

Forman, North Dakota
December 6, 2022

The Sargent County Board of Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. with the following members present: Wade Anderson, Lyle Bopp, Mark Breker, & Scott Johnson. Jason Arth was present through technology. Also present were Richard Ruch and Jerry Waswick, County Residents; and, Pam Maloney, Sargent County Auditor. Jayne Pfau, State's Attorney, was in & out throughout the meeting. Mary Engst, Sargent County Teller, was present through technology.

Pam Maloney, County Auditor, called the meeting to order to organize for 2023.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Nominate Mark Breker for Chairman, term ending on December 4, 2023. (Johnson) Motion that nominations cease and to cast a unanimous ballot for Mark Breker. (Bopp/Anderson) Upon Roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Breker accepted his election, and assumed control of the meeting as Chairman of the County Commission.

Nominate Scott Johnson for Vice-Chairman, term ending on December 4, 2023. (Bopp) Motion that nominations cease and to cast a unanimous ballot for Scott Johnson (Bopp/Anderson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Breker made the following portfolio appointments:

1. Highway Department and Highway Building – Scott Johnson
 - State's Attorney
 - Coroner
 - Health Board; Department; & Building
 - Park Board
 - Job Development Authority (needs re-appointment)
 - Tax Director
2. Sheriff's Department – Jason Arth
 - Gwinner Airport
 - Milnor Airport
 - Lake Agassiz Regional Council
 - Weed Control Board
 - Planning Commission
 - Park Board
3. Emergency Medical Advisory Board – Mark Breker
 - Forman Ambulance
 - Milnor Ambulance
 - Emergency Manager
 - 911 Coordinator
 - Personnel Board
 - Planning and Zoning Board
 - Job Development Authority (needs re-appointment)
 - Park Board
4. Courthouse Building – Lyle Bopp
 - Custodian
 - Auditor
 - Veteran's Service Officer
 - Treasurer/Recorder/Clerk of Court
 - RSR Zone Board
 - Park Board
 - Human Resources Director
 - Housing Authority
5. Fair Board – Wade Anderson
 - Extension Office
 - Soils Committee

Park Board
Water Resource Board

Set regular 2023 monthly meeting dates as the first and third Tuesdays of each month, other than the first meeting in July, which is the Independence Day holiday. This meeting will be moved to Wednesday, July 5. (Bopp/Johnson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to authorize Auditor to pay utility bills and withholding taxes. (Johnson/Anderson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to authorize the Treasurer to invest county funds. (Bopp/Johnson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Approve agenda as amended. (Anderson/Johnson) Motion carried unanimously.

Travis Paeper, Sheriff, arrived at the meeting.

Discussion was held on the 2023 Cola increase for county employees. Motion to reduce the Cola from the 8% budgeted to 7% for all county employees for 2023 and to absorb 1% more of their retirement benefit. (Anderson/Bopp) Roll Call Vote: Yes – Anderson, Arth and Bopp. No – Breker & Johnson. Motion carried.

Approve beer and liquor licenses for 2023 to: Dale Lugert, Geneseo Bar & Grill, LLC, Kingston Township, Geneseo; Olivia and Austin Stenvold, CDPB, LLC, Tewaukon Township, rural Havana; and Kate & Paul Mund, The Field dba the Schoolhouse, Hall Township, DeLamere. (Bopp/Anderson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Approve the Sheriff's Department to get an exchange check from the Treasurer's Department for the funds received at auction for a sheriff's fleet vehicle. (Johnson/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to appoint Scott Johnson and re-appoint Mark Breker as Commission Representatives to the Job Development Authority Board – terms to expire December 1, 2025. (Bopp/Anderson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Michelle Denault, Human Resources Director; and Melissa Seykora, NDSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Agent, arrived at the meeting to discuss Amber Mathison's pay grade. Her job description had been revised as her job duties increased due to the retirement of Cindy Klapperich. Gallagher Benefits did recommend her grade to increase from B21 to B22. Motion to approve the grade increase for Ms. Mathison from B21 to B22 effective December 1, 2022. (Bopp/Johnson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Seykora also requested that the county purchase an accounting software to be used by the townships for all the annual reports that are required by the county. The software would be beneficial to the auditor's office, as well, as it would decrease time spent on auditing and/or correcting bookwork turned in by the townships. There is a one time cost of \$1200. Motion to purchase the township accounting software at a one-time cost of \$1,200, with the funds to come out of Cares Act money. (Johnson/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Ryan Johnson and Auston Creech, Gwinner First Responders, arrived at the meeting to discuss the possibility of funding for additional EMT's/paramedics for 2023. The question on the ballot to increase the mill levy for EMS funding did pass, but those funds won't be collected until 2024. The commissioners requested more financial information from all ambulance squads and the first responders before making any decision.

Alison Toepke, Treasurer/Recorder/Clerk of Court; Cindy Yagow, Chief Deputy Treasurer/Recorder/Clerk of Court; and Bobbi Maly, Deputy Treasurer/Recorder/Clerk of Court arrived at the meeting. Ms. Toepke introduced Ms. Maly as her newest employee in the office. She also informed the board that she has appointed Cindy Yagow as Chief Deputy and Ms. Yagow will take on a more supervisory role within the offices. Ms. Toepke also requested authorization to add Ms. Maly to the signature card at the bank. Motion to authorize Bobbi Maly, Deputy Treasurer/Recorder/Clerk of Court, to sign signature cards at the local financial institutions to enable her to sign warrants for payment of bills. (Johnson/Anderson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Toepke also asked the commission to reconsider their decision to deny payment of additional hours that Ms. Toepke has worked. In September, she moved her office to a 40 hour work week, due to being short-staffed. The commission has paid her staff for additional hours worked, but denied her request for payment, as she is an elected official. She stated that when that office had a similar situation years prior that the elected official had been paid for her additional hours. When looking back through commission minutes from that time period, it appears that the elected official was paid for additional hours, but that she had budgeted for the additional hours for certain months of the year. No action was taken.

Commissioner Johnson asked if an additional county fleet car could be housed at the Health Department. As there are only two cars at the present time, one will stay at the courthouse, while the other will remain at the Health Department. There is a possibility of adding an additional fleet vehicle when the Sheriff's Department replaces one of their squad cars, and at that time, the Health Department could house two vehicles there.

Discussion was held on the tax forfeited property in Harlem Township that now belongs to Sargent County. The property is a business band radio tower in the NE1/4 of Section 19. Richard Ruch called Dakota Valley Electric and there is power to the pasture where the tower sits, but is unsure if there is electricity to the tower. Motion to insure the tower and to turn on the electricity to the tower, so the light can be lit at the top. (Bopp/Anderson) Roll Call Vote: Yes – Anderson, Arth, Bopp & Johnson. No – Breker.

The auditor has been contacted by someone interested in the tower, however, the prior owner has thirty days to redeem the property if another party purchases it. Motion to reduce the purchase price to \$3500 and to offer it to the interested party. (Bopp/Arth) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. If he decides against the purchase, it might be offered to a cell phone company, and if there is no interest there, the colony will be contacted to take it down.

Approve November 15, 2022 minutes as presented. (Anderson/Johnson) Motion carried unanimously.

Wade Anderson has resigned as Health Board Member as he is now a Commissioner. The auditor will advertise for a member-at-large to fulfill his term on the Health Board.

Motion to authorize the appropriate county officials to execute the annual Maintenance Certification for county federal aid projects for submission to the NDDOT. (Anderson/Johnson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve the following bill. (Bopp/Johnson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

84564	SE ND County Commissioner's Ass'n 2023 Dues	\$400.00
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Tim Faber, Road Supervisor; Damon DeVillers and Zach Hatting, Interstate Engineering; and Bruce Speich, County Resident; arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Speich reported that he has excess clay stockpiled from a drain cleanout that could be used for the County Road #1 re-route or other road projects that might come up. He also stated that a cleanout of Drain #7 is scheduled for next year, so there might be more clay available.

Mr. DeVillers reported that the estimate for Prairie Dog Funds to be received by the county in the first quarter of 2023 is in the amount of \$1,297,648.50. Sargent County townships will receive \$9,166.15 each.

Mr. DeVillers also provided the final estimate from Knife River Materials for the summer paving projects and stated that the final costs were less than anticipated.

Mr. DeVillers stated that there is another round of funding for bridge repair/replacements/removals. He will request funding for those bridges that were not chosen for the last round of funding.

County Road #4 patching that didn't get done due to the weather will be done in the spring and the quote pricing will be honored.

Mr. Faber reported that he has ordered more sand and salt.

Mr. Faber inquired what could be done about the two road employees that do not have a CDL license and have now said that they don't plan to acquire them. Ms. Pfau stated that she didn't think that anything could be done regarding the current employees. A policy change might be required for future employees, but all people involved need to be present to get the policy changes correct.

Mr. Faber stated that the wall furnaces out at the county shop do not work. He has been waiting for Crossroads to come & repair or replace them, but they have not been there. He was instructed to contact Triton Electric in Gwinner to see if they would be available.

Commissioner Arth left the meeting at 12:12 p.m.

The mag chloride billings were discussed. There were several billings from individuals on county roads that had not been approved by the townships. Typically, the townships only receive billings from individuals on their township roads. This is the first year that individuals on county roads have to pay for their mag chloride. The auditor was instructed to contact the townships and have them bill the individuals.

Motion to authorize the chairman to sign the contract from Computer Express for IT service and support for 2023. (Bopp/Johnson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

MARK BREKER – CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

PAM MALONEY – COUNTY AUDITOR