

Forman, North Dakota  
January 4, 2022

The Sargent County Board of Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. with the following members present: Jason Arth, Lyle Bopp, Mark Breker, and Scott Johnson. Also present were Pam Maloney, Sargent County Auditor. Mary Engst, Sargent County Teller, was present through technology.

Jason Arth, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Richard Ruch, Commissioner, arrived at the meeting.

Melissa Seykora, NDSU Extension Ag and Natural Resources (ANR) Agent; and, Cindy Klapperich, NDSU Extension Family and Community Wellness (FCW) Agent; reported on the activities of the County's Extension Service office personnel from October through December 2021. A written report was delivered to each commissioner and to the county auditor. A copy of the report can be obtained from the Extension Office. Ms. Klapperich has been involved with numerous projects involving county residents, including: Human Development/Family Science Education; 4-H Youth Development; Administrative duties; & Leadership & Civic Engagement. She also provided weekly news columns, social media posts, and worked on many 4-H activities. She is looking ahead to Building Tomorrow's Leaders classes, Powerful Tools for Caregivers classes and Grade 2 Nutrition Education. Ms. Seykora had worked with numerous projects including: the Sargent County 4-H Awards Night, a Holiday Plants Workshop and the Extension Advisory Council meeting. She has also participated in soil conservation meetings, Sargent County Township Officers' Ass'n Annual Meeting, supervised pesticide testers, and wrote 4 ANR news columns. Moving forward she will be working on 4-H Crop Judging, SE Beef Update, Design Your Succession Plan, SE Crop Market Update & Private Applicator Pesticide Training in March. The commission thanked them for their service and dedication to the public.

The new commissioner, Scott Johnson, signed his Oath of Office. Chairman Arth appointed Mr. Johnson to Portfolio #2 which had previously been held by Jerry Waswick.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended. (Breker/Bopp) Motion carried unanimously.

Approve December 21, 2021 recessed to January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, minutes as presented. (Breker/Ruch) Motion carried unanimously.

Alison Toepke, Treasurer/Recorder/Clerk of Court; Denise Ferderer, Tax Director; & Jayne Pfau, State's Attorney; arrived at the meeting to discuss the temperature of the offices at the courthouse. The furnace is not keeping up with these cold temperatures and as the bricks only heat up during the night to take advantage of off-peak rates, they can't fully recover overnight. The offices are not bad in the morning, but by afternoon, the temperature drops considerably. A solution to the heating/furnace problem needs to be found, both short term and long term. G & R Controls suggested getting a backup LP unit to help out during the really cold temperatures. Motion to contact Ottetail and sign a one-year contract for regular electrical rates and look for an alternative heat source to help when it's extremely cold. (Breker/Ruch) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The demolition of the auditorium at the fairgrounds was discussed. Motion to accept the bid from RTS Shearing, Jamestown, if they are still willing to honor the bid received at the November 2, 2021 meeting. The work will need to be done between January 31, 2022 and May 1, 2022. (Ruch/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Road department wages were discussed. Sargent County is currently paying less than the surrounding counties and it has been hard to retain employees. Motion to eliminate the longevity requirement for all employees within the pay plan until an employee reached Step 8 (midpoint). (Bopp/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Wendy Willprecht, Emergency Manager/911 Coordinator, arrived at the meeting.

Brenda Peterson, Health Unit Administrator, arrived at the meeting via technology. She stated that there are currently 3 Covid 19 active cases in Sargent County. Ms. Willprecht stated that things are going well within the schools and there are no concerns at this time. The monthly Covid 19 reports

will disperse with this meeting – Ms. Peterson will contact the auditor to be placed on the agenda if she feels that there is information to be shared.

Tim Faber, Road Supervisor, and Isaac Swanson, former road department employee, arrived at the meeting.

Motion to move into executive session pursuant to NDCC 44-04-18.1 at 10:41 a.m. for an approximately time period of 20 minutes. (Ruch/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to close executive session at 11:13 a.m. and continue with regular meeting. (Ruch/Johnson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to affirm termination of Isaac Swanson based on factual tests received. (Bopp/Ruch) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Damon DeVillers, Interstate Engineering, arrived at the meeting.

Commissioner Bopp requested that Interstate Engineering’s structural engineer contact him to set up a walk through of the courthouse to check on some cracks and crumbling of the walls in the basement.

Mr. DeVillers provided a map with bridge ratings within the county. There are grant monies available for bridge repair in the state, with a two million cap for each county and each project having a limit of \$1.25 million. Bridges will be scored on the following criteria: condition, load rating, ADT, detour length, roadway classification, traffic generators & replacement/rehabilitation (rehab projects will be scored higher). Motion to have Mr. DeVillers prepare the applications to request funding for three bridge replacements: 116-24.0, southwest of Havana on the state line; 122-23.0, on County Road #7 east of Havana; 132-18.0, near Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge; and funding for one bridge rehabilitation: 127-03.0, Storm Lake by Milnor. (Breker/Ruch) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Clarification was made regarding holiday pay and OT pay for the road department.

Discussion was held on changes to Policy 202 – Employment Categories, paragraph regarding Regular Full-Time. Motion to eliminate the verbiage “and their appointed personal staff”. (Bopp/Ruch) After some discussion, motion tabled to a later meeting.

Motion to designate Stock Growers Bank as the depository for county funds. (Bopp/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Wendy Willprecht, Emergency Manager/911 Coordinator, arrived back at the meeting.

Motion to adopt the following snow emergency declaration: (Bopp/Breker) Roll Call Vote: Yes – Arth, Bopp, Breker, Johnson and Ruch. No – None. Motion carried.

**SARGENT COUNTY NORTH DAKOTA  
JANUARY 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2022 SNOW EMERGENCY DECLARATION**

**WHEREAS:** repeated snowfalls and multiple blizzards have occurred in Sargent County, imposing heavy burdens on farmers; ranchers; private businesses; individual homeowners; Townships; Cities and County road departments due to the amount of snow and the constant wind which plugs roads; and,

**WHEREAS:** The County Road Department; Townships; and Cities in Sargent County have expended most, in some cases all, of their funds budgeted for snow removal, and some Townships have now had to close all but the most essential roads due to lack of manpower and funding. Critical roads such as emergency routes, school bus routes etc. must be run several times most days; and,

**WHEREAS:** The attempt to maintain access to these critical routes; farmyards; businesses; and, residences; has caused an inordinate amount of wear, tear and inadvertent damage to Township, City and County road equipment; has required an inordinate increase in the amount of fuel consumed, wages paid and overtime required; and, has also caused significant damage to collateral infrastructure such as school busses; and,

**WHEREAS:** The excessive cost of snow removal has generated unexpected contractor fees, equipment costs and employees’ overtime, further depleting budgets.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that The SARGENT County Commission declares that a State of Emergency exists in SARGENT County, its Townships and Cities requiring the activation and utilization of The Combined SARGENT County Emergency Operations Plan, its procedures and attachments to monitor the ongoing situation, mitigate where possible; and to provide protection to the citizens of SARGENT County during this ongoing event.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, all local government agencies and departments are directed to provide protection to the citizens of SARGENT County during this event and limit, where possible, the hardships and impact of said emergency on the citizens and residents of Sargent County.

Ms. Willprecht also brought to the commissioners' attention that there are federal and state disaster dollars available to provide storm shelters out at Silver Lake Recreation Area. Local cost would be between \$29,850.19 & \$34,382.25 depending on which shelter was chosen. This would be for two shelters – one on each side of the lake – and could be split into two different budget years, as these funds would be available through 2024. The commissioners would like input from the other park board members and the park manager before making a decision. The auditor will invite them to the next meeting for discussion.

Motion to authorize the commissioners to all sign the letter written to NDDOT opposing the proposed roundabout east of Gwinner at the intersection of State Highways 13 & 32. (Bopp/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

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JASON ARTH – CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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PAM MALONEY – COUNTY AUDITOR