

Glenda Wiles

From: Chris A. Hoffman
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2018 4:14 PM
To: 'Chapter One Book Store'; Ravalli County Commissioners Office; Olivia LaVecchia
Subject: RE: Purchasing From Amazon

Dear Shawn,

Thank you for your October 9th email and your continued interest. Please rest assured that the board heard you on March 21st, 2017, and took your words to heart.

Shortly after that meeting, we commissioned our CFO to conduct a quick audit to identify where we were spending tax payers dollars. Within the scope of that audit, we only looked at purchased goods and services for calendar year 2016.

We were able to determine that the county had spent in excess of \$2 million on goods and services from businesses in Ravalli County. We found that an additional \$4 million were spent with companies outside of Ravalli County, but inside the State of Montana. Just as you had pointed out, we verified that collectively, county entities had spent approximately \$15,000 through Amazon.

In short, we were pleased to find that the total amount spent with Amazon or with out of state vendors of any kind was a only a small fraction of total county spending.

Nevertheless, to ensure that we are doing our best to spend locally, we did contact all other elected officials and department heads to remind them that, where possible, they need to purchase locally.

Needless to say, our charge as local government is to be good stewards of the tax payers dollar. We remain committed to vetting all purchases, and in particular all purchases of bulk items in order to verify that we are getting the best price for any given item.

I hope that I've answered your questions, but am always available to discuss this issue with you at any time.

Sincerely,

Chris Hoffman
Vice Chairman
Ravalli County Board of County Commissioners cahoffman@rc.mt.gov

-----Original Message-----

From: Chapter One Book Store [mailto:Books@Chapter1BookStore.com]

Sent: Tuesday, October 9, 2018 1:31 PM

To: Ravalli County Commissioners Office <commissioners@rc.mt.gov>; Olivia LaVecchia <olivia@ilsr.org>

Subject: Purchasing From Amazon

Dear Commissioners:

It has been nearly 20 months since Al Mitchell and I testified before you about the county's purchasing policies that favored Amazon over local businesses. At that meeting, you stated an intent to craft a "Buy Local First" policy. There was also a decision at that meeting to have Mitchell--since the county rarely buys books--address department heads to press upon them the need to look for their supplies locally first. I talked with Dan Mitchell at the Paper Clip last week, and he said no orders have been placed by the county at his store since that meeting.

Perhaps the county has made efforts to by from Evans Ace Hardware?

Extrapolating using the numbers I obtained after paying a fee, I would estimate that more than \$20,000 has been paid to companies residing outside the county, for which there is an acceptable local provider. I am writing to determine what, if any progress has been made on the issue.

Regards,

Shawn Wathen

Chapter One Book Store