



# Montana Board of Livestock Meeting Minutes

**(This Meeting was Open to the Public & By ZOOM)**

May 17, 2023

MT Department of Livestock Board Room #319  
301 N. Roberts, Helena, Montana

## Board Members Present

Gene Curry, Chairman (cattle producer)

Alan Redfield (cattle producer)

William Kleinsasser III (swine producer)

Lily Andersen (dairy & poultry)

Greg Wichman (sheep producer)

Jake Feddes (cattle producer)

Nina Baucus (cattle producer)

**(Gene Curry and Nina Baucus attended the meeting in person. The rest of the BOL members attended by ZOOM, with Lily Andersen joining the meeting at 10:47 AM)**

## Staff Present

Mike Honeycutt, EO

Brian Simonson, Deputy EO

Buddy Hanrahan, Centralized Services

Dale Haylett, Centralized Services

Donna Wilham, Adm. Assistant to EO

Dr. Marty Zaluski, State Veterinarian

Mike Spatz, Centralized Services

## Public Present

None

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## MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

**(:21) 10:31 AM**

Chairman Gene Curry called the meeting to order at 10:31 AM

## CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

**(:21) 10:31 AM**

Chairman Gene Curry announced that this was a “special” meeting of the BOL and requested introductions from the BOL members:

- Nina Baucus, Cattle Representative, Helena
- Lily Andersen, Dairy & Egg Representative, Livingston **(joined the meeting at 10:47 AM)**
- William Kleinsasser III, Swine Representative, Augusta
- Jake Feddes, Cattle Representative, Manhattan
- Greg Wichman, Sheep Representative, north of Lewistown
- Alan Redfield, Cattle Representative, south of Livingston
- Gene Curry, Cattle Representative, Valier

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**(2:23) 10:34 AM**

### **(2:23) 10:34 AM – DISCUSS OPEN POSITION, PLANS, COMPENSATION, ETC.**

Gene Curry announced that Dr. Marty Zaluski had entered his resignation and he requested him to address the BOL regarding that announcement:

- Dr. Marty Zaluski said that effective July 1, 2023, after 16 years with the DOL, he would be leaving the DOL, which he said was a difficult decision
- Dr. Zaluski expressed his appreciation of the opportunity to serve as the Montana State Veterinarian and hoped that he made at least a limited impact to the positive during his tenure
- Although he hadn't planned on staying with the DOL as long as he had when he first started as the State Veterinarian, Dr. Zaluski said that him staying for 16 years was a testament to working with an amazing team who had a cooperative atmosphere of the ability to make the decisions for the good of the stakeholders that he cared greatly about
- He said he was ready for the challenges that taking a new position elsewhere would offer him and that salary had come to a bit more of an important juncture in his life. Dr. Zaluski said that compared to other State Veterinarians, his salary was in the bottom of the Northwest area and he was not okay with that
- Dr. Zaluski said he had some regrets regarding the timing of his resignation, especially with Dr. Tahnee Szymanski, the Assistant State Veterinarian, having just left the DOL as well. He said that once you throw your name into the hat and somebody wants you to fill their vacancy, you lose control over the calendar
- BOL members expressed their thanks to Dr. Zaluski for his years of service to the industry and the fine job he had done in representing the DOL and the State of Montana
- Alan Redfield said he wanted to thank Dr. Zaluski for taking all the blows from the people involved with bison and the IBMP, adding that he and Mike Honeycutt had stood alone much of the time on those issues. He said that he planned to attend the next IBMP meeting, that Mike Honeycutt said would be Dr. Zaluski's last

The BOL discussed their path forward, now that there were two open positions to consider, the State Veterinarian and the Assistant State Veterinarian:

- Mike Honeycutt said the BOL would need to consider whether or not they wanted to repost the Assistant State Veterinarian position. The BOL would also need to consider salary for the Assistant State Veterinarian because it would affect the salary for the State Veterinarian position
- Mike Honeycutt suggested, for the protection of the Hiring Committee and for the protection of those people already interviewed for the Assistant State Veterinarian position, that if those candidates' interviews were discussed, it would be a good idea to discuss those things in an Executive Session

**(16:55) 10:48 AM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**(16:58) 12:25 PM RECONVENE**

Gene Curry called the BOL meeting back to order into an open session

**NEW BUSINESS (continued)**

**(17:02) 12:26 PM**

**(17:02) 12:26 PM – BOL ACTION ON OPEN POSITION, PLANS, COMPENSATION, ETC.**

Gene Curry requested BOL action on two items:

**MOTION/VOTE**

**(17:17) 12:26 PM**

**Greg Wichman moved to accept the resignation of Dr. Zaluski, the State Veterinarian, effective July 1, 2023. Nina Baucus seconded. The motion passed.**

**MOTION/VOTE**

**(17:59) 12:26 PM**

**Alan Redfield moved to post the open State Veterinarian position with a salary range of \$125,000 to \$131,000. Jake Feddes seconded. The motion passed.**

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS/COMMENTS FROM PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS**

**(18:50) 12:27 PM**

For his final order of business, Gene Curry requested comments:

- Mike Honeycutt announced that the State Architecture and Engineering Division had moved the construction of the new Lab facility out into the bidding process
- Shawn Hando, Mr. Honeycutt reported, had officially accepted the DOL's offer to be the new Eastern Area Supervisor in the Brands Enforcement Division
  - Mr. Honeycutt said there was a good pool of applicants for the position
  - Shawn Hando's exit from his District Investigator position would mean that position would have to be filled at some point
- All the documents needed from the buyer of the Headwaters Livestock Market had been received, Mr. Honeycutt reported
  - The DOL could now move into the public hearing phase of the market purchase which required a 10-day notice period before that public hearing could actually take place, followed by a transfer of license phase, that Mr.

Honeycutt thought could be accomplished during the June 20, 2023 BOL meeting

- Mr. Honeycutt thought that the closing on the property sale had been scheduled for May 26, 2023, which might mean that the current owner and licensee would need to run the market under their name and custodial accounts for a few more sales until the license transfer took place


The BOL discussed the process to be taken in hiring of a new State Veterinarian:

- Mike Spatz said that he would post the job as “Open Until Filled” and would send out applicant bios to the BOL members
- Mike Honeycutt said that because the State Veterinarian position was a specialized one, to not be alarmed if there were not as many applicants as the amount received to fill the Brands Enforcement Administrator, which was around 30 applicants
- Mr. Honeycutt said that he and Mike Spatz could do the initial screening of the applicants to assure they met the DOL’s minimum qualifications and then have the BOL look at those remaining

There were no public on ZOOM, Mike Honeycutt said

## **MEETING ADJOURNED**

**(26:39) 12:35 PM**



Gene Curry, Chairman