

Mercer County Commission Minutes February 6, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Gene Wolf. Present were Commissioners Jamee Folk, Mark Pierce, Rick Bauman, Casey Voigt, Auditor Carmen Reed, and Dan Arens of the Hazen Star. Others present during the meeting were States Attorney Todd Schwarz, Treasurer Dawn Grannis, HR/EM Director Alice Grinsteinner, Sheriff Terry Ternes, Landfill Director Candi Strand, Tax Director Jen Neumiller, Deputy Auditor Mark Erhardt, Road Superintendent Elroy Opp, Assistant Road Superintendent Dennis Olheiser, Interstate Engineer Harvey Fitzgerald, Frey Consulting Travis Frey, Civil Science Engineering Project Manager Carl Rohde, Coteau Freedom Mine Representative Darren Hellman and Paul Renner, ND Department of Commerce Al Anderson, Beulah JDA Beaver Brinkman, Hazen Community Development Buster Langowski, Donovan & Kaffar, PLLP Representative Jennifer M. Gooss, Houston Engineering Representative Shawn Soehren, Lignite Energy Council President Jason Bohrer, Brosz Engineering Representatives Billy Doerr, Eric Urness, Kevin Kalvoda, and Charlie Hankins. KLJ Engineering Representative Andrew Krebs, Moore Engineering Representative Tom Weigel and Jim Jackson, Pledge of allegiance was said.

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

Voigt moved to approve the January 2, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Pierce seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Pierce moved to approve the January 15, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Board reviewed vouchers. Bauman moved to approve all bills as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. ADVANCED BUSINESS METHODS \$16,958.88; ARMOR INTERACTIVE \$73.91; ASKIM, CRAIG \$489.25; BEULAH JOB DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY \$1,196.67; BEULAH VISION, PC \$1,182.75; BLOOM'N HOUSE \$82.00; BRONSON'S MARKETPLACE \$22.02; BUTLER MACHINERY CO \$138.48; CDHRA TREASURER \$75.00; CITY OF BEULAH \$10.68; COLONIAL RESEARCH CHEMICAL CORP \$354.93; D & E SUPPLY CO INC \$510.45; DALE SCHWALBE TRUCKING \$750.00; DIRECT MED \$569.26; DONOVAN & KAFFAR PLLP \$2,055.00; DUANE'S BODY SHOP INC. \$4,488.15; ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS INC \$1,396.04; ESCRIBERS, LLC \$26.00; ETSYSTEMS IN \$17,475.00; FORCE AMERICA DISTRIBUTING LLC \$97.71; GRANNIS, DAWN \$31.50; GRINSTEINNER, ALICE \$368.90; HAZEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE \$50.00; HAZEN HARDWARE HANK \$346.17; HAZEN STAR \$375.00; ISTATE TRUCK CENTER \$1,032.20; KRAUSE SUPER VALU \$44.70; LARSON, STEVEN \$48.00; LEE, JOHN \$85.40; LINDE GAS & EQUIPMENT, INC. \$274.38; MENARDS \$135.70; MERCER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT \$1,932.09; MIDCONTINENT COMMUNICATIONS \$183.09; MONTANA DAKOTA UTILITIES \$130.96; NAPA \$2,710.67; ND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES \$573.30; ND COUNTY

RECORDERS ASSOCIATION \$500.00; ND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION \$9,214.37; ND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION \$11.50; ND LEAGUE OF CITIES \$180.00; ND SHERIFF'S & DEPUTIES ASSOC. \$500.00; ND SURPLUS PROPERTY DIVISION \$200.00; NDAE4-HYW %JILL MURPHY \$100.00; NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE \$15,503.24; NEUBERGER OIL COMPANY \$2,668.30; NORDAK CENTRAL PUBLISHING \$47.00; NORTH CENTRAL INTERNATIONAL, LLC \$730.82; Olson, Curt \$20.99; PFLIGER, METTA \$34.84; POITRAS, RACHEL \$58.53; QUADIENT FINANCE USA, INC. \$4,000.00; RADISSON HOTEL \$102.50; RDO TRUCK CENTERS \$229.94; ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC \$175.00; RTS TACTICAL \$8,459.82; RUD PROPANE LLP \$5,772.82; SAKAKAWEA MEDICAL CENTER \$138.44; SCHEELS \$199.59; SCHUTT, KRISTY \$84.00; SCHWARZ, TODD \$364.00; SIGN SOLUTIONS \$101.95; SOUTHWEST WATER AUTHORITY \$59.20; STEIN'S INC \$591.12; STERICYCLE, INC \$21.40; THE BEACON \$676.99; THE COMPUTER GUY \$60.00; THE HUB CONVENIENCE STORES, INC. \$58.50; TYLER BUSINESS FORMS \$178.77; TYLER TECHNOLOGIES \$31,450.30; UNIFORM CENTER \$1,037.91; VANGUARD APPRAISALS INC. \$867.15; VERIZON WIRELESS \$2,335.24; VOIGT, CASEY LEE \$200.80; WALK-N-ROLL INC \$999.18; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$1,121.39; WESTERN PLAINS PUBLIC HEALTH \$73.00; WEX BANK \$2,585.50; WIEDRICH, WARREN \$139.97; WOLF, GENE \$86.40. (Total: \$148,214.71)

Talon Representative Jessica Johnson gave a high-level overview presentation of the Talon Metal Corporation, explaining the extracting and product development process via zoom. The Board agreed to the importance of continuing communications with Talon possibly on a quarterly basis and to hold educational public meetings.

Recessed at 10:31 a.m.

Reconvened at 10:36 a.m.

The following seven engineering firms responded to the County RFP; Houston Engineering, Interstate Engineering, Frey Consulting, Brosz Engineering, Civil Science, and KLJ Engineering. States Attorney Todd Schwarz advised the Board to select two commissioners to work with the Road Superintendent to go through proposals and rate sheets, do the interviews and have a decision at the next commission meeting on February 20, 2025. Bauman and Folk were chosen as commissioners on this committee. It was agreed that all rate sheets from applicants need to be into the Auditor's office no later than Tuesday, February 11, 2025.

Interstate Engineer Harvey Fitzgerald discussed the Interstate bill of \$13,583.10. Board requested a breakdown of this bill and information on the grants used for this project.

Bauman moved to close the regular meeting at 11:09 a.m. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Bauman moved to open the Public Hearing. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Tax Director Jen Neumiller presented the second reading of the flood ordinance. No public comments have been received and no input was heard during this hearing. Folk moved to approve the updated flood ordinance as presented. Pierce seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Bauman moved to close the public meeting. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Folk moved to open the regular meeting. Pierce seconded. All vote aye. Motion carried.

HR/EM Director Alice Grinsteinner presented the requested Badge and Key Policy. Commission requested that this policy be reviewed by the Sheriff and was postponed until the next meeting. Grinsteinner updated the board on the new ND Pers defined contribution retirement plan which is available for new employees that have never been on any Pers retirement plan. County will pay all the 9.26% and if employee selects the extra 3%, employee would pay 3% and county would match this 3%. This plan has a max of 15.26% total. Voigt moved to adopt the new ND Pers retirement plan as proposed. Pierce seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Due to a county employee losing a family member, employees were allowed to attend the funeral without using vacation leave, but only if you were scheduled to work. Folk moved to approve county paying for work hours lost due to employee attending the funeral. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Folk moved to approve the Donovan & Kaffar, PLLP, agreement for the update/rewrite of the county's planning and zoning ordinances contract as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The following budget items were presented for amendment: County Commissioner #1 Bauman (General Fund), \$-1,383.30, Expenditures exceeded appropriations (Travel Expenditures). Auditor (General Fund), \$-4,582.64, Expenditures exceeded appropriations (Employee Vacation/Sick Leave payout of \$8,440.90). Human Resources (General Fund), \$-76,150.61, Expenditures exceeded appropriations. On 3/6/24, Commission approved HR Budget for \$76,150.61. EM wages not split out from HR Wages of \$10,000.02. Publishing & Printing (General Fund), \$-8,983.94, Expenditures exceeded appropriations. Publication of Commission minutes/legal Ads & purchase of minute books. Postage (General Fund), \$-9,966.46. Expenditures exceeded appropriations. Election Postage total \$9,274.31 & Reg Postage \$692.15. Examination Fees/Audit Fees (General Fund), \$-71,320.59, Expenditures exceeded appropriations. (\$27,983.94 Audit Fees/\$66,320.59 Insurance Claims). Miscellaneous (General Fund), \$-45,929.55, Expenditures exceeded appropriations. (\$17,758.77 Opioid funds paid out/\$15,000 to Fair Board). Transport Deputy Sheriff \$-4,007.55, Expenditures exceeded appropriations (Didn't budget enough. Cash on Hand: \$12,432.85). County Advertising, \$-3,964.85, Expenditures exceeded appropriations (2024 website hosting/update bill). Health Insurance, \$-60,004.49, Expenditures exceeded appropriations. (Percentage not milled. Cash on hand \$674,695.32). Ext Agency/Pesticide Fund (Used for Educational classes), \$-1,219.31, expenditures/revenues depend on class fees. (New Educational Class Usage/Cash on hand \$14,175.82). Landfill, \$-75,214.62, expenditures exceeded appropriations. (Unforeseen Capping Project Expenses/ Cash on Hand \$49,106.85). Pierce moved to approve the 2024 Budget Amendments as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Folk made a motion to table the 2025 budget discussion until the next meeting. Pierce seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Landfill Director Candy Strand requested approval of an overhead door replacement. Folk moved to approve the replacement of the requested door. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Schwarz presented the Tyler Software amendment which was now ready for commission approval. Pierce moved to approve the Tyler Software amendment as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Folk moved to approve the Building Maintenance's Energy Tech System (ETS) Services contract and voucher for \$17,475.00. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Folk moved to approve the Hazen Golf Course Liquor License Application as presented. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Pierce moved to approve the State Auditor Letter of Understanding for the 2023 audit. Voigt seconded. All voted aye.

Portfolio updates were given.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 20, 2025, 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