

Mercer County Commission Minutes January 21, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Rick Bauman. Present were Commissioners Jamee Folk, Gene Wolf, Casey Voigt, Auditor Carmen Reed, and Dan Arens of the Hazen Star. Mark Pierce was absent. Others present during the meeting were Sheriff Terry Ternes, States Attorney Todd Schwarz, Deputy Auditor Mark Erhardt, HR/EM Director Alice Grinsteiner, Treasurer Dawn Grannis, Maintenance Supervisor Jim Albers, Tax Director/Land Use Administrator Jennifer Neumiller, Moore Engineer Tom Weigel, Coteau Freedom Mine Representative Darren Hellman, and Darwin Knutson.

Pledge of allegiance was said.

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

Voigt moved to approve the January 7, 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Voigt moved to approve the January 7, 2026 special meeting minutes as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The following planning and zoning cases were presented by Tax Director/Land Use Administrator Jennifer Neumiller:

- Zoning Case 26-01-01-Andy & Sarah Thomas- Non-Farm Residence- W2W2 T144 R85 S5. Folk moved to approve Zoning Case 26-01-01 as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Zoning Case 26-01-02-Coteau Properties-Amend existing Cond Use Permit 02-12-01-W2 of Section 1 & 12, portion of Section 2 & 11 T144 R89 & E2 of Section 32, T145, R88. Coteau Freedom Mine Representative Darren Hellman was present for clarification and to answer any questions regarding this case. Voigt moved to approve Zoning Case 26-01-02 as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Paula Lavelle Abatement request due to removal of buildings from property. Voigt moved to approve abatement as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Neumiller gave an update regarding the use of SRF Consulting services for completing the ordinance rewrite project.

Maintenance Supervisor Jim Albers presented updated skid steer quotes. Folk moved to approve the purchase of the New Lease Return Cat 260 Model Skid Steer for \$63,825. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Albers presented the jail kitchen repairs cost of \$6,375, that need to get completed as soon as possible. Folk moved to approve the jail kitchen repairs for \$6,375 as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The purchase and maintenance of the Roughrider RV property was discussed. Folk moved to create the Beulah Building Maintenance Department. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Treasurer Dawn Grannis explained how county funds are maintained and how important it is to make sure she has some heads up when large bills are going to be paid in order to properly move monies.

Grannis presented the pledge of assets and designated depositories for approval. Voigt moved to approve the pledge of assets as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Wolf moved to approve the designated depositories as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Grannis requested approval to travel out of state to attend the Nation Treasurer's Convention. Wolf moved to approve the Treasurer's out of state travel request as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Recessed at 10:02 a.m.

Reconvened at 10:09 a.m.

HR/EM Director Alice Grinsteinner presented the Mercer-Oliver Joint Powers 1-year agreement for HR/EM services. Voigt moved to approve the Mercer-Oliver Joint Powers agreement as presented with changes in dates. Folk seconded. Voigt rescinded his motion. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion rescinded. This item was placed on the February 4, 2026 meeting agenda. Grinsteinner requested that the state mileage be changed from \$0.725/mile to \$0.73/mile. No action was taken on this item.

Sheriff Terry Ternes requested permission to forgive mobile home taxes on several abandon trailer homes.

Voigt made a motion to remove the following mobile homes from the Mercer County tax rolls and to forgive the outstanding taxes on 305 Center Ave. S, Beulah, 515 Central Ave. S, Beulah and 513 Central Ave. S, Beulah, with a total tax amount of \$734.87. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Moore Engineer Tom Weigel reviewed the 2026 engineering tasks. Folk moved to approve Task No 2 for on-call consulting services as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Folk moved to approve Task No 3 for Design and Plan Preparation as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Folk moved to approve Task No 4 for Design and Construction Inspection as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The Pick City Cabin site #2 Special Assessment District Road Project was discussed with States Attorney Todd Schwarz. Voigt moved to approve the Public Hearing for the Special Assessment District Road Project be set for February 18, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. Resident Darwin Knutson presented information regarding the Coal Severance and Conversion information and commended Commissioner Voigt on his efforts to update amounts of revenue to the county.

Folk moved to approve the quarterly County Nurse's report as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Wolf moved to accept Commissioner Pierce's resignation letter for March 1, 2026. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. States Attorney Schwarz explained to the Board that NDCC 44-02-05 states that if the commission can't agree on the replacement of this vacancy immediately, then the Treasurer will fill this vacancy until the next General Election.

Folk moved to appoint Andy Thomas to the Planning & Zoning Board. Voigt seconded. Folk and Voigt voted aye. Wolf and Bauman voted nay. Motion tied and moved to next meeting.

Wolf moved to re-appoint Folk to the Dakota Central Zone Board. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Portfolio updates were given.

Folk moved to approve all bills as presented except for the 3D Specialties Bill for \$32,786.23. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. The following bills were approved for payment: BRAUN INTERTEC CORPORATION \$1,525.50; HAZEN WELDING \$75.40; KNIFE RIVER VETERINARY CLINIC \$280.02; NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE \$15,899.40; TYLER TECHNOLOGIES \$120.00; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$2,509.89; CAPITAL TROPHY INC. \$107.50; CHI ST ALEXIUS HEALTH \$209.41; D & E SUPPLY CO INC \$531.45; DIRECT MED \$550.38; FARM & HOME PUBLISHERS, LTD. \$450.00; FIRE EXTINGUISHING SYSTEMS INC. \$360.90; FITTERER OIL HAZEN LLC \$8.25; HAZEN HARDWARE HANK \$184.40; HAZEN STAR \$185.00; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT \$6,171.25; J2 Studio \$3,773.70; LANGOWSKI, GONTRAN \$100.00; MCLEAN COUNTY SHERIFF \$17,000.00; MERCER COUNTY PROPERTIES INC. \$8,914.00; MID-STATE ORGANIZED CRIME INF CENTR \$150.00; MIDCONTINENT COMMUNICATIONS \$183.17; NAPA \$334.88; ND SECRETARY OF STATE \$36.00; NORTH DAKOTA ONE CALL \$6.00; OFFICE OF ADJUTANT GENERAL \$2,513.08; OFFROAD SOFTWARE, INC. \$4,500.00; QUADIENT FINANCE USA, INC. \$1,000.00; QUADIENT LEASING USA, INC. \$682.29; ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC \$730.87; RUD PROPANE LLP \$6,073.08; SCHWARZ, TODD \$395.20; THE BEACON \$20.00; THURN'S SALES, LLC \$1,800.00; VERIZON WIRELESS \$592.35; ESLINGER, MIKE \$31.18; HAFNER, KEVIN \$47.13; RENNER, CHRIS \$33.35. (TOTAL: \$78,085.03)

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:39 a.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4, 2026, 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: _____
Rick Bauman, Chairman

Attest: _____
Carmen Reed, Auditor