

SUBLETTE EXAMINER

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Ricketts donates \$1M toward CAH shortfall

From Kari DeWitt, Sublette County Health Foundation executive director

PINEDALE — The Sublette County Health Foundation Feb. 13 announced that it has received a donation of \$1 million from Joe Ricketts, of Sublette County, to help close the gap in needed funds to build the new hospital. Formed in 2022, the Foundation’s mission is to raise financial support to advance the mission of Sublette County Health—to provide efficient, high-quality and patient-centered care.

In November 2020, a majority of Sublette County residents voted in favor of building a critical access hospital and long-term care facility, but inflation, a sharp increase in construction costs and a robust commercial construction market have caused a \$9.2-million shortfall ahead of the spring timeline for construction. If the budget shortfall is not overcome in the next two weeks, construction could be delayed to the next year and potentially even threaten the viability of the project.

“Years of work and planning have gone into making a critical access hospital and nursing home facility a reality for our county and this budget shortfall is a setback,” said Kari DeWitt, executive director of the Sublette County Health Foundation. “Joe Ricketts’



COURTESY PHOTO

generous donation is a critical first step to close the gap and will hopefully be a momentum builder. We are overwhelmed by his generosity. If others in the community are so inclined to make a donation to help ensure the construction of the hospital begins on time, we would be further humbled.”

The Sublette County Board of Commissioners will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023, to further discuss the budget shortfall, which now has been significantly reduced by the Ricketts’ donation.

“Few things are more personal or important than access to quality and timely health care,”

said Joe Ricketts, owner of the Jackson Fork Ranch in Sublette County. “I am happy to be a part of the community coalition working to keep health care local and accessible.”

To learn more about the Sublette County Health Foundation or to donate, please visit www.sublettecountyhealthfoundation.org.

Deputy clerk named next county administrator

By Cali O’Hare, cohare@subletteexaminer.com

PINEDALE — Three months after the retirement of Sublette County administrator Matt Gaffney, a replacement has been hired. Deputy county clerk Jeness Saxton will transition into the position on March 1.

Saxton told the Roundup she brings “a unique outlook to the job because I have experienced Sublette County government from various perspectives ... as a taxpayer, conditional use applicant, voter, appointed assessor, elected official and budgeting officer.”

Saxton began her career with Sublette County in the assessor’s office in March 1997. She was appointed county assessor in 2012, a position she held until March 2020 when she transferred to the clerk’s office.

The county administrator serves at the direction of the board of county commissioners to “plan, implement and coordinate the policies and goals of the board within the county departments and coordinate activities and operations with the elected officials.” The administrator is also responsible for “facilitating the development and maintenance of annual and long-range strategic plans to ensure the board’s organizational goals, objectives and priorities are met.”

Saxton will be responsible for providing the overall direction for all activities related to county administration, personnel, information systems, contract database management, grants and the county safety program. In her new role, she will work closely with the chairman of the Sublette County board of commissioners.

Saxton’s appointment as county administrator one month after deputy clerk Andrea Jean was hired as the county’s new Human Resources director, leaves the clerk’s office short-staffed. [Text Wrapping Break]Sublette County Clerk Carrie Long told the Roundup that she plans to hire a replacement for one of the two vacant positions in her office but will wait to see how much the workload and employee traffic is reduced by moving the human resources component to its own department before filling the other position. [Text Wrapping Break]Clerk Long said she is “really happy for both Andrea and Jeness and knows they will serve the county well.”

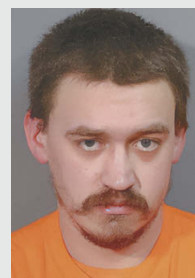
The county administrator position comes with a salary range of \$75,000 to \$95,000.

Marbleton pair charged with meth deliveries

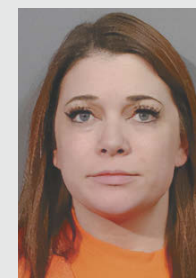
By Joy Ufford, jufford@subletteexaminer.com

SUBLETTE COUNTY —

A Marbleton man and woman were each charged Feb. 6 with felony counts of delivery of meth, conspiracy to commit a meth delivery and possession of meth.



Leon Covell



Jayden Bohm

On Feb. 3, a different confidential source contacted Turner and said he/she could buy 2 ounces of meth from Bohm for \$1,400 and a deal was arranged. Bohm messaged the second CS that she

was out of town and would send someone else to the Spur Bar, it says. Jayden L. Bohm and Leon E. Covell IV were subjects of an investigation after a confidential source contacted a detective on Jan. 20, according to court records.

The confidential source (CS) told Detective Karson Turner he/she could allegedly buy 3.5 grams of meth for \$300 from Bohm; the detective said in his affidavit.

On Jan. 20, detectives Turner, Toby Terrell and Travis Lanning met with the CS and arranged for a purchase in Sublette County; the CI was fitted with a covert listening device, the affidavit says.

The CS went to the Silver Spur Bar in Big Piney and allegedly met with Bohm and made a deal, it says. The informant then turned over a baggie with a white crystalline substance that tested presumptive positive for presence of meth, it says.

Bohm messaged the second CS that she was out of town and would send someone else to the Spur Bar, it says.

A white male named Leon met the confidential source and said he needed the money to go get the meth from a “mutual friend,” and Covell returned with two baggies of crystalline substance. The CS tried to set up one more buy in five or six weeks, according to the affidavit.

On Feb. 6, Turner tested the substance, which was positive for meth and weighed 60.5 grams with packaging.

Covell was arrested and appeared in Circuit Court, where his bail was set at \$15,000 cash only. His preliminary hearing was set for Feb. 16 at 10 a.m.

Bohm also appeared in Circuit Court with a \$15,000 cash-only bond set and a Feb. 16 preliminary hearing.

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