13 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:21:25 Rep. Shane Klakken
16:22:05 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:22:19 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
16:23:06 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:23:22 Maxwell Parson, LSD
16:24:40 Rep. Courtenay Sprunger
16:25:20 Maxwell Parson, LSD
16:26:27 Sen. May Ann Dunwell
16:27:55 Rep. Greg Oblander
16:29:26 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:29:58 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
16:30:32 Rep. Shane Klakken
16:30:40 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:32:49 Maxwell Parson, LSD

Potential Legislation Brainstorming

16:39:47 Maxwell Parson, LSD

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:41:12 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
16:42:31 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:43:08 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
16:43:40 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:43:54 Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell
16:44:03 Vice Presiding Officer Alanah Griffith
16:44:43 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:47:07 Rep. Courtenay Sprunger
16:47:43 Presiding Officer Forrest Mandeville
16:48:28 Rep. Shane Klakken
16:49:07 Maxwell Parson, LSD

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM IN LGIC'S SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION

16:49:57 None

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 16:50:34