

McLean County Commission Proceedings

Tuesday, April 25, 2023

The second regular April meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 8:31 a.m. by Chairperson Steve Cottingham. Present were Commissioners Cottingham, Steve Lee, and Barry Suydam. Also present were Auditor Beth A. Knutson; Chief Deputy Auditor Lori A. Foss; Road Superintendent Jim Grey; Assistant Road Superintendent Travis Verke; Tax Director Todd Schreiner; Dakota Central Human Service Zone Director Maurice Hardy; NDSU Extension Agents Sarah Bedgar and Kamile Moderegger; and Ethyn Calvert of NorDak North Publishing.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to approve the minutes of the previous regular meeting held on April 4, 2023, as submitted. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey and Verke presented an update on department operations reporting that blading and culvert work is ongoing. Shoulder work should be starting soon. Sign truck went down yesterday again, they are trying to locate a replacement or attempting to repair with items on hand. The department would like to avoid sticking much more money into it.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to locate and purchase a replacement sign truck not to exceed \$75,000. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey reported that they have interviewed candidates for the remaining Equipment Operator II position, they have made an offer, and are waiting for the candidate's response.

Grey went on to discuss a new 51-lot subdivision being developed near Wilton. There would be 45 residential lots, four commercial, and two lots zoned industrial. They would access the area using County Road (CR) 24. He has concerns with potential damages to CR 24 in the process since the road is narrow with no shoulders and is not designed for that type of traffic load. Since the road is located near a hill, there are also visibility and safety issues for oncoming traffic from the west on Highway 83. Grey would prefer one access point off of CR 24 with primary access from Highway 83 especially during the construction process. Knutson questioned what the purposes of the industrial or commercial zoning lots are. Schreiner stated that since this area is located in Wilton's planning and zoning authority, we have no part of it other than input on access and letting them know that the county is not responsible for road maintenance in the subdivision. Grey needs to send a response and would like some guidance from the board. Safety concerns were discussed with adding more traffic to an already problematic area. Grey will visit with the City of Wilton and return at a later date to allow for a more informed decision by our board.

He reported that the preliminary work for the emergency snow assistance funding through the state has been completed by himself, Verke, and Administrative Assistant Noelle Kroll. It is almost ready for submission by this Friday. Knutson reported that for townships to participate, the county must participate since they go through us. We are unsure if we will qualify for any funding but we will have everything by the deadline.

Hardy was present to discuss the timing of raises for zone employees since their salaries are determined by Human Services and they operate on a fiscal year with a start date of July 1. They would like their raises to take place on July 1 versus January 1 as it is now.

Move by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to move the salary increase date for zone employees from January 1 to July 1. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Bedgar and Moderegger were present to introduce Moderegger to the board as the new Extension Agent responsible for Family and Community Wellness activities. They presented information on their offerings and invited the board's input. She informed the board about that the upcoming Rural Resilience Retreat set for Saturday, May 13, 2023, at Washburn United Methodist Church, which will feature speakers from around the state, the local area, and Minnesota.

Knutson presented the Pledge of Securities received from TruCommunity Bank for the period ending March 31, 2023. The total public deposits were \$28,819,949.59 and the total pledged securities were \$33,546,397.26 with an average of \$4,726,447.67.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to accept the Pledge of Securities from TruCommunity Bank. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson reported on an email received from North Dakota Game and Fish. We now have a fully executed contract in place to get started on Sportsmen's Centennial Park's replacement of main ramp and extension of the low water ramp. We pay the bills directly and submit for reimbursement.

We have received our P-Card rebate for the period of February 2022 through January 2023 in the amount of \$10,398.90. This is a decrease of \$944.08 over last year though we had an increased number of transactions but spent about \$60,000 less.

Knutson informed the board that we received a \$6,250 matching grant applied for through Garrison Diversion Conservancy District for replacement of a boat ramp. We are required to place a plaque recognizing their donation since they contributed more than \$5,000.

Knutson presented a Gaming Site Authorization Application submitted by Gorilla Wrestling Club, Inc. of Bismarck for bingo, pull tab, and electronic pull tab activities at Rosies of Mercer for July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

Moved by Suydam, seconded by Lee, to approve the Gaming Site Authorization Application as submitted by Gorilla Wrestling Club, Inc. of Bismarck. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented a Gaming Site Authorization Application submitted by American Legion Post 91 of New Salem for bingo, pull tab, and electronic pull tab activities at Totten Trail of Coleharbor for July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. She reported that they do donate some of their proceeds to Sportsmen's Centennial Park.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to approve the Gaming Site Authorization Application as submitted by American Legion Post 91 of New Salem. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Cottingham questioned whether or not any of these organization's report on the results of their gaming efforts and the disbursement of proceeds. Knutson replied no but we have never requested that information.

Moved by Suydam, seconded by Lee, to approve the Local Raffle Permit request submitted by the McLean County 4-H Leader's Council for a 50/50 raffle to be held on June 18, 2023, at the McLean County Fair Grounds in Underwood. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson reminded the board that the next meeting is set for May 9. She informed them that we have begun preliminary work with the audit team from Eide Bailey and we have had our first project start-up call with Tyler who has informed us that our "go live" date will most likely be July 1 since the January 1 schedule is already full.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to approve the following vouchers for payment:

A detailed list of checks is available for public inspection anytime during regular business hours in the McLean County Auditor's Office.

Roll Call Vote: Aye: Suydam, Lee, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Board recessed at 9:27 a.m.

Board reconvened at 9:35 a.m.

Sheriff JR Kerzmann and North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI) Special Agent Alex Droske joined the meeting.

Kerzmann requested authorization to purchase additional AR rifles and ammunition using budgeted dollars with excess funding from available forfeiture funds.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to authorize the ammunition purchase in the amount of \$9,997 from M & M Sporting of Washburn funded by the budget line item. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Suydam, Lee, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Suydam, seconded by Lee, to authorize the purchase of seven AR rifles from M & M Sporting of Washburn at a total cost of \$7,770 using \$2,000 approved in this year's budget and \$5,770 from available forfeiture funds. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Suydam, Lee, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Kerzmann then requested authorization to use \$16,563.25 from the department's forfeiture funds to purchase bean bag rounds, assorted related items, and to secure training for the less lethal ammo. Training would be provided by a certified member of the department. Bean bag rounds require a separate launching device and the shotguns will be separate from lethal weapons and will be clearly marked. No live ammo will be shot through these units. There would be a total of nine supervisory department members trained.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to authorize the purchase of the less lethal equipment and required training. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Suydam, Lee, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Kerzmann went on to request further funding from the department's forfeiture funds to purchase 20 cell phones to be issued by the department to patrol officers for business use only. The monthly cost for the 20 added lines would be \$800 with required apps including tracking to be run on the designated devices.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to authorize the purchase of the requested 20 cell phones and set aside \$50,000 of the forfeiture funds as a hedge against potential future budget shortfalls. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Suydam, Lee, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

In his last request of the day, Kerzmann requested funds to purchase two illuminated drones for use in the county by the department, one located on the north end of the county and the other on the south end. Droske, who serves as a certified drone operator for BCI, presented related information on the requested unmanned aircraft system (UAS) drones with regard to capabilities, thermal sensing, and various uses including crime/accident scene 3-D modeling. The tools can radically increase efficiency and accuracy in investigations. Any individuals operating this equipment will need to be certified as unmanned aircraft pilots under the FAA's Small UAS Rule (Part 107), specifically they would need to obtain a Remote Pilot Certificate from the FAA. This entails a significant amount of training and knowledge. Kerzmann requests a total of \$15,200 for two units, two batteries, and training for possibly 6-8 officers. Droske will assist with securing training and certification. There are no anticipated ongoing annual costs associated with this request. Knutson questioned whether or not it would be better to have three units in the county due to the geographic size of the county and the possibility of three teams in the department being trained.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to authorize the purchase of three drones at a total cost of \$22,800. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Suydam, Lee, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Kerzmann informed the board that the annual county auction is planned for June.

Enterprise Fleet Management Representative Joshua Roberts-Lujan joined the meeting to answer further questions from the board regarding fleet vehicle leasing for the Sheriff's Department and possibly the county's other fleet needs. Cottingham questioned the maintenance costs quoted in the lease proposal and also where that maintenance would be performed. Robert-Lujan provided the source of Enterprise's data and also discussed their contracts with Ward and Grand Forks Counties. Lee expressed his preference to do that type of work with in-county businesses. Discussion followed regarding contract terms, the acquisition and implementation process, and funding of the venture.

Schreiner rejoined the meeting.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to proceed with this plan with Enterprise to acquire 28 Sheriff's Department fleet vehicles. Lee amended his original motion to include the stipulation that costs for the first two years will be paid with ARPA funding. Cottingham seconded the amended motion. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Suydam, Lee, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion carried.

The board along with Knutson completed the annual performance reviews of Clerk of Court Bonnie Bohnsack and Tax Director/Veteran's Service Officer/E-911 GIS Mapping Technician Todd Schreiner.

There being no further business, the chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 9, 2023. The commission minutes and agenda can be found on the county website at <https://www.mcleancountynd.gov>.

Steve Cottingham, Chairperson

Lori A Foss, Chief Deputy Auditor