

August 4, 2020

Forman, North Dakota

The Sargent County Board of Commissioners met at 9:03 a.m. in the Conference Room with the following members present: Bill Anderson, Jason Arth, Lyle Bopp, Richard Ruch, and Jerry Waswick. Also present were Luke Siemieniewski and Todd Stein, Sargent County Water Resource Board; Sue Seelye, Park Manager; Mary Engst, Sargent County Teller; and Pam Maloney, County Auditor.

Chairman Waswick called the meeting to order.

Mr. Siemieniewski and Mr. Stein stated that they had met with NRSCS personnel recently to discuss Crooked Creek. They are planning a Crooked Creek Water Study and as there is not enough of a retention area, they are proposing to make Buffalo Lake larger and to create a new park there. The federal government will build it and then the county will maintain and manage the park, similar to what is being done at Silver Lake. The commissioners stated that recreation areas seem to be in high demand in the county, so they approve of the study and will look forward to expanded opportunities at Buffalo Lake.

Jayne Pfau, State's Attorney, arrived at the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Sue Seelye requested an increase in her budget for part-time help. The commissioners had initially requested the auditor to budget for 1 person 40 hours/week for 4 months of the year. Ms. Seelye stated she will need additional help to work on the new shelterbelt that was approved for next year. Commissioner Waswick requested payroll figures for 2018 & 2019 to review and compare. Motion to increase the preliminary budget for part-time personnel from \$12,223 to \$18,000, as the part time help expense for 2019 was \$17,150. (Bopp/Arth) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. It was noted that we didn't have the year to date actual cost for 2021, but we will review that a later date and the budget can still be decreased, but not increased.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

Motion to approve July 21<sup>st</sup> minutes as corrected. (Arth/Bopp). Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Denise Ferderer, Tax Director, arrived at the meeting to discuss painting her office, the auditor's office and possibly, the commissioner's room. She has an estimate of approximately \$1600 for paint & labor to paint her office and the auditor's office. Motion to approve painting the tax director's office, the auditor's office and the commissioner's room at a cost of no more than \$2500. (Anderson/Arth) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Jayne Pfau, State's Attorney; & Margie Johnson, Legal Assistant; presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding Parental Leave, which had been recommended by the Personnel Board. This would give the primary caregiver eligible to receive up to 12 weeks of leave at base pay; and the secondary caregiver to be eligible to receive up to 4 weeks of leave at base pay. There were concerns about employees taking advantage of the parental leave and then leaving employment after the 12 weeks were up. Some also felt that the four weeks given the secondary caregiver was too much time given. After discussion, the policy change was tabled to the next meeting.

Wendy Willprecht, Emergency Manager/911 Coordinator; arrived at the meeting; and Brenda Peterson, Health Unit Administrator; joined the meeting via technology. Ms. Peterson stated that there are currently 3 active cases in Sargent County and that North Dakota cases, on the whole, are increasing. The increases tend to come after mass events take place. Ms. Peterson has been working with the schools to ensure a safe start to the year. Ms. Willprecht stated that the Governor has taken a proposal to the Emergency Commission to reimburse counties and cities for "law enforcement first responder payroll costs" for the first 7 months of the pandemic (March through September). If approved by the Emergency Commission and the Budget Section, counties will simply submit their total payroll costs for sworn officers for March through July for immediate reimbursement. August and September payroll amounts will be submitted and reimbursed later, once they are incurred. This will get much needed revenue to the county quickly and efficiently. Ms. Willprecht also stated that she has been working with the county schools, as well, for a smart restart to in-person school.

Some discussion was held regarding the State's Attorney providing representation to the Job Development Authority. The auditor was asked to send email to neighboring counties to find out their procedures.

There is a position open on the School Re-Organization Board, as George Bishoff has passed away. According to NDCC, the county superintendent of schools should recommend someone for the county commissioners to approve. The auditor/superintendent of schools will look for candidates before the next meeting.

An application was received from Jennifer Gullson, Rutland; for the advertised weed board position. Motion to re-appoint Jennifer Gullson to the Sargent County Weed Control Board. Term to expire August 10, 2024. (Anderson/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Ron Narum's position on the Sargent County Weed Control Board is also vacant. No applications were received. Tabled until the next meeting.

Brian Tayer, Sargent County Ambulance-Milnor Squad, called into the meeting. He stated that things are still going well, and he had just returned from his 79<sup>th</sup> run for the year. He gave a brief SIRN update and said that the state will be cost-sharing \$1500 for new radios purchased. There will be 94 new towers build across the state and communications will be switched over sometime in 2021. The Milnor Squad is still looking to purchase a new rig, but are having trouble getting a demo due to the pandemic. Mr. Tayer is hoping that their old rig could be utilized by Gwinner First Responders, as their vehicle should be replaced.

Damon DeVillers, Interstate Engineering; & Merrill Engquist, Road Supervisor; arrived at the meeting. Mr. DeVillers provided a letter regarding his discovery of the east road ditch on 146<sup>th</sup> Ave SE located in Section 9 of Hall Township. The concern that has prompted the survey for this area is the water from the SW1/4 of Section 9 being obstructed from flowing north due to the ditching and tiling project that was completed in the NW1/4 of Section 9 recently. After much discussion and Mr. DeVillers providing answers to many questions, motion to install a 30" culvert under County Road #14 on the north side of the railroad tracks. (Arth/Anderson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Ruch asked what could be done regarding County Road #1 west of Crete. Mr. Engquist stated they could continue to haul in fill to make the road passable until they have the permission to work on drain tiling. Mr. Engquist reported that the new pipe had been installed in Taylor Township on the east/west road. Commissioner Ruch asked when the hole in County Road #4 could be fixed and Mr. Engquist stated that it would be repaired tomorrow.

Commissioner Bopp asked if he could offer the large window that was replaced at the front of the courthouse to the museum. Motion to allow Commissioner Bopp to offer the window to the Historical Society or to otherwise dispose of it as he sees fit. (Anderson/Arth) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Approve and authorize the chairman to sign the Township Road Mileage Certification to the State Treasurer certifying 776.75 miles of township roads in Sargent County. (Anderson/Arth) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The Commission reviewed the draft Preliminary Budget for 2021, showing a projected mill levy of 100.70 mills. Motion to approve the 2021 preliminary budget in the amount of \$11,716,901. (Anderson/Arth) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. A public hearing will be conducted on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the conference room, Sargent County Courthouse, Forman.

Milnor City has been awarded Transportation Alternatives funds for its "Milnor Safe Route to School Project". Sargent County will be the pass-through agency needed for the grant funds. Motion to authorize the state's attorney, commission chairman and the auditor to sign the Cost Participation, Construction and Maintenance Agreement for the Milnor Sidewalk Project. (Bopp/Anderson) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The auditor has received information from NRG regarding better equipment for teleconferencing public meetings. They provided a quote for the commissioner's room at an approximate cost of \$1000-\$1100, but are unable to quote prices for equipment for larger spaces. Mr. DeVillers recommended a Wahpeton company, Digital Guru. The auditor will contact them to inquire about equipment for the conference room.

Motion to authorize the courthouse commissioner to relocate the mailbox unit to a place within the courthouse that is acceptable to employees and to the mail carrier. (Anderson/Ruch) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The auditor requested clarification on whether or not the coroner staff is paid personal vehicle mileage when coming from home to pick up the county car. After discussion, the matter was tabled until the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

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JERRY WASWICK – CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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PAM MALONEY – COUNTY AUDITOR