From the Broadwater County Commissioners

2025 is off with a bang, and just like that, January is behind us. So goes the pace of our little county government. The new year welcomes a couple new faces at the Broadwater County Courthouse including appointed County Attorney Kevin Bratcher, and new Commissioner Jesse Swenson, who represents District 3 in Broadwater County. They are jumping in with both feet and fully participating in the baptism by fire that is the first two years in local government.

With the onset of 2025 comes the bi-annual excitement at the Capital, also known as the legislative session. Broadwater County Commissioners are joining commissioners from Montana's other 55 counties to take part in the public process over the session's 90 days. There are several bills we are tracking and on which we are testifying. We encourage the public to engage with their legislators, send public comment, or testify in person or online. Find all things related to the legislature at **www.legmt.gov.** For Broadwater County, contact HD 77 Representative Jane Gillette **Jane.Gillette@legmt.gov** or SD 39 Senator Wylie Galt **Wylie.Galt@legmt.gov.**

Speaking of the state, Broadwater County is one of two test counties trialing the Department of Revenue's (DOR) new construction reporting tool. This can be used by county road crews and public alike to report new construction, remodels, additions, and improvements. Go to: **https://tap.dor.mt.gov/?Link=ReportNewConstruction** to easily and quickly submit information that will help alert the DOR to properties needing assessed. Simply put, the DOR has far fewer property assessors than needed to accurately capture all the new and updated construction. There's a "cringe" element to this that may seem to smack in the face of being a good neighbor, but the weight of the state's property tax system lightens for all county residents when everyone is paying their share. See: **www.montanafreepress.org/2023/06/22/property-taxes-explained-with-pictures/**. The DOR is aware some may try to use this vindictively and will identify repeat entries from the same person or address.

As most are aware, government is slow in just about everything, so we like to celebrate the small things that move us forward. This year, one of many goals being implemented is improved communication coming from the county. So many methods of communication exist that the challenge of consistently reaching the public cannot be understated. Moving forward, the county will be contributing a weekly article in Montana43 News. There will be updates from different departments, including the Commissioners. At times we will foray into some of the more "sticky" and even controversial topics, with the intent of providing education and facts, and invite the questions and (civil) discussion that may follow.

If there is a department you want to hear from or topics you'd like to learn about, please let us know! Send an email to our incredible, multi-tasking administrative assistant at **dhansen@broadwatercountymt.gov**. To be one of the first to get county alerts and announcements, sign up for **TextMyGov,** the county's text message alert system, by texting **BCNOTIFY** to **91896**. Residents can also find news, updates, forms, meeting calendar, agendas and more on our new and improved website at **www.broadwatercountymt.gov**. All Commission meetings and nearly all county board

meetings are live streamed, and the recording can be found at**:** **www.youtube.com/@broadwatercounty**. Any of the commissioners can also be reached by phone or email:

Lindsey Richtmyer, Chair:	406-266-9271,	**lrichtmyer@broadwatercountymt.gov**
Debi Randolph, Vice Chair:	406-266-9270,	**drandolph@broadwatercountymt.gov**
Jesse Swenson	406-266-9272,	**jswenson@broadwatercountymt.gov**

We look forward to keeping our residents more informed and wish you all a wonderful 2025!

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