

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**October 3, 2023**

October 3, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Chairman Skorheim, Commissioners Barta, Brintnell, Anderson, and Suda

At 9:00 am the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The meeting was called to order and bills were reviewed.

**Commissioner Barta moved to approve the September 19, 2023 minutes and monthly bills, seconded by Suda. All voted in favor; motion approved.**

Sheriff Ron Jurgens and Adam Trahan came before the commissioners to introduce the two new employees for the jail, Nicolai Ipsen and Hannah Vagle. Adam reported to the commissioners that the employee appreciation meal will be held in Park River at the Alexander House on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Brent Nelson, Emergency Manager, appeared for the following:

- Brent reported that he looked into consolidate the dispatch center with Cavalier County and Pembina County. Pembina County has not responded but Cavalier County is not interested in consolidating but they are interested in possibly being backup. Brent will contact Motorola to see if there is a way to provide backup for each other. Commissioner Brintnell recommended to reach out to Grand Forks to see if they would be interested in taking over the dispatch center, if needed. Chairman Skorheim would like all options explored.
- Brent then reported that he submitted the floodplain resolution that would relinquish the townships authority to administer flood hazard areas and related floodplain management concerns to Walsh County. This is required in order for the townships to be eligible for flood insurance in the future. Brent asked for consent to move forward and distribute the resolution to the townships.

Sheriff Ron Jurgens, appeared for the following:

- Ron reported that they are looking into updating their hand guns but at the time of the meeting he did not have the information needed. He asked for this subject to be pushed to the next meeting.

Jason Johnston, Highway Superintendent, appeared for the following:

- Jason presented the commissioners with a water board approved drainage permit for Phillip Jallo for a new approach to his house. He then presented a drainage permit for Roger Gorder to clean a ditch County Rd #8. The final permit was a drainage permit for Tarek Schanilec to clean out a ditch on County Rd #8. Jason reported that the water board did not have an issue with that permit either. **Commissioner Brintnell made a motion to approve the three drainage permits, seconded by Commissioner Suda. All voted in favor; motion approved.**
- Jason then presented the commissioners with a utility permit for Nodak Cooperative to cross County Rd #1 for their drain tile system. He also presented a utility permit for

Ottertail Power on County Rd #15 by Minto. Jason stated that he does not have any issues with either one. **Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the two utility permits, seconded by Commissioner Barta. All voted in favor; motion approved.**

- Jason then had a discussion with the commissioners regarding Walsh County's Right of Way policy. Currently, storage of material that the county has to move from the right of way is not addressed in the policy. After a long discussion, it was decided that Jason would reach out to tow trucks to get the items moved with the cost being the responsibility of the citizen. It was decided to update our policy in the future.
- Jason reported that BNSF will be replacing the railroad crossing on #4 and #9 in the Cashel area.
- Jason informed the commissioners that the NDACo meeting with DOT will be held on Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am during the annual convention.
- Jason reported that the Local Road Conference will be held in Sioux Falls on October 23 – 25. He would like a couple of employees to go with him and they would be riding a bus from Fargo to Sioux Falls.
- Commissioner Suda asked for an update on the sign remote. Jason reported that it did speed up the sign repairs and it was now a one employee job because of it.
- Commissioner Brintnell asked for an update on crack sealing. Jason stated that there is a way to chip seal a whole road. He also stated that there is a fog coat that would go on the entire road with minimal downtime.

Auditor Kristi Quibell then went over the final budget for 2024 with the commissioners. Auditor Quibell first went over the other county levies with the commissioners. This would include the Health District (2.51 mills), Historical Society (0.24 mills), Senior Citizens (0.50 mills), County Library (2.02 mills), JDA (4.0 mills), Water Resource District (4.0 mills), Soil Conservation District (2.24 mills), and the State Mill Levy (1.0 mills). Auditor Quibell informed the commissioners that she used the dollar amount that was requested on each of their budgets to find the mill levy that would be needed to generate the amount requested. She also reviewed the Red River Joint Water District (1.85 mills) and the Devils Lake Water District (0.00 mills) with the commissioners. Both water districts submit an annual payment for the county's share and it was noted that the Devils Lake Joint Water District mills have generated enough in previous years that the mill was able to be removed for 2024. Auditor Quibell then went over the general fund and special revenue funds for the county. It was reported that County General would need 59.74 mills, Road & Bridge 9.85 mills, Farm to Market 24.97 mills, County Road 4.43 mills, County Emergency 0.00 mills, Veteran Services 0.87 mills, and Weed Control 2.50 mills. Auditor Quibell reviewed the newly added Capital Projects fund with the commissioners. The Capital Projects fund will be used for the upcoming HVAC project for the courthouse and/or the jail project. The needed mills for that fund would be 10.0 with the intentions of transferring those funds into a newly created fund specifically for the HVAC and/or jail projects. After a discussion **Commissioner Brintnell made a motion to clarify that the 10 mills that are being levied for the Capital Projects fund will be designated for either the \$5 million HVAC bill for the courthouse or the jail project, seconded by Commissioner Barta. All voted in favor; motion approved.** It was noted that the preliminary budget had a mill increase of 10.0 mills but the final budget was a 6.99 mill increase from last year. **After a lengthy discussion Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the final budget as presented, seconded by Commissioner Brintnell. All voted in favor; motion approved.**

Commissioner Suda informed the board that Stacie Sevigny was hired as the JDA Director, with RRRC filling her vacant position.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am

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Dennis Skorheim, Chair

Attest:

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Kristi Quibell  
Auditor