

## McLean County Commission Proceedings

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

The second regular November meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 8:31 a.m. by Chairperson Steve Lee. Present were Commissioners Lee, Steve Cottingham, and Curt Olson. Also present were Auditor Beth A. Knutson; Deputy Auditor Diane L. Blumhagen; Deputy Auditor Emily K. Retterath; First District Public Health Nurse Pam Fischer; and Assistant Road Superintendent Travis Verke.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 2, 2025, as submitted. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Verke presented a boring request from Falkirk Mining Company to bore 10-inch HDPE pipe twelve feet below existing grade to be used to pass electrical cable under County Road (CR) 17. Discussion followed.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the boring permit as presented. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Verke presented an update on department operations reporting that a guard rail was struck which resulted in significant damage, 3D Specialties has been contacted for repairs. Verke also stated that graveling has been completed for the season and shop projects will start as well as tree removal in various areas. Discussion followed.

Building Maintenance Supervisor Curtis Malo joined the meeting to present a quote from Emineth Plumbing for a 3-inch water softener descaler. Discussion followed which resulted in tabling the quote until an upcoming commission meeting.

Fischer informed the commission of the circulation of a community health assessment survey in the county. Discussion followed.

Jared Mack from Eide Bailly joined the meeting via telephone to discuss the 2023 Audit Review for McLean County. Discussion followed.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, to accept the Eide Bailly 2023 McLean County Audit review. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

States Attorney Ladd Erickson joined the meeting via telephone to request the commission's support of Rainbow Energy Center's (REC) application for funding through the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) "Restoring Reliability: Coal Recommissioning and Modernization" initiative. Discussion followed.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve and sign the letter of support for REC. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Erickson requested commission approval to apply for a \$5 million loan through the Bank of North Dakota (BND) Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund for a Rainbow Energy and Blue Flint Ethanol road project. Discussion followed.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, to approve the \$5 million dollar BND loan application with the understanding that there is no obligation to accept the loan. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson discussed the previously approved Back the Blue Grant, stating there were 39 employees receiving the funds instead of the prior amount of 40 which changed the disbursement amount to \$1,420.19.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, to approve the updated disbursement amount as presented. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson discussed the previously approved Back the Blue Grant stating the amount changed to \$55,082.40. Discussion followed.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, to approve the Back the Blue Grant's updated amount as presented. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson requested approval to cover Back the Blue reimbursement difference of \$305.20 to be disbursed out of the General Fund.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to disburse funds out of the General Fund. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented the employee commuter list for December 2025 through November 2026.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve James Grey, Travis Verke, Curt Malo, Vance Tomlinson, and Troy Kittler as 2026 Commuter Benefit Employees. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson requested approval to advertise for the open Planning & Zoning Board for the Underwood seat.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to advertise as requested. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson stated that John Schulz is no longer on the agenda due to the weather.

The board signed years of service recognition certificates for the following employees:

- Rhonda S Biffert, Jill L Gasaway, Eden F McLeod, Kelsey J Renner, Amanda D Schmidt, Jordon A Schumacher, and Donald T Simon for five years;
- Karissa K Rittenbach, Ricky L Richard, and Alexander D Torrez for ten years;
- Carey M Mautz, Henry A Bauer, Casey B Howe, Ryan S Oberg, and Dalen Schaefer for 15 years;
- James A Grey and Connie K Kelsch for 20 years;
- Paul O Jacobson for 30 years;
- Richard D Johnson for 40 years, and,
- Mary S Devlin for 45 years.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, 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: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson suggested moving the commission meeting held on December 2, 2025, to a later time due to the Employee Recognition Potluck following the commission meeting.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to move the meeting to 10:00 a.m. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m. The commission minutes and agenda can be found on the county website at <https://www.mcleancountynd.gov>.

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Steve Lee, Chairperson

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Diane L. Blumhagen, Deputy Auditor