

Minutes of the Board of Ward County Commissioners

September 18, 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 Weppler present. Also present were department heads: Betty Braun, Bob Barnard, Devra Smestad, Ellen Bjelland, Jason Blowers, Kerriane Boetcher, Leona Lochthowe, Mark Schrader, Melissa Bliss, Roza Larson, Robin Finneseth, Ryan Kamrowski.

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

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Louser, to approve the regular Commission meeting minutes from the September 4th meeting. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to approve the regular bills totaling \$816, 871.04 and Social Services bills totaling \$7,960.22. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Mark Krebsbach appeared on behalf of his wife, Garnet and himself. The Krebsbach's purchased property from the County in March and were asked to remove a structure on the land by November. Mr. Krebsbach is trying to move and sell the house and is having difficulty. Would like an extension until the end of summer 2019.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Louser, to extend the deadline for the removal of the building to September 30, 2019. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Mr. Krebsbach also asked if he could keep the garage on the property and run a fence between the subject property and an adjacent piece of land he and his wife own. The fence would cross an unused road. They would like to leave the garage to be used as a horse shelter. The Commissioners recommended that he work with the County engineers before a decision can be made.

Sheriff Barnard came forward and requested approval of a grant in the amount of \$12,675.00 from Hess Corporation to be used for outer carriers for bulletproof vests. Barnard also asked that a hearty thank you letter be sent to them.

Moved by Comm. Louser, seconded by Comm. Weppler, to accept the grant and send a thank you letter to Hess Corporation. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Sheriff Barnard also informed the Commissioners that the Department of Corrections once again inspected the jail so that occupancy can be raised to the maximum level of 290 occupants. The inspection went very well and a formal report is expected soon.

Travis Schmit appeared with two items. The first is a bid from Dig It Up Backhoe Services to clean up the Ostrom property in the amount of \$10,800.00. The owner has done some clean up, however, additional work needs to be completed.

Moved by Comm. Louser, seconded by Comm. Rostad, to approve the bid from Dig It Up Backhoe Services in the amount of \$10,800.00 and add the cost to the owner's property taxes. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

The second item is a request to proceed with the design and permitting for a grade raise of County Road 9A. This is the last county road that is under water as a result of the 2013 flood. The proposal is for a 5 foot grade raise that can accommodate vehicles and truck traffic. Estimated cost is \$500,000.00. There was considerable discussion and there was concern about the cost because County Road 9 is only two miles over and is useable as access for the area.

Moved by Comm. Fjeldahl, seconded by Comm. Louser, to continue the design and include numbers for a lower rise as an alternative. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

The release of the Letters of Credit for the owners at Rice Lake was addressed. Comm. Wepler said she had heard that the Water Resource Board had okayed the release of the letters. Nothing has been received by the County. The Auditor/Treasurer's Office was told the letter was being reviewed by an attorney and we can move forward once it has been approved.

Comm. Walter asked Mr. Schmitt about Cobi Hood's Rice Lake property acquisition under the FEMA grant. Schmitt was informed that the Water Resource Board no longer wants to pursue the buyout of the property or be part of the grant program and want to be released entirely. The Commissioners should be receiving a letter to confirm.

Devra Smestad appeared:

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Louser, to Receive and File the following correspondence: North Dakota Department of Health – Permit Renewal for Solid Waste Management Facility; NDARB – Cloud Seeding Press Release; NDACO – Probation Violation Transportation Fund; Emergency Management Services – EMST Request for Assistance; Court Facilities Improvement Advisory Committee – Application for Grant; MADC – Letter of Support and Sponsorship for CRISI Program. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to Receive and File monthly reports including financials: Public Library; Recorder's Office; Sheriff's Department; Tax Equalization Office; Veterans Affairs. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to approve the liquor license application for the Grainhopper. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Louser to approve and sign the Emergency Management Performance Grant. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl to table approval of the Court Services Contract until it can be reviewed by the State's Attorney. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Rostad to close the County Offices on Christmas Eve Day and be open as usual on New Year's Eve day. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to approve the following payroll amendments: Pletcher, L. – Sheriff's Department (Level 18) and Powell, S. – Sheriff's Department (Level 18). Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Fjeldahl, to add an HR approval block on the Payroll Amendment form. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Wepler, seconded by Comm. Louser to approve the removal of the cooling tower on the old jail. The cost of the project will range from \$29,000.00 to \$32,000.00. There is contingency money available to complete the project. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Ellen Bjelland appeared to update the Commissioners on the activities of the NDSU Extension office. The Minot office has a full complement of staff. Other counties are staffed based on their size. Extension operates at the county level, not regional. State-wide, numerous county positions are vacant due to budget constraints. Each member of Extension staff spoke to their individual programs.

Comm. Walter reminded the group of the upcoming Elmer Jesme conference, the North Dakota Association of Counties conference and HostFest.

At 10:35 a.m. with no further business, the meeting was adjourned.