

Mercer County Commission Minutes February 20, 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 Grinsteiner, Tax Director Jen Neumiller, Deputy Auditor Mark Erhardt, Interstate Engineer Harvey Fitzgerald, Moore Engineering Representative Tom Weigel and Jim Jackson, Coteau Properties Company Environmental Specialist Darren Hellman, Brosz Engineering Representative Eric Urness and Kevin Kalvoda, Houston Engineering Representative Shawn Soehren, and Coyote Creek Mining Company Representative Brad Erickson.

Pledge of allegiance was said.

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

Bauman moved to approve the February 6, 2025, regular minute with the following amendments; Page 2 near bottom, correct Interstate bill of \$13,582.10 to "\$31,583.10" and on page 3, in middle after HR Budget for \$76,150.61, remove "Budgeted outside of 2024 Budget deadline." Pierce seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Pierce moved to approve the February 6, 2025 special meeting minutes with the following amendment remove "Beaver Brinkman" from list of attendees. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Tax Director Jen Neumiller presented the following items:

1. USA Trust Abatements received from the Three Affiliated Tribes for parcels 27-146-90-00-16-600, 27-146-90-00-16-400, 27-146-90-00-15-600, 27-146-90-00-15-400, 27-146-90-00-09-800, and 27-146-90-00-09-600. Voigt moved to approve the six USA Trust Abatements as presented. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

2. Temp Use Permit Renewal #653, Arlen Kurtti -Nonfarm Residence to be used as a rental house. Folk moved to approve Temporary Use Permit #653 as presented. Pierce seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Coteau Properties Company Environmental Specialist Darren Hellman gave an informal update of the ongoing activities at the Coteau Freedom Mine and answered questions from the board.

Recessed at 09:54 a.m.

Reconvened at 10:01 a.m.

Interstate Engineer Harvey Fitzgerald presented a revised Interstate Engineering bill of \$16,308.10 and answered questions and concerns from the Board. Bauman moved to approve the revised engineering bill of \$16,308.10 as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Bauman moved to approve an estimated \$70,000 building improvement project at the county shop. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Pierce moved to approve the Moore Engineering bid for the county engineering for 2025, a one-year contract. Folk seconded. Pierce, Folk, Bauman and Wolf voted aye. Voigt voted nay. Motion carried.

Bauman moved to approve the 2025 Annual Bid Letting at 10:00 a.m. on April 2, 2025, at the Courthouse in Stanton, ND. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Bauman presented a letter from Sheriff Terrance Ternes requesting lost vacation hours payout to Chief Deputy Schmitt and Jail Administrator Major Roth due to continued staffing issues, ramping up prisoner housing, added 911 duties and helping department deal with the on-duty loss of an employee. It was noted that these expenses are within the Sheriff's 2025 Budget and see it as a one-time payout. Bauman moved to approve the lost vacation payouts of 136 hours for Kent Roth for \$5,728.32 and 16 hours for Mark Schmitt for \$674.72. Pierce seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Folk moved to approve the duplicate warrant #55152 for \$10,861.14. Bauman seconded. Pierce moved to amend motion to add "and upon approval a stop payment will be made on original check before issuing duplicate." Folk seconded. All voted aye. Amendment carried. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Due to the Coyote Creek Mining agenda item, Voigt recused himself. States Attorney Schwarz advised that Commissioner Voigt who is directly involved in this situation can only speak on this as a landowner or member of the public, and cannot be a part of the commission's final decision.

Coyote Creek Mining Company Land Manager Brad Erickson discussed the 2016 resolution and agreement with Mercer County Commission regarding the closing of a public road. Erickson states that the Mine is now ready to complete reclamation of this closed road and is willing to reconstruct this road in a way that will best benefit Mercer County. It was decided that Voigt as a landowner, Erickson, Bauman, and Schwarz meet at the site next week, then work with all landowners to figure out the best way to reconstruct this closed road.

HR/EM Director Alice Grinsteinner presented the ID Badge and Key Policy which has been approved by the Sheriff's Office. Pierce moved to approve the ID Badge and Key Policy as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Grinsteinner gave a report on the NDACo Capital Connection Event in Bismarck surrounding the legislative session. Folk moved to approve and write a letter of support for SB2277, ND Fallen Peace Officer Memorial Bill. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Bauman moved to remove the moratorium on ore processing. Pierce seconded. Bauman, Pierce, and Wolf voted aye. Folk and Voigt voted nay. Motion carried. 2025 Budget Item was tabled until next meeting.

January, 2025 payroll errors were discussed. Folk moved to hire Eide Bailly LLP to audit the January 2025 payroll. Pierce seconded. Pierce moved to amend and add the following, "Audit to include a complete walk through of payable and payroll processing, controls in place, provide an assessment of the control design and recommendation of control improvements." Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Amendment carried. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Portfolio updates were given.

Board reviewed vouchers. Folk moved to approve all bills as presented with the exception of three Butler Cat vouchers, \$91.58, \$38.87, and \$655.60. Bauman seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. ADVANCED BUSINESS METHODS \$2,888.57; AED EVERYWHERE \$117.59; APEX DEFENSE USA \$19,202.69; ARMOR INTERACTIVE \$2,461.00; ARNTSON STEWARD WEGNER PC \$3,031.64; BERG, MICHAEL \$32.20; BISMARCK HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER \$528.00; BOESHANS, JAYME \$28.00; CAPITAL TROPHY INC. \$107.50; CHARM-TEX, INC. \$302.50; CHI ST ALEXIUS HEALTH \$150.00; CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY \$29.75; CITY OF STANTON \$7,149.92; COAL COUNTRY CHC \$387.00; D & E SUPPLY CO INC \$42.45; DIRECT MED \$163.25; DOOLEY ENTERPRISES INC. \$798.92; EMINETH PLUMBING \$2,448.70; FARM & HOME PUBLISHERS, LTD. \$450.00; FIRESIDE OFFICE SOLUTIONS \$590.55; FLEMMER, RYAN \$112.00; GIERKE, GARY \$51.80; HAZEN HARDWARE HANK \$61.44; HAZEN HEALTH PHARMACY \$104.41; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT \$5,227.14; INTERSTATE ENGINEERING INC \$16,308.10; ISTATE TRUCK CENTER \$1,507.29; LANGUAGE LINE SERVICES \$266.65; LUCKYS TOWING AND REPAIR \$1,050.00; MIDCONTINENT COMMUNICATIONS \$173.17; NAPA \$1,651.02; ND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION \$12,376.43; ND LEAGUE OF CITIES \$60.00; NEUMILLER, JEN \$184.90; NORDAK CENTRAL PUBLISHING \$141.00; NORTH CENTRAL INTERNATIONAL, LLC \$331.46; OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL \$1,250.00; PHARMCHEM, INC. \$605.10; QUADIENT FINANCE USA, INC. \$1,112.08; RDO TRUCK CENTERS \$385.00; ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC \$1,126.44; RUD PROPANE LLP \$5,118.92; SAILER, SHANNON \$133.00; SCHEID, RICHARD \$12.60; SCHLENDER, SCOTT \$25.20; STERICYCLE, INC. \$21.40; STROUP INSURANCE & REALTY \$50.00; TESKY, LEONARD \$185.72; THE HUB CONVENIENCE STORES, INC. \$74.68; TYLER BUSINESS FORMS \$583.61; TYLER TECHNOLOGIES \$580.00; VERIZON WIRELESS \$491.99; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$2,487.53; WESTERN PLAINS PUBLIC HEALTH \$4,397.40; WOLF, GENE \$86.40. (Total: \$99,244.11)

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:23 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 5, 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