

Minutes of the Board of Ward County Commissioners

January 16, 2018

The regular meeting of the Ward County Commission was called to order by Chairman Walter at 9:00 a.m. with Comms. Fjeldahl, Louser, Rostad and Wepler present. Also present were department heads: Amanda Schooling, Bob Barnard, Dana Larsen, Devra Smestad, Leona Lochthowe, Roza Larson, Ryan Kamrowski, John Crosby.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve the Agenda with additions. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Wepler, to approve the Regular Commission meeting minutes from the January 2, 2018 meeting. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve Regular bills totaling \$454,442.00 and Social Services bills of \$24,869.45. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Brian Kunz from Adolfson & Peterson Construction appeared with an update on the construction of the Ward County Jail. On the remodel, demolition is 95% complete on Level 2, 65% complete on Level 1, and have started the 4th Level stairwell. The kitchen is 95% complete and has passed inspection. Just waiting for the door. Kitchen should be used beginning next week.

Adolfson & Peterson brought forth change orders for discussion and approval. These are items that would have been in the original bid but were eliminated due to the overall cost of the project. Now that construction is 85% complete, these items can be brought in comfortably. All are upgrades to the project.

Change Order #066 – Cell toilet overflow preventers. Total cost \$30,478.00.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve Change Order #066. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Change Order #070 – New wall finishes on 2nd Floor. Total cost \$37,189.00.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve Change Order #070. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Change Order #071 – Miscellaneous ceilings and lights in remodel. Total cost \$41,571.00.

Moved by Comm. Rostad seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve Change Order #071. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Ryan Ackerman from the Souris River Joint Board gave a quarterly update. Updated and answered questions regarding the StARR program, the status of the Emergency Action Plan for the Mouse River Valley, the securing of funds from the US Army Corps of Engineers for flood control, the status of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Burlington and Minot, update on the Design of the three phases of the flood control project for Minot as well as the project in Burlington, update on the J. Clark Salyer improvements and securing funding from the State of North Dakota for projects throughout the basin. Also provided information on construction contract awards and current biennium funding considerations.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to receive and file the information provided by Mr. Ackerman. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Amanda Schooling presented the Ward County Emergency Operations Plan for approval. Noted changes to Red Cross programs and added pet sheltering with the Zoo and Souris Valley Animal Shelter. Also stated the plan is for the City of Minot and Ward County only as other cities have their own plans.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to adopt the Emergency Operations Plan and have the Chairman sign. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Planning & Zoning Administrator Nancy Simpson appeared to seek approval for a consultant to conduct the Ward County Comprehensive Plan and ordinance update. Received six proposals. Interviews were conducted with the top three who had local presence—KLJ, SRF/HEI and Ackerman-Estvoid. After deliberation, the committee recommends KLJ.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to hire KLJ for the planning and zoning work. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Highway Engineer Dana Larsen appeared with a request to hire Main Electric to repair the automatic traffic recorder. He was notified by the ND DOT that it wasn't working properly. Main Electric was the low bidder for a total of \$23,110.00.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to approve the bid from Main Electric and have them proceed with repairs. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Larsen is also seeking authorization to request bids on maintenance for items such as striping or graveling projects, etc.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to grant authorization to request bids for maintenance items. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Mr. Larsen also submitted a request to purchase four 2008 and 2009 Freightliner trucks from ND Surplus Properties at \$6,000.00 each. These would be converted to snowplow trucks to rebuild the fleet as other trucks age out.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to approve the purchase four trucks from ND Surplus Properties. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Director of Tax Equalization Ryan Kamrowski presented Memorandum A – Tax Roll Corrections for review and approval:

1. Property purchased by taxable individual, was exempt under previous owner:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Gravesen, Seth & Janae	BD000010400180 Lots 17 & 18 Block 4 Original Berthold	2017	\$0.00	\$28,000	\$0.00	\$1,400

2. Property purchased by tax exempt entity, remove value for 2017:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
City of Burlington	BN010380000030 Hacienda Acres 3 rd Addn. Lot 3	2017	\$16,000	\$0.00	\$800	\$0.00
City of Burlington	BN010380000040 Hacienda Acres 3 rd Addn. Lot 4	2017	\$15,000	\$0.00	\$750	\$0.00

3. Valuation data entry error:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Johnson, James & Carolyn	BT120990000021 Olt 2 of SE less Por N of River & Hwy & Lot H	2017	\$264,500	\$24,500	\$12,025	\$1,225
Johnson, James & Carolyn	HA180490000050 Nursery S/D Lot 5	2017	\$92,000	\$8,700	\$4,600	\$435

4. Owner applied for and qualifies for Farm Residence Exemption:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Larson, Mark & Jeffrey	BU250020000000 NW S25-154-84	2017	\$175,300	\$118,900	\$8,470	\$5,945
Larson, Mark & Jeffrey	BU250020000000 NW S25-154-84	2016	\$175,300	\$118,900	\$8,470	\$5,945
Jung, Daniel & Christina Revocable Living Trust	SU150990000040 Olt 4 of E2NE S15-155-81	2017	\$438,000	\$31,000	\$19,710	\$1,395
Effertz Key Ranch Inc.	NP250040000000 SE S25-154-81	2017	\$235,000	\$111,400	\$11,110	\$5,570
St Croix, Ronald & Rita	KE200990000041 Olt 4 in NE Less Lots A & B S20-160-88	2017	\$264,000	\$11,300	\$11,880	\$565

5. Owner consented to inspection of property, adjusting T & F value to more accurately reflect market value:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Schlosser, Barry & Donna	SR140990000020 Olt 2 in SWNE S14-154-82	2017	\$426,000	\$388,000	\$19,410	\$17,700

6. MFH moved to landfill:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Bertsch, Randy	MY5101372 Mckinley TWP Sec 6 SE	2018	\$12,000	\$0.00	\$540	\$0.00
Quality Construction Inc.	NP5100249 New Prairie TWP Sec 32 SW	2018	\$9,000	\$0.00	\$405	\$0.00

7. MFH moved out of county without permit:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Ganje, Katherine	KM000010600151 Original Kenmare W45' of Lots 15 & 14 Block 6	2017	\$31,000	\$0.00	\$1,395	\$0.00

8. Qualifies for property tax exemption:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
First Assembly of God	MI5104616 Prairie Bluffs MHP Lot 115	2017	\$84,000	\$0.00	\$3,780	\$0.00

9. Parcel deleted in 2015, reactivated and billed for 2017. Reverse tax bill parcel is not active:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Undhjem, Derek	CO120020400020 Lots 1 & 2 Blk 4 Dunnams 1 st Addn	2017	\$10,000	\$0.00	\$500	\$0.00

10. Owner consented to inspection of property, adjusting valuation to reflect % of basement finish and physical condition of interior of property:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Burke, Derrick & Tanya	HA161070200100 West Hills Acres Lot 10 Block 2	2017	\$450,000	\$396,000	\$20,250	\$17,820

11. Property not exempt for 2017:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Erickson, Casey & Michelle	MI151140700140 Garden Home Addn. Lot 14 Block 7	2017	\$0.00	\$166,000	\$0.00	\$7,470

12. Building used as of Sept. 1st for non-profit qualifying status:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Gymnastics Inc.	MI27D800600020 55 th Crossing 4 th Addn. Lot 2 Block 6	2017	\$1,768,000	\$1,178,000	\$88,400	\$58,900

13. Airplane Hanger rented on 4-1-17, prorate for 9 months:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
City of Minot c/o Galen, Jacob & Marsh, Matthew	MI137A680800107 Minot International Airport 2 nd Addn. Lot 1 Block 8	2017	\$13,000	\$10,000	\$650	\$500

14. Property was combined with lot containing garages and land value was tripled and garage value doubled in software:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
DLC Properties LLC	MI231410000020 R/A Lots 2-6 R/A of Halvors S/D of Olt 14 S23-155-83	2017	\$520,000	\$216,000	\$26,000	\$10,800

15. Fire on main building prorate 6 months:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Valley Investments LLP	MI274040000160 S/D of Olt 22 S27-155-73	2017	\$1,270,000	\$1,015,000	\$63,500	\$50,750

16. Used 3 months for church prior to demo of interior and reconstruction:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Gold Creek Community Church	MI259400000010 20 th Ave Mall Condominium on Lot 2 S Park Terrace 15 th Addn Unit 1	2017	\$2,064,000	\$1,686,000	\$103,200	\$84,300

17. Basement finish was added following inspection in 2015 after homeowner stated they would be complete by end of year. It was never completed only partially completed:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Lewis, Elijah & Carrie	MI06E940000300 The Bluffs 7 th Addn. Lot 30	2017	\$449,000	\$428,000	\$20,205	\$19,260
Lewis, Elijah & Carrie	MI06E940000300 The Bluffs 7 th Addn. Lot 30	2016	\$470,000	\$450,000	\$21,150	\$20,250

18. Finished the basement after following up on permit in Jan. 2017. After reviewing in Jan. 2018 removed basement finish and added a desk property owner did not take out a permit for.

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Schafer, David & Jessica	MI15C470200190 Eagles Landing Addn. Lot 19 Block 2	2017	\$311,000	\$302,000	\$13,995	\$13,590

19. Home was estimated in 2016 review area. After physical inspection in June 2017, construction of interior of home was not complete and there was no basement finish:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
3V LLC	MI240720400090 Eastwood Park Addn. Lot 9 Block 4	2017	\$274,000	\$205,000	\$12,330	\$9,225

20. Property needs reduction to reflect market value:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Elberg, Beverly & Dena	MI115170100090 Marian Heights Park Condos Unit A-9 on Lots 11-19 Block 1 & Lots 1-18 Block 2	2017	\$133,000	\$101,000	\$5,985	\$4,545

21. Property needs reduction to reflect market value:

Property Owner	Description	Valuation Year	Old True & Full	New True & Full	Old Taxable Value	New Taxable Value
Ness, Jan & Loren	MI23E470000011 Mayfair 3 rd Addn. Lot 1 A	2017	\$270,000	\$201,000	\$12,150	\$9,045
Goss, Robert Tyler & Jodi	MI144720300070 Waidts Addn. Lots 6 & 7 & Portion Vac. 12 th Ave NW Less Alley Block 3	2017	\$353,000	\$309,000	\$15,885	\$13,905

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to approve Memorandum A – Tax Roll Corrections. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Kamrowski then presented agricultural land valuation as required yearly by North Dakota Century Code. The value certified is the average value per acre that must be met by the county for the 2017 agricultural land assessments. It was recommended the commission adopt an average valuation of \$583.01 per acre and no change to agricultural land values, thus meeting the allowed tolerance levels set by The State Board of Equalization.

Moved by Comm. Fjeldahl, seconded by Comm. Louser, to set land values for 2018 at \$583.01 per acre. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

The third item Kamrowski presented was a list of foreclosed properties in Ward County's due to delinquent taxes as requested by the commissioners at the January 2nd meeting. Total outstanding in special assessments is \$29,908.48 and the total tax amount due is \$49,388.53. Mr. Kamrowski is looking for guidance on whether or not the commission wishes to assess the full value of 2017 taxes against the property or if they wish to have the property valuation prorated from the date of transfer of ownership and taxes adjusted accordingly. He recommends that the taxes due are kept with the valuation of the property and add taxes to the valuation going forward.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to include taxes owed on the property and adjust any minimum sale prices that fall below the taxes owed up to the amount of taxes owed. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Mr. Kamrowski presented information about Farm Residence Exemption Applications regarding how often applicants falling under the Retired Farmer Category would be required to be audited. Kamrowski recommends that 1) applicants currently filing under the Retire Farmer Category be excluded from future audits unless circumstances arise that warrant an individual review of an application and 2) audits will be required for applicants applying for exemption in a category which differs from a prior year.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to approve the recommendation from the Director of Tax Equalization. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

The last item present by Kamrowski pertains to an email from Al Schall disputing the valuation of his property. He stated that Mr. Schall can go through a formal process to appeal the valuation of his property. Suggested that a letter be sent to Mr. Schall advising him to begin the formal appeal process to apply for abatement.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to receive and file the documentation as well that a letter to be sent outlining the formal appeal process to be signed by the Chairman. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

State's Attorney Roza Larson discussed committee meetings and notices required for committees appointed by the county commission. She has been contacted by some committee members and the Auditor's office to understand which committee meetings need to be noticed and made public. Suggests a letter to the appointed committees reminding them that they are to conduct open meetings, post notices of meetings as well as prepare bylaws. Bylaws will help committee members be aware of who calls meetings, how meetings are conducted and where the minutes should be kept. All committees are subject to open meeting laws under North Dakota law. Bylaws should be held by the Auditor/Treasurer's office. Information can also be placed on the Ward County website.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to draft a letter to the committees outlining the items Roza has brought forth and also inform the Auditor's office of meeting times so that the Auditor's office can take appropriate actions. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Auditor/Treasurer Devra Smestad appeared;

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to Receive and File the following correspondence to include the Extension newsletter: Director of Tax Equalization – vehicle transfers; Highway Engineer – year-end report for Rushville Township; Extension Service – quarterly report. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to Receive and File the following monthly reports to include: Financial Report; Sheriff's Office; Veterans Services; Public Library. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve the following payroll amendments: Thiele, T Level 18; Walker, S Level 16; Volk, D level 16; Schumann, R Level 16; Hesser, E Level 18; Lynn, T Level 18; Ryan, E Level 18. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Devra Smestad discussed the upcoming Elmer Jesme Conference scheduled for Monday, January 22. It will be here in Rooms 106 and 108. Should be a good presentation and will include the future of extension funding and report on oil activity.

Moved by Comm. Fjeldahl, seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve the deed for sale to the City of Donnybrook for a foreclosed property. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Louser, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to approve a raffle permit for Nodak Racing Club for a driving suite valued at \$1,000. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Louser, seconded by Comm. Wepler, to accept the Contract for Coroner Services between Ward County and Trinity Health. Trinity used their format but there was no change to the language. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Other Business: Comm. Fjeldahl inquired about the evaluation process and where it stands and what the commissioners should be doing going forward. At the last Personnel Committee meeting, the committee was waiting for information from other major counties. No response to date. With the information that has been received, the Personnel Committee will bring their recommendations to the commission. Until that time, commissioners will deal with it as they see fit.

At 10:30 a.m. with no further business, the meeting was adjourned.