

Mercer County Commission Minutes April 15, 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 via phone, Auditor Carmen Reed, and Dan Arens of the Hazen Star. Others present during the meeting were Sheriff Terry Ternes, Treasurer Dawn Grannis, Tax Director/Land Use Administrator Jennifer Neumiller, HR/EM Director Alice Grinsteiner, Assistant Highway Superintendent Dennis Olheiser, Deputy Auditor Mark Erhardt, Moore Engineers Tom Weigel, Jordan Nehls, Mercer County Planning & Zoning Board Chairman Mike Eslinger, Coteau Properties Representative Darren Hellman, NextEra Representatives Heath Barefoot, Wayne Bertsch, Melissa Hochmuth, Stephanie Morales, Melissa Brook, Basin Electric Power Cooperative Representatives John (Jack) Schuh, Mike Murray, Erin Laverdure, Crowley Fleck Representative Erik Edison, Joe Grannis, Kevin Irwin, Linette Irwin, Lori Hammer, Wayne Windhorst, Wes Klein, Michael Berg, Weston Berg, Duane Miller, Mike Knuth, Sheri Santos, Robert Berger, Liz Lundstrom Dallas J Maas, Laura Hopkins, Marcia Jurgens, and Mercer County Concerned Citizens.

Pledge of allegiance was said.

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

Voigt moved to approve the April 1, 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

HR/EM Director Alice Grinsteiner presented the Nationwide Plan Update with updated options for employees. Commission requested more information and moved to next meeting agenda.

Tax Director/Land Use Administrator Jennifer Neumiller presented the following:

- Zoning Case 26-03-01-Chris Santos- Amendment to County Zoning Map-Ag to Commercial- Parcel 2A, Being a portion of Parcel 2 within the NW4NW4 of Section 17 T144N R85W. Voigt moved to approve Zoning Case 26-03-01 as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Zoning Case 26-04-01-Warren & Jodie Woroniecki-Non Farm Residence- Parcel 1 in the SE4 of SE4 located in Section 20 T141N R89W. Voigt moved to approve Zoning Case 26-04-01 as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Zoning Case 26-04-02 Kris & Nicole Martens-Non Farm Residence- NE4SE4NE4 located in Section 28 T145N R87W. Voigt moved to approve Zoning Case 26-04-02 as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Temporary Use Permit #671-Fisher Sand & Gravel-Gravel Pit- SW4 of Section 8, T145N, R89W-20 Acres. Voigt moved to approve Temporary Use Permit #671 as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- Temporary Use Permit #672-Fisher Sand & Gravel-Gravel Pit- Fraction of the N2 of Section 7, T145N, R88W-20 Acres. Guenther moved to approve Temporary Use Permit #672 as presented. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Mike Eslinger gave a subcommittee update.

Folk moved to approve the County Nurse Quarterly Report as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Wolf moved to approve the Sheriff's March revenues of \$57,473.94. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Recessed at 9:20 a.m.

Reconvened at 9:25 a.m.

Michael Berg presented information regarding the Basin Electric River Run Energy Center.

Assistant Highway Superintendent Dennis Olheiser presented the Annual Bid recommendations. Folk moved to approve the annual bid recommendations as presented. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Olheiser presented the Roughrider Electric Utility Permit #1777 (26). Voigt moved to approve Utility Permit #1777 (26) as presented. Guentner seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Olheiser requested the approval of the following purchases:

- 2022 International LT625 6X4 for \$55,000. Folk moved to approve the purchase of the 2022 International Semi-Truck as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- 2018 Belly Dump for \$42,900. Voigt moved to approve the purchase of the 2018 Belly Dump for \$42,900. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- 2011 XL Specialized Lowboy Trailer for \$25,000. Guentner moved to approve the purchase of the Lowboy trailer for \$25,000 as presented.
- Mulchers for two blades for \$45,000 each. Wolf moved to approve the purchase of the two mulchers as presented. Voigt seconded. Wolf amended his motion from two mulchers to one mulcher. Voigt seconded amendment. All voted aye. Amendment carried. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- New packer for new blade, for \$25,000. Voigt moved to approve the purchase of the packer as presented. Guentner seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Moore Engineer Tom Weigel presented the Bid Notice of Award for Cabin Site #2 Special Assessment District SI 2026-4002 to Bechtold Paving, Inc, which was the lowest bid of the five bids that were received. Guentner moved to approve the bid award to Bechtold Paving, Inc as presented. Wolf seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Wolf moved to close the regular meeting. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Wolf moved to open the Public Hearing. Voigt seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Coteau Properties Representative Darren Hellman presented an overview of the requested setback waiver and presented the following resolution for commission approval:

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of Section 38-14.1-07(04) of the North Dakota Century Code and Section 69-05.2-04-01.1(3)(b) of the North Dakota Administrative Code, The Coteau Properties Company ("Coteau") petitioned the Board of County Commissioners of Mercer County, North Dakota ("Commission") for permission to conduct surface coal mining operations within 100 feet of the outside right-of-way line and within the right-of-way line of the following public road:

- a. The west side of County Road 9 located within the SE¼ of Section of 36, Township 146 North, Range 87 West, for an electrical substation serving Coteau

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held upon the Petition of Coteau before the Commission on the 15th day of April, 2026, at 10:00 A.M. CST, in the Courthouse in the City

of Stanton, North Dakota, and the Commission having heard and considered all of the testimony and evidence presented;

WHEREAS, the Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter of the Petition and the public road and right-of-way stated therein;

WHEREAS, the Notice of Hearing on said Petition was published as required by law; and WHEREAS, the interests of the public and the interests of affected landowners will be protected.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission does hereby approve the conducting of surface coal mining operations, except actual coal removal, by Coteau within 100 feet of the outside right-of-way line and within the right-of-way line of the following public road:

- a. The west side of County Road 9 located within the SE¼ of Section of 36, Township 146 North, Range 87 West, for an electrical substation serving Coteau

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution, the Petition involved herein, and the Affidavits of Publication of Notice of Hearing be filed with the Mercer County Auditor.

Voigt moved to approve the resolution as presented. Guenthner seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. Wolf moved to close the Public Hearing. Folk seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Recessed at 10:07 a.m.

Reconvened at 10:14 a.m.

Chairman Bauman asked if anyone had comments regarding the Public Hearing? No comments were heard.

NextEra Energy Resources representatives Melissa Brooks and Stephanie Morales presented a River Run Energy and Data Center Project update.

Wayne Windhorst, Michael Berg, Lori Hammer, and Wes Klein made statements during the Public Comment Period.

Recessed at 10:46 a.m.

Reconvened at 10:50 a.m.

Folk moved to approve the bills as presented. Guenthner seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried. The following bills were approved for payment: 3-D SPECIALITIES \$141.98; ARMOR INTERACTIVE \$2,606.00; ASKIM, CRAIG \$17.40; BEULAH ND HARDWARE \$21.98; BLUE-TOP STEERING GEARS, INC \$25,000.00; BOBCAT OF MANDAN INC. \$643.80; BRONSON'S MARKETPLACE \$13,734.24; BUTLER MACHINERY CO \$918.32; CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY \$29.75; CITY OF STANTON \$7,018.28; D & E SUPPLY CO INC \$1,086.61; DAKOTA AWARDS, INC. \$24.99; DIRECT MED \$6.88; DIRT PRO SERVICES \$165.00; EMINETH PLUMBING \$3,885.00; FARMERS UNION OIL CO \$12.00; FIRESIDE OFFICE SOLUTIONS \$95.14; FITTERER OIL HAZEN LLC \$97.77; FLEMMER, RYAN \$14.50; GIERKE, GARY \$53.65; GUENTHNER, STEVE \$296.50; HAZEN HARDWARE HANK \$39.35; HAZEN HEALTH PHARMACY \$240.87; HAZEN MOTOR CO \$547.45; HAZEN STAR \$1,005.30; HERZOG ROOFING, INC \$3,860.00; INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT \$7,589.32; J-S SANITATION \$70.00; JOHNSEN TRAILER SALES, INC. \$429.64; KRAUSE SUPER VALU \$329.15; LANGOWSKI, GONTRAN \$232.00; LANGUAGE LINE SERVICES \$90.00; LOMCO INC \$3,636.70; MENARDS \$205.26; MERCER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT \$1,584.88; MIDCONTINENT

COMMUNICATIONS \$192.80; MULLOY LAW \$75.00; NAPA \$762.37; ND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES \$63.00; NDSAA \$400.00; NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE \$15,899.40; NEUBERGER OIL COMPANY \$3,500.08; North Central International, LLC \$55,000.00; NORTH DAKOTA ENVELOPE COMPANY \$578.25; NORTH DAKOTA ONE CALL \$4.50; OFFICE OF ADJUTANT GENERAL \$720.00; OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL \$1,880.00; OLSON ELECTRIC \$2,569.96; OLSON, RONALD \$312.80; PFLIGER, METTA \$100.78; HARMCHEM, INC. \$543.15; PROFESSIONAL HEATING & COOLING \$4,000.00; QUADIENT LEASING USA, INC. \$682.29; RDO EQUIPMENT CO. \$493.32; ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC \$2,048.78; RUD PROPANE LLP \$2,230.45; SAILER, SHANNON \$29.00; SCHEID, RICHARD \$13.05; SOUTHWEST WATER AUTHORITY \$213.34; SRF CONSULTING GROUP, INC \$7,856.91; Stein's Inc \$225.43; STERICYCLE, INC. \$24.50; TOWER COMMUNICATIONS INC \$555.00; VERIZON WIRELESS \$42.07; WEST RIVER EQUIPMENT \$163.52; WEST RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS \$2,502.06; WESTERN PLAINS PUBLIC HEALTH \$4,226.73; WILMINGTON TRUST NA \$202,425.00; I-29 TRAILER SALES, INC \$42,900.00; BIEBER, GERALD \$7.25; BOESHANS, JAYME \$29.00; CITY OF BEULAH \$145.13; COLE, SHANNON \$33.35; ESLINGER, MIKE \$69.60; HAFNER, KEVIN \$71.78; RENNER, CHRIS \$66.70; TESKY, LEONARD \$535.91; THOMAS, ANDY \$24.65. (TOTAL: \$429,946.62)

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, 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