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Ravalli County Commissioners

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August 18, 2014

**Commissioner Jeff Burrows, District 4
215 S. 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT. 59840**

Dear Mr. Burrows;

On August 8, 2013, the Board of County Commissioners laid off five employees working at the Ravalli County Road Department. You specifically stated "the budget issue is due to the \$700,000 shortfall in Secure Rural School (SRS) monies for the 2014 FY budget". Receipt of SRS funds on April 10, 2014, should have provided the road department with funds to support road maintenance in Ravalli County.

We are witnessing road department staff "smear asphalt" on our deteriorating roadways with the use of road graders. We know the road department owns the proper asphalt lay down equipment and has staff capable of completing premium quality road resurfacing.

The attached photos identify various road surfaces, past and present, which we encourage you to review and ponder. Photo #1 illustrates a paver patch done 13 years ago when the road department annual budget was \$2 million dollars. In 2014, the road department budget is \$875,000 more than 2001. Lack of funds is no excuse for what you will see in the attached photos.

Photo #1: Taken Summer 2014 on Westside Road. The Ravalli County Road Department completed this asphalt paver patch 13 years ago. Weathered but no potholes. It pays to do it right!

Photo #2: Taken Summer 2014 on Camas Creek Loop. This photo shows at least five years of patching the same potholes. Why not repair the road correctly - one time? The color fading on the patches identifies multiple years of inferior patching.

Photo #3: Taken Summer 2014 on Gold Creek Loop. This photo shows the grader asphalt patching done in the summer of 2014. Potholes were present within three weeks of patching. Did we waste our time and money?

Photo #4: Taken Summer 2014 on Westside Road. This shows five years of re-patching the same location. There is a better, less costly way to spend our road department budget!

Photo #5: Taken Summer 2014 on Westside Road. This is the "classic" repair of a pothole. Shows the pride of workmanship! Let's patch one half of the pothole this summer and the other portion next summer!

Who is overseeing the quality of work produced by our road department? Is that person on summer vacation or completely inexperienced in road repair? The current "concept patching" is a total waste of our tax money. Either perform the job property and professionally or shut the road department down and send them all home. Our Commissioners are telling the public that the "roads are in the best condition ever". That cannot be further from the truth!

The election is just around the corner and the taxpayers have paid their property tax bills. We have a righteous expectation that our tax money should maintain the level of infrastructure we previously enjoyed.

Stop this feeble attempt at road maintenance. Put the laid off staff back to work. Let the road department know that the taxpayers are watching this disgusting attempt at road repair. Put the road department staff who are "asphalt pavers" in charge and let them do what they know how to do. Do it once, do it right!. Give us our money's worth and we will leave you alone.

We are not going away, rather we are going to the election polls.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "E. M. Huffman DVM". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Mike Huffman
Voter in District 4

CC: Commissioner Candidates & Newspaper



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