

**Mercer County Commission Minutes
March 21, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Gene Wolf. Present were Commissioners Liza Taylor, Travis Frey, Rick Bauman, Auditor Carmen Reed, and Dan Arens of the Hazen Star. Jamee Folk was absent. Others present during portions of the meeting were Treasurer Dawn Grannis, States Attorney Todd Schwarz, Mercer County HR Director Alice Grinsteiner via telephone, Clerk of Court Wanda Knutson, State District Court Administrator Donna Wunderlich, Road Superintendent Ken Miller, Tax Director Jennifer Neumiller, Policy Committee Chairman Gwyn Bosch, Oliver County Commissioner Darrell Berger, Recorder Shannan Senger, and Marv Schwehr.

Pledge of allegiance was said.

Bauman moved to approve the agenda as amended. Frey seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Frey moved to approve the March 6, 2024, minutes as presented. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Frey moved to approve bills. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The following bills were approved for payment: AG-NEWS \$209.00; ARMOR INTERACTIVE \$3,762.00; ASKIM, CRAIG \$235.17; THE BEACON \$1,645.90; BEULAH LUMBER CO \$90.00; BUTLER MACHINERY CO \$2,392.76; CENTER MACHINE INC \$2,716.16; CHARM-TEX, INC. \$820.44; CITY OF BEULAH \$94.97; CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY \$29.75; DAKOTA BUSINESS SOLUTIONS INC. \$1,195.00; DIRECT MED \$33.60; EIDE FORD MANDAN \$598.51; ELECTION SYSTEMS & SOFTWARE INC. \$1,173.29; ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS INC. \$168.18; FARM & HOME PUBLISHER, LTD \$300.00; FREY, TRAVIS \$119.68; GALLS, LLC \$486.63; HALLIDAY, WATKINS & MANN \$220.00; HAZEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE \$50.00; HAZEN MOTOR CO \$77.33; HAZEN STAR \$284.55; HAZEN WELDING \$180.40; HR COLLABORATIVE \$99.00; IMPERIAL PRIVACY SYSTEMS LLC \$590.00; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT \$5,545.94; J & M HARDWARE, INC. \$1,289.22; J-S SANITATION \$31.00; LANGUAGE LINE SERVICES \$90.00; RELX INC. DBA LEXISNEXIS \$416.21; MCLEAN COUNTY SHERIFF \$3,450.00; MENARDS \$171.19; MERCER COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION \$15,000.00; MIDCONTINENT COMMUNICATIONS \$170.24; MORIN, KENNETH \$23.80; NAPA \$2,077.13; OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL \$1,540.00; ND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION \$2,269.33; ND DEPT OF HUMAN SERVICES \$475.91; ND SECRETARY OF STATE \$72.00; ND WEED CONTROL ASSOCIATION \$285.00; NDSU AG COMMUNICATION \$171.00; NDSU AGRICULTURE COMMUNICATION \$150.00; NDVAA \$50.00; NEUBERGER OIL COMPANY \$27,801.27; NEXT MOVE GROUP LLC \$25,000.00; NTOA \$50.00; OFFROAD SOFTWARE, INC. \$2,025.00; ODP BUSINESS SOLUTIONS INC. \$179.73; PEPIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE \$60.00; PFLIGER, METTA \$103.16; POSTMASTER \$50.00; PRO-VISION VIDEO SYSTEMS \$12,660.00; RDO EQUIPMENT CO \$1,566.19; ROOSEVELT PLACE HOTEL \$192.60; ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. \$1,557.04; SCUBA ONE INC. \$300.00; SEIFERT, BRADLEY Q. \$59.38; SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MGMT \$264.00; CHI ST ALEXIUS HEALTH CARE COMPANY \$360.38; STERICYCLE,

INC. \$20.00; STROUP INSURANCE INC. \$100.00; THE HUB CONVENIENCE STORES, INC. \$122.83; THE PAINTERS, INC. \$860.00; TYLER TECHNOLOGIES INC. \$600.00; VAXSERVE \$95.24; VERIZON WIRELESS \$42.00; VOLK, GINGER R. \$57.02; WALLER, CHRISTOPHER \$2,979.96; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$2,898.39; WIELER, TANYA \$2,000.00; NATIONAL SHERIFF'S ASSOCIATION \$125.00; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$460.00 (CHECK #s 49968-50040) TOTAL \$133,439.48. Policy Committee Chairman Gwyn Bosch presented the updated Policy 403 Paydays for the second reading. No comments have been received in writing by the auditors office regarding this updated policy. Frey moved to approve the updated Policy 403 Paydays as presented. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Frey moved to approve the Dakota Waters Resort Liquor License #457. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Wage committee will meet on April 3, 2024, after the commission meeting. Mercer County HR Director Alice Grinsteinner via telephone advised the commission regarding the vacant Tax Director/Land Use Administrator position to appoint Jennifer Neumiller as Mercer County Tax Director/Land Use Administrator and set her wage at \$35 per hour and back pay her to March 4, 2024. At the time she becomes class one certified her wage will increase to \$36 per hour. Bauman moved to appoint Jennifer Neumiller as Mercer County Tax Director/Land Use Administrator and set her wage at \$35 per hour with back pay to March 4, 2024. At the time she becomes class one certified her wage will increase to \$36 per hour. Frey seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Frey moved to post for the open deputy tax director position with salary to be determined and the application deadline is April 5, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Tax Director Jennifer Neumiller, presented the following two (2) planning and zoning items to the board:

- Temp Use Permit #631-Strata Corporation-Portable crusher and screening operations. Stockpile of material on site & imported material. Portion of SW4 Sec 26 T144N R84W. No action taken, postponed.
- Vanguard Service Contract for Assessor Web Site.

Bauman moved to approve the Vanguard Appraisal computer systems 5-year service contract commencing on March 22, 2024. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The board recessed at 9:48 a.m.

The board reconvened at 9:54 a.m.

Road Superintendent Ken Miller requested approval of the purchase of two (2) belly dumps for a total of \$50,000. Bauman moved to approve the purchase of two (2) belly dumps for a total of \$50,000. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Miller informed the commission that he has received a contract from Next Era Energy Partners regarding the transmission line that is being constructed in Mercer County for the Oliver County wind tower project. This contract will be reviewed by the States Attorney before it is signed. Miller reported that due to

forecasted winter storm over the weekend, the highway department is busy coordinating with the sheriff in taking necessary preventive measures to better handle any emergency road issues that may come up.

Board discussed the Emergency Management position applications and possible new information regarding this position that Taylor will be bringing to the commission to consider. Taylor moved to extend the Emergency Management application deadline to April 5, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Oliver County Commissioner Darrell Berger noted that the Emergency Management job application ad has not been placed in the Center Republic. Board agreed that the advertisement of this position will be advertised in the Center Republic, Hazen Star, and Beulah Beacon since it is a Mercer-Oliver shared position.

Portfolio updates were given.

Frey moved to approve continuance of the funding agreement option number two for the 2025-2027 biennium to receive state reimbursement for providing clerk of court services. Taylor seconded. Frey, Taylor, and Bauman voted aye. Wolf voted nay. Motion carried.

Marvin Schwehr discussed the Parks In Lieu account and reimbursing this funds from the general fund. State Attorney Todd Schwarz stated that after reviewing the information that has been gathered regarding the Parks In Lieu fund and how it was initially taxed, the commission are legally bound to reimburse these monies back into the Parks In Lieu fund and can be used for county parks of which they were initially intended. Board agreed that funds need to go back, but with revenues that aren't milled, so as not to double tax the residents.

Treasurer Dawn Grannis stated that we have received additional unbudgeted coal severance revenues of \$929,334.45 that could be used to reimburse these funds. Grannis and Reed will reconcile the exact amount owed into the Parks In Lieu fund. This item was put on the April 3, 2024, agenda at 9:40 a.m. Schwehr stated that at the end of each year all parks need to be notified of funds available so requests with a description of the project and amount requested can be reviewed by the board and these funds can be allocated according to the ordinance.

Portfolio updates were completed.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the boardroom of the Mercer County Government Center in Stanton, North Dakota. The meetings can be viewed online at www.mercercounty.com

Approved: _____
Gene Wolf, Chairman

Attest: _____
Carmen Reed, Auditor