

**Mercer County Commission Minutes
April 1, 2026**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Rick Bauman.

Present were Commissioners Jamee Folk, Steve Guenther, Gene Wolf, Casey Voigt, and Auditor Carmen Reed. Dan Arens of the Hazen Star was absent. Others present during the meeting were States Attorney Todd Schwarz, NDSU Extension Agent Metta Pfliger, Treasurer Dawn Grannis, Tax Director/Land Use Administrator Jennifer Neumiller, Assistant Highway Superintendent Dennis Olheiser, Highway Department Administrative Assistant Rachel Grimm, Deputy Auditor Mark Erhardt, Moore Engineers Tom Weigel, Jim Jackson, NextEra Energy Resources Representatives Executive Project Director of Development Heath Barefoot, Strategic Engagement Director Wayne Bertsch, Senior Project Manager Kristy Smith, Crowley Fleck Representative Erik Edison, Basin Electric Power Cooperative Representatives VP of Commercial Operations Daniel Gallagher, Senior Legislative Representative John (Jack) Schuh, Director of Property & Right-of-Way Mike Murray, Project Coordination Representative Erin Laverdure, Western Dakota Energy Association Executive Director Alison Ritter, Sundre Sand & Gravel Joe Mayer, Joe Grannis, Kevin Irwin, Linette Irwin, Lori Hammer, Cody Didier, Wayne Windhorst, Brandon Windhorst, Wes Klein, Mike Berg, Kaylene Berg, Weston Berg, Duane Miller, Mike Knuth, Lucinda Johnson, Kevin Herrmann, and Darwin Knutson.

Pledge of allegiance was said.

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

Voigt moved to approve the March 18, 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

NDSU Extension Family and Wellness Agent Metta Pfliger gave an update on her role as a Family and Wellness Agent and her various activities.

Tax Director/Land Use Administrator Jennifer Neumiller presented the Tied Vote - Chapter 3, Section IV-Industrial District: Data Center listed as a conditional use. Voigt moved to approve Chapter 3, Section IV-Industrial District: Data Center listed as a conditional use as presented. Guenther seconded. Voigt, Guenther, Wolf, and Bauman voted aye. Folk voted nay. Motion carried. Planning and Zoning Chairman, Mike Eslinger gave a subcommittee update regarding the data center ordinance. Next subcommittee meeting is scheduled to meet on April 14, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in the board room of the Mercer County Government Center in Stanton.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative Representatives VP of Commercial Operations Daniel Gallagher, and Senior Legislative Representative John (Jack) Schuh gave an update of the River Run Energy Center & Associated Data Center project and what was learned from the March 30th Open House event held in the Stanton Civic Center.

Recessed at 9:39 a.m.

Reconvened at 9:50 a.m.

Voigt moved to approve the February Recorder's revenues of \$4,255.80. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Folk moved to approve the J2 Studio proposal to design the Beulah Building prints with a total cost of \$15,620 as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Moore Engineer Tom Weigel presented the following Task Orders:

- Task Order #5- design & plan preparation along 45th Ave and 7th St. near Pick City. Folk moved to approve Task Order #5 as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Task Order #6- design and plan preparation along County Road 21 between Meadow Dr. and ND 200. Bauman moved to approve Task Order #6 as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Assistant Highway Superintendent Dennis Olheiser presented the West River Utility Permit #1776 (26). Folk moved to approve Utility Permit #1776 (26) as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. At 10:00 a.m. Highway Department Administrative Assistant Rachel Grimm opened the annual bids. The Highway Superintendent Elroy Opp will review and bring back recommendations to the board for approval.

Darwin Knutson, Michael Berg, Wes Klein, Lori Hammar, and Lucinda Johnson spoke during the public comment period.

Recessed at 10:51 a.m.

Reconvened at 10:56 a.m.

Treasurer Dawn Grannis and States Attorney Todd Schwarz presented the Proposal of Financial System Conversion Audit received from the CliftonLarsonAllen LLP CPA Firm, who's local office is in Minneapolis, MN. Voigt moved to approve the Proposal of Financial System Conversion Audit as presented. Guenther seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Portfolio updates were given.

Folk moved to approve the bills as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. The following bills were approved for payment: ADVANCED BUSINESS METHODS \$1,984.23; ARMOR INTERACTIVE \$7,441.80; BADLANDS HYDROVAC SERVICES, LLC \$2,137.50; BEULAH JOB DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY \$1,196.67; BEULAH ND HARDWARE \$129.05; COLONIAL RESEARCH CHEMICAL CORP. \$269.89; D & E SUPPLY CO INC \$517.14; ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS INC \$3,332.06; FARMERS UNION SERVICE ASSOC. LTD \$345.00; GRANNIS, DAWN \$32.63; HAZEN HARDWARE HANK \$75.95; HOUSTON ENGINEERING INC \$2,989.50; ISTATE TRUCK CENTER \$369.80; KRAUSE SUPER VALU \$21.13; LEXIS NEXIS MATTHEW BENDER \$226.81; LIGNITE TIRE SERVICE \$704.00; LUCKYS TOWING AND REPAIR \$350.00; MENARDS \$96.87; MERCER COUNTY TREASURER \$638.17; MONTANA DAKOTA UTILITIES \$124.54; MOORE ENGINEERING \$21,854.50; NAPA \$554.50; NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE \$45.85; NEUBERGER OIL COMPANY \$23,887.33; NEUMILLER, JEN \$66.70; NORTH DAKOTA ENVELOPE COMPANY \$306.25; POSTLE INDUSTRIES, INC. \$691.47; RUD PROPANE LLP \$372.20; T-MOBILE USA, INC \$87.35; THE PAINTERS, INC. \$240.00; TYLER TECHNOLOGIES \$360.00; VERIZON WIRELESS \$84.46; VOIGT, CASEY LEE \$222.55; VOLK, GINGER R; . \$60.69; ERHARDT, MARK \$268.11; GRINSTEINER, ALICE \$225.70; REED, CARMEN \$502.43; SCHUTT, KRISTY \$207.06. (TOTAL: \$73,019.89)

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the boardroom of the Mercer County Government Center in Stanton, North Dakota. Meetings can be viewed live at <https://www.youtube.com/@MercerCo>

Approved: _____
Rick Bauman, Chairman

Attest: _____
Carmen Reed, Auditor