

Commissioner Comments
Steve Shockley
January 14, 2012

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a good holiday season. I would like to personally thank all the folks who donated to the Christmas decoration fund. Without you, the decorations at the courthouse would not have been possible.

It seems like it was yesterday that I took office but it has already been a whole year. A lot has happened in my first year as commissioner; I know it was not one of Platte County's best.

Information and events will now be posted on the Platte County Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Platte-County/154550131309434>. The ladies in our tech department will be posting general information there - similar to what gets posted on the home page of the county website. One of the problems that I have encountered in my first year is misinformation or the lack of information. Anything we can do to get accurate information out is a positive step.

With the open winter, the road and bridge department has been busy hauling gravel, replacing culverts and doing much-needed upgrades to several roads. Construction is underway on the Happy Hollow crossing on Chug Creek and, weather permitting, that project should be completed soon. We authorized preliminary engineering work to be done on Pioneer Road so that it will be ready for the construction season.

There are several other things of interest that will be coming up in the next several weeks.

First of all, the revisions to the Planning & Zoning rules and regulations will be going before the planning commission at their regular meeting February 15, 2012. If everything goes well, the changes will go before the commissioners on February 21, 2012. This group has worked hard on these changes, they have done a very thorough job on this daunting task, and they deserve a big thank you.

The next issue that is of concern to some is the National Guard's petition to the county to abandon the portion of Emigrant Hill Road that runs through the Guard's firing range. The way the process works is the petitioner first has to provide the County with a petition that included the signatures of at least five registered voters who live within 25 miles of the road. Then the petitioner is required to supply the county with the exact legal description of the portion of the road they want abandoned. At this point the petitioner must pay the county an amount equal to the cost of advertising plus the cost of a third party viewer. The viewer goes out and looks at the road and then makes a report to the commissioners on their findings. The public has a chance to make comments at a public hearing and then the commissioners make a determination on whether to abandon the road or not. If you have an interest in this matter, please watch the legal notices in the paper for the times of these public hearings.

There are a couple of items of interest in the upcoming legislative session. One of the big issues this term is redistricting. All of the legislative districts must be redrawn to reflect the population changes determined by the 2010 census. At the current time, Platte County does not have a representative or a senator that resides in the county.

Hopefully, this will change in the future. Another thing that is of importance to us here in Platte County is local funding. Governor Mead has been working with legislators to come up with a reliable revenue stream for local governments. Contact your legislators and let them know how important these issues are to us here in Platte County. For general information regarding the current legislative session go to the following website: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/lsoweb/>

You can also express your comments through the "2011 Legislative Redistricting" page on the Legislative Service Office website: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us>

One last item I would like to touch on is the shooting range. As most of you know, it was closed last month after safety concerns were brought to our attention following the fire that occurred there. We know that the shooting range is very popular and that there is a need in the county for this type of recreational opportunity. At this time, a committee has been formed to address these concerns. If anyone has ideas on how to make the shooting range safer or knows of a good location that would make a safe range, please contact the chairperson of this committee, Angie Kernan (331-1726) and let her know.

As always, you are welcome at commissioner meetings. I certainly appreciate your suggestions and ideas; so don't hesitate to let me know your thoughts. Until next time I hope everyone has a safe and successful spring.