

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
January 21, 2025

January 21, 2025– 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Chair Brintnell; Commissioner Suda, Barta, Houdek, and Skorheim

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

Skorheim moved to approve the January 2, 2025 regular meeting minutes and monthly bills; seconded by Suda. All voted in favor; motion approved.

Bailey Schroeder, the newly hired Ag and Natural Resource Agent, introduced herself to the commissioners.

Ed Sevigny, Tax Director, appeared for the following:

- Presented an abatement application for Rotnem Able American Legion for the 2023 and 2024 tax year. After a discussion, Ed recommended that the abatement application be approved to reduce the total true and full value of the property to \$0, which was approved by the City of Fordville. **Suda made a motion to approve the abatement application, as presented, seconded by Houdek.** All voted in favor; motion carried.
- Presented an abatement application for Ryan Ebertowski for a residential property for the 2024 tax year due to a structure fire. After a discussion, Ed recommended that the abatement application be approved to reduce the structure value to \$32,570, which was approved by the City of Minto. **Barta made a motion to approve the abatement application, as presented, seconded by Suda.** All voted in favor; motion carried.
- Presented an abatement application for Central Valley Bean Cooperative 2024 tax year. After a discussion, Ed recommended that the abatement application be approved to reduce the structure value to \$145,000, which was approved by the City of Pisek. **Skorheim made a motion to approve the abatement application, as presented, seconded by Barta.** All voted in favor; motion carried.
- Ed updated the commissioners on the mobile home removal discussed at the January 2nd meeting. After working with the States Attorney's Office, the county will not be able to assess the removal costs to the landowner.

Brent Nelson, Emergency Manager, appeared for the following:

- Presented a reappointment of Kent Matejcek to the Weed Board. **Suda made a motion to reappoint Kent Matejcek to the Weed Board for a four-year term, seconded by Skorheim.** All voted in favor; motion carried.
- Presented an update on the Township Floodplain Management. Due to the uncertainty with it right now it was recommended that Brent reach out to the 3 townships that have not returned a resolution to the county to ensure they are covered with FEMA.
- Presented an update on the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Brent requested permission to apply for a BRIC Grant, which is a 25% cost share to the county, and hire a grant writer to assist in the renewal process of the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The county has used the grant writers in the past and the cost

share will be included in the 2026 budget. It was decided that Brent should hire the grant writer and report back once the grant application process is complete.

Commissioner Skorheim reported that HB1591 is a County Fair Resiliency Grant Program which includes a one-time grant of up to \$100,000 for planning and designing a new building, which might be available to the county if the bill passes.

Commissioner Barta reported that he and Commissioner Houdek met with the highway department. Barta shared the highway department equipment listing and noted the age of the inventory. Barta and Houdek would like to see a plan in the budget to start replacing a few pieces each year.

Auditor Quibell presented the 2025 Commissioner Portfolio list for approval. **Houdek made a motion to approve the 2025 Commissioner Portfolio list, as presented, seconded by Barta.** All voted in favor; motion approved.

Tanya Wieler appeared for the following:

- Presented the second reading of the updated Winter Weather Policy to the commissioners. After a discussion, **Suda made a motion to approve the second reading of the Winter Weather Policy, seconded by Houdek.** All voted in favor; motion approved.
- Presented an overview of the new NDPERS retirement plan that went into effect January 1, 2025. The new plan allows the employee to elect an additional contribution that would require a matching contribution from the county. Currently employees are contributing 3% and the county is contributing 13.26% but with the new plan the maximum contribution is 15.26%. After a discussion, **Suda made a motion to approve the employee contribution of 3% with the county contributing up to 15.26%, depending on the employee's election, seconded by Barta.** All voted in favor; motion approved.

Sid Samuels, The Samuels Group, presented a slideshow with the findings on the LEC Project. Sid went over, in detail, the preliminary cost to build a new jail facility, the tax impact to fund the project, the financial projections to transport inmates for the next 20 years, and the floorplan of the project. The projected cost to build the new facility is \$42,635,140, with the projected cost to transport all inmates over the next 20 years being \$49,454,856.18 with the need to build a Sheriff's Office and Intake Facility of \$12,513,876.00.

Ron Jurgens, represented the Jail Committee, informed the commissioners that it is the recommendation of the Jail Committee to adopt a referendum to proceed with the new jail facility, as presented by The Samuels Group.

Chair Brintnell scheduled a special meeting for 8:00 am on January 27, 2025 to discuss the jail project.

Auditor Quibell informed the commissioners that she will be out of the office on March 4th. After a discussion, it was decided to change the meeting dates in March to Monday, March 3rd and Monday, March 17th. Chair Brintnell decided to cancel the second meeting in February due to conflict with a conference being held in Bismarck.

Auditor Quibell asked for a motion to approve payments on demand going forward, which would give her permission to pay bills without approval prior to the commissioner meetings. After a discussion, **Suda made a motion to allow the auditor to pay bills without prior approval when needed, seconded by Houdek.** All voted in favor; motion approved.

Auditor Quibell informed the commissioners that the Court Facilities Improvement Grant application for Walsh County was approved.

Auditor Quibell informed the commissioners that interviews were held for the two open positions in her office and the Deputy Auditor II position was accepted by Anna Thompson and she will be offering the Deputy Treasurer II position in the near future.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 am

Kristi Brintnell, Chair

Attest:

Kristi Quibell, Auditor/Treasurer