

Mercer County Commission Minutes January 17, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Vice Chairman Rick Bauman. Present were Commissioners Jamee Folk, Liza Taylor, Travis Frey, Auditor Carmen Reed, and Dan Arens of the Hazen Star. Gene Wolf was absent. Others present during portions of the meeting were Tax Director Cyndi Zueger, Beulah City Assessor Heidi Hamelton, Landfill Director Candy Strand, NDSU Extension Agent Craig Askim, Road Superintendent Ken Miller, Sheriff Terry Ternes, States Attorney Todd Schwarz, Beulah City Economic Development Director Beaver Brinkman, Ottertail Power Company Representatives Kelly Dolbec, Paul Vukonich and Brad Zimmerman, Alice Grinsteinner, Randy Byrum, and Gwyn Bosch.

Pledge of allegiance was said.

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

Frey moved to approve the January 3, 2024, minutes with the following amendments, add "Planning and Zoning" and "MCED Alternate" to line 11 on page three and take out stricken words on page 2. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

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

The following bills were approved for payment: ARMOR INTERACTIVE \$1,881.00; BAUMAN, RICK \$9.90; THE BEACON \$1,255.76; BEULAH DRUG \$47.58; BEULAH LUMBER CO \$224.85; BRONSON'S MARKETPLACE \$9.99; BUTLER MACHINERY CO \$162.75; CITY OF BEULAH \$87.55; CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY \$29.75; CITY OF HAZEN \$9,500.00; CITY OF STANTON \$6,903.87; WESTERN PLAINS PUBLIC HEALTH \$3,888.65; D & E SUPPLY CO INC. \$636.34; DOOLEY ENTERPRISES, INC. \$1,023.48; EMINETH PLUMBING \$3,504.78; FARMERS UNION OIL CO. \$22.10; FIRESIDE OFFICE SOLUTIONS \$398.05; PFLIGER, DUANE \$170.00; HAZEN HEALTH PHARMACY \$1,012.32; HAZEN MOTOR CO. \$485.30; HAZEN WELDING \$410.65; HEART RIVER STABLES \$3,762.00; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT \$5,524.74; INTERSTATE ENGINEERING INC \$5,156.82; INTERSTATE POWER SYSTEMS, INC. \$17.68; JOHNSON TRAILER SALES, INC. \$679.44; JOHNSON CONTROLS \$1,282.65; KRAUSE SUPER VALU \$129.99; LANGUAGE LINE SERVICES \$90.00; LIGNITE TIRE SERVICE \$1,829.24; QUADIENT LEASING USA, INC. \$682.29; MARQUART, ANDREW \$198.00; RELX INC. DBA LEXISNEXIS \$205.00; MENARDS \$239.60; MERCER COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION \$61,000.00; MERCER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY \$5,000.00; MIDCONTINENT COMMUNICATIONS \$170.24; NAPA \$427.36; ND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES \$428.00; ND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES 911 \$858.42; OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL \$1,585.00; ND COUNTY AUDITORS ASS'N \$250.00; ND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION \$1,106.06; ND STATE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS \$720.00; NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE \$14,822.01; QUADIENT FINANCE USA, INC. \$4,000.00; NSC MINERALS LTD \$3,679.28; PFLIGER, METTA \$584.66; PHARMCHEM, INC. \$1,085.10; POITRAS, RACHEL \$109.06; LINDE GAS & EQUIPMENT, INC. \$252.30; ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. \$997.53; ROUGHRIDER RV'S, INC. \$368.39; RUD PROPANE LLP \$5,656.04; SAKAKAWEA MEDICAL CENTER \$200.00; SISKA, MELISSA

\$18.00; SOUTHWEST WATER AUTHORITY \$57.90; STERICYCLE, INC. \$20.00; STRAND, CANDY \$33.76; UNIFORM CENTER \$1,173.02; US RECORDS MIDWEST LLC \$2,861.00; VERIZON WIRELESS \$41.99; VEZINA, JORDAN \$103.55; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$3,037.15; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$440.00; JOB SERVICE UNEMPLOYMENT \$57.72 (CHECK #s 49610-49674) TOTAL \$162,605.66. Cyndi Zueger, Tax Director/Land Use Administrator, presented three (3) temporary use permit renewals to the board;

- Temp Use #627 issued to LeeRoy Fischer for a scoria pit located in Section 2 T143N R89W of the 5th P.M. Mercer County ND. Restrictions include work limited to daylight hours.

Folk moved to approve the renewal of permit #627 for LeeRoy Fischer. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- Temp Use #628 issued to Randy Byrum for a sand pit and overburden pit located in 20 acres within E2SE4 Section 32 T145N R87W of the 5th P.M. Mercer County ND. Restrictions include work limited to daylight hours.

Folk moved to approve the renewal of permit #628 for Randy Byrum. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- Temp Use #629 issued to Randy Byrum for a scoria pit located in S2N2 of Section 33 T145N R87W of the 5th P.M. Mercer County ND. Restrictions include work limited to daylight hours.

Folk moved to approve the renewal of permit #629 for Randy Byrum. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Ottertail Power Company representatives Paul Vukonich-Environmental Compliance Manager, Kelly Dolbec- Fuel and Grounds Supervisor and Brad Zimmerman-Plant Manager discussed and answered questions regarding the landfill activities and future plans of the Ottertail Power Company.

Road Superintendent Ken Miller presented the MC-800 Cutback Asphalt purchase agreement for crack sealing work at approximately \$25,000. He would like to purchase 25 ton at \$981.53 per ton totaling \$24,538.25. Frey made a motion to approve the MC-800 Cutback Asphalt purchase agreement with a limit of \$25,000. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Miller gave an update on the County Road 20 Bridge project and stated the box culvert shop drawings were approved by contracted County Engineer Charlie Hankins approximately one month ago and the completion deadline of this project is July 2024. Miller also requested to rent a mover and skid steer to mow ditches. Frey moved to approve the renting of the mover/skid steer. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The board recessed at 10:08 a.m.

The board reconvened at 10:14 a.m.

Beulah City Assessor Heidi Hamelton requested approval for the Extra Territorial (ET) appointment of Gerald Bieber to the Beulah City Planning and Zoning Board. Frey moved to approve the ET appointment of Gerald Bieber to the Beulah City Planning and Zoning Board. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Beulah City Economic Development Director Beaver Brinkman gave a Mercer County Economics Board update, which included development of a regional recycling center, establishing a STEM center in Beulah that would benefit all

Mercer County school systems, and a \$150,000 grant has been received from the Department of Energy (DOE) for work force development.

NDSU Extension Agent Craig Askim gave a year-end review and 2024 activities update. Requested commission approval to advertise and hire a replacement for the vacant part time secretary position. Folk moved to approve re-advertising the part time secretary position. Frey seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Frey moved to approve all NDSU Extension bills as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Reed stated that the Tyler Software installation and personnel training will be completed throughout 2024 and is scheduled to be fully in place by January 1, 2025.

Portfolio updates were given.

Frey moved to approve the 2023 budget amendments. Taylor seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Budget amendments were as follows:

Director Tax Equalization (general fund) \$6,906.47, expenditures exceeded appropriations, due to these monies being taken from wrong account. Utilities, Rent, Maintenance (general fund) \$24,608.54, expenditures exceeded appropriations, due to utility expenses. Examination Fees (general fund) \$314.66, expenditures exceeded appropriations, due to new hire expenses. Sheriff (general fund) \$70,916.30, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to consolidation of departments, and when taken this into account would actually be \$51,749.84 appropriations exceeding expenditures. Health Insurance (general fund) \$72,580.16, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to new hire expenses. ARPA Funding \$967,194.98, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to building maintenance/financial software expense. Special Vehicle Fund \$57,263.94, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to unbudgeted expense. Game & Fish Grant \$5,285.47, expenditures exceeded appropriations. Transport Deputy Sheriff \$11,252.50, expenditures exceeded appropriations. Aid to Secondary Roads \$71,579.00, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to nothing budgeted. County Infrastructure \$613,824.03, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to nothing budgeted. County Library \$53,854.67, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to more taxes received than budgeted. Commission on Aging \$1,241.24, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to more taxes received than budgeted. Water Resource \$7,726.21, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to more taxes received than budgeted. Western Plains Health (Custer Health) \$4,339.33, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to more taxes received than budgeted. County Advertising \$269.80, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to 2022 website hosting bill paid in 2023. CD Interest Fund \$96.99, expenditures exceeded appropriations due to nothing budgeted.

Reed presented documentation of all funds collected from 1/20/2009 through 6/12/2019, because of the establishment of the Parks in Lieu fund, with a total of \$123,315.96. These funds were put back into the general fund and never used for the purpose it was intended. This was tabled and put on the February 7, 2024, agenda.

Frey moved to pay 100 percent county employee health insurance for a year, effective January 1, 2024. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Frey moved to approve a \$50,000 allocation for the Mercer County Economics Board with case by case request for fund distribution. Taylor seconded. Frey, Taylor, and Folk voted aye. Bauman voted nay. Motion carried.

Frey moved to pay 100 percent county employee vision and dental insurance for a year, effective January 1, 2024. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Individual raises will be discussed at the February 7, 2024, meeting at 11:00 a.m. Bauman requested board to consider helping the Fair Board with building loan payments. This was tabled and put on the next meeting agenda.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 7, 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.mercercountynd.com

Approved: _____
Gene Wolf, Chairman

Attest: _____
Carmen Reed, Auditor