

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
February 20, 2024

February 20, 2024– 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Chair Anderson, Commissioners Barta, Suda, and Brintnell.
Present via Zoom: Commissioner Skorheim.

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

The meeting was called to order and bills were reviewed.

Barta moved to approve the February 6, 2024 minutes and monthly bills, seconded by Brintnell. All voted in favor.

Josh Anderson and Brandon Mathiason from WC Soil Conservation District to discuss the Fordville Aquifer region, specifically the exposed area. Josh presented the commissioners with an example of a groundwater protection ordinance to review. A discussion was had on the importance of preserving the water quality. Josh asked if there would be interest from the commissioners to have a member sit on the newly formed Walsh County Water Quality Team. Josh introduced the Water Shed Coordinator, David Bounds, who will be working with the Federal 319 Watershed project.

Jason Johnston appeared for the following:

- Jason presented the commissioners with the most recent bridge inspection bill for approval to pay. Jason reported that there were 8 bridges inspecting, totaling \$8,562.06. Jason stated that he does not know when the federal funding will be released to cover some of the bridge projects for the county. Jason reported that once a bridge is over 50 years old it is considered historic in the State of North Dakota and the county can no longer remove it without going through a very long process. A discussion was had on potential issues that one of these bridges could cause the county. **Brintnell made a motion to approve paying the bridge inspection bill, seconded by Suda.** All voted in favor; motion carried.
- Jason reported that the bridge truck has not been repaired yet. A discussion was had and Brintnell asked if the county should be looking for a replacement and selling one of them once the repaired truck is returned. After a lengthy discussion it was decided that Jason would check to see if there is any consumer protection rights on the current bridge truck. Jason will also look into replacing the bridge truck and will present the commissioners with numbers at a later date.
- Jason informed the commissioners that after 45 years, Bill Jasmer has announced that he will be retiring on March 31, 2024. Jason asked for a motion to fill Bill's position. **Suda made a motion to allow Jason to fill the Highway Maintenance Tech position, seconded by Skorheim.** All voted in favor; motion carried.

- Commissioner Barta commended Bob Rosvelt, George Midboe, and Clint Sticha for their Road Scholar Program hours.
- Jason stated that he would like to work with Tanya to try incentivize cross-training within his department.
- A discussion was had on Homme. Barta stated that it has been cleaned up and organized. Anderson asked if the utilities in the wintertime are being paid by Susanne Blair. Jason report that the county was paying for all of the utilities year-round. It was agreed that the utilities would be looked at in the spring to see if there are any options.
- Scot Grove from the City of Adams presented the county with a request to purchase the store in Adams for \$1.00. Jason reported that the county has spent over \$5,000 the store, including the asbestos removal. A lengthy discussion was had on the precedence that would be set if the county agreed to sell it for \$1.00. **Skorheim made a motion to sell the store in Adams for \$1.00.** Motion died for lack of a second. It was decided that the county should make it a priority to get a policy in place to handle abandoned buildings that are returned to the county due to delinquent taxes. Jason will mobilize and take down the building to reduce the liability on the county.

Commissioner Suda questioned if the county has a Vehicle Procurement Policy. After a discussion was had it was decided that Anderson would reach out to Ron Jurgens to have him help develop a policy in an effort to keep it consistent. Swapping vehicles between departments was discussed for the situations where a department does not need a brand new vehicle.

Commissioner Brintnell updated the commissioners on the department head meeting that she recently attended. She reported that there was a conversation about changing the county's website. Allen Anderson and Ed Sevigny will be looking into it and will present their findings to the commissioners at a later date. She also stated that there was a discussion about potentially creating a policy to pay out a portion of accrued sick leave in an effort to curb the abuse of sick-time use. She also stated that there was a discussion about possibly changing the vacant part-time janitorial position to a full-time position. A discussion was had on what the potential full-time position would include and how it would be funded.

Commissioner Barta informed the commissioners that Jason Flanders reached out to him regarding a septic issue between him and his future neighbor; who is having trouble financing the rural property. Barta has been in contact with Luther Meberg from Planning & Zoning and Luther felt that a letter written on behalf of the Walsh County Commission would resolve the issue. Barta asked for permission to have Madam Chair Anderson sign the presented letter. **Barta made a motion to accept the letter and have Madam Chair Anderson sign, seconded by Suda.** All voted in favor; motion carried.

Madam Chair Anderson discussed the resume that was received from Matthew Richardson for the vacancy on the Planning & Zoning board. It was decided to wait on

the appointment until the expired terms of the board can be reviewed. Auditor Quibell will report back and at that time the commissioners will discuss appointing him to the board.

Madam Chair Anderson briefly reviewed Walsh County's Home Rule Charter after some inquiries were received. Madam Chair Anderson requested that the charter be placed on the website so it is easily accessible to the public. Auditor Quibell briefly explained the signature requirements for initiatives and referendums. She reported that once the petition is received in her office she would determine if the petition was sufficient and then proceed accordingly.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 am

Karen Anderson, Chair

Attest:

Kristi Quibell
Auditor