

## McLean County Commission Proceedings

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

The first regular February meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 8:34 a.m. by Chairperson Barry Suydam. Present were Commissioners Suydam, Steve Cottingham, and Steve Lee. Also present were Highway Superintendent Jim Grey, Auditor Beth A. Knutson and Deputy Auditor Aimee Schmit.

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

Highway Superintendent Jim Grey reported to the commission that the department has been busy getting trees cleaned up in ditches, working on road grading when possible, and doing routine maintenance on the equipment in the shop.

Grey requested permission to advertise for bids for gravel crushing and equipment rental; the call for bids reflects a bid opening date of March 16, 2021. Cottingham pointed out a typo in the call for bids, Knutson said she would let Noelle Kroll, Highway Administrative Assistant know to correct the typo.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to authorize Grey to advertise for bids for gravel crushing. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Building Maintenance Supervisor Curt Malo joined the meeting along with State's Attorney Ladd Erickson.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to authorize Grey to advertise for bids for equipment rentals. Discussion followed regarding the types of equipment the department will be renting. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to set the bid opening date and time for gravel crushing and equipment rental for the March 16, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., respectively. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey next discussed a reversible plow that the Highway Department owns that is no longer of use to them due to damage. Grey requested permission to purchase a used plow from Swanston Equipment in Minot for \$10,000. The requested plow only has one year of use on it. Lee asked Knutson if the county is ok with cash flow to cover this expense and Knutson responded yes.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the purchase of the plow for \$10,000 from Swanston Equipment. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey discussed one of the Highway Department employees moving to a rural location. Grey requested authorization to purchase a used 1,000-gallon fuel tank with pump from a Highway Department employee for \$800. The tank would be placed at this rural location and would be used to refuel equipment, reducing drive time for equipment operators who currently drive back to the shop to refuel.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to approve the purchase of the 1,000-gallon fuel tank with pump for \$800. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson discussed the Otter Tail Power Company bills she was asked to pull for the Highway Department. She explained the bills do not break down the costs per light pole. Knutson said she will be calling Otter Tail to get more details as to how the county is billed for these services.

Lee brought forward discussion about County Road 15 being washed out near the mine. Grey stated he and his crew are monitoring this road.

Erickson handed out a packet of bills that are being looked at this legislative session. Erickson explained a few of the bills and wanted to make the commission aware of them and let them know that he will be actively working on these and other bills that may have effects on the county and the energy sector within the county.

Administrative Assistant Jan Hanson, Extension Agent Courtney Hoikkala, and Extension Agent Calla Edwards of the NDSU Extension-McLean County Office joined the meeting.

Malo presented bids for replacing the backup generator for the courthouse that the commission had requested at the prior meeting. Malo explained that the only thing in the building right now that is relevant to having the generator fixed is the vaccine storage refrigerator in the First District Health Office. Knutson presented the cost difference for on-peak versus off-peak; the difference for one month was around \$14.00. Malo requested permission to purchase a new portable generator that would generate round a 6500 kWh for the building which would be adequate to run the refrigerator if a power outage occurs.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the purchase a portable generator as well as cords for less than \$1,000 with the stipulation that the generator stays on courthouse grounds. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Lee questioned the need for the full-sized backup generator. Malo would like to do more investigating to determine if there is a need for it. If he finds there is a need, he would recommend putting in next year's budget.

Malo discussed a motion from the last meeting authorizing him to spend up to \$6,000 to replace damaged wire harnesses. Malo explained he awarded the job to Kevin's Heating and Plumbing out of Minot as their bid came in substantially lower than H. A. Thompson & Sons.

Edwards presented quotes from Menards and Rough Rider Industries for storage furniture. Knutson presented the quote from Wagon Wheel Lumber that commission had requested at the last meeting. Discussion followed on options presented. Lee questioned delivery time and installation of the Wagon Wheel and Rough Rider quotes. He also questioned whether the cabinets and storage cabinets from Menards would come assembled. Edwards replied that the lower cabinets are assembled but the storage cabinets would need to be assembled. Cottingham preferred the Master Force cabinets since they are deeper and would fit the storage bins that the NDSU Extension Office currently uses.

Edwards also requested authorization to purchase a shelving unit for publications to be placed in the front office. The cost was around \$430. Discussion followed on other costs that could be incurred. Knutson presented a quote from 2 Vets Moving Company (2 Vets) to move all of the offices involved. The cost would be \$1,600-\$1,800. Knutson also presented a quote from Marco for a photocopier/printer for the Tax Equalization/Veterans Service Office at a cost of an additional \$103 per month when added to our current lease agreement. Knutson explained that extra was budgeted in the affected line item and this extra cost would not be a problem.

Other topics discussed were storage available in the courthouse for NDSU Extension, the phone system through West River Telephone that was installed at the new location, and the move date.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to purchase cabinets from Menards for roughly \$5,200 which would include replacing Perfomax cabinets with Master Force cabinets along with extra trim and hardware which was not included in the quote. Discussion followed on purchasing from Menards with all commissioners agreeing that even though it is not local it is the best use of the taxpayer's money. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham and Lee. Nay: Suydam. Motion carried.

Edwards next discussed the move date. Knutson stated that McLean County is on the schedule with 2 Vets for February 8, 2021, but this date is transferrable. Edwards requested February 17 for a move date; Erickson said even though it is a court date that shouldn't be a problem. Malo contacted 2 Vets and February 17, 2021, will work for them as well.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the lease of the copier/printer from Marco for an added \$103.00 per month. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Richard Johnson joined the meeting requesting permission to purchase new vehicles which were approved in the 2021 budget. Johnson requested authorization to purchase four 2021 Chevrolet Tahoes for \$38,876.00 each. Knutson noted there is \$180,000 in the budget for vehicle purchases and that there are CARES act reimbursement funds still available in the county general fund as well.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to purchase four 2021 Chevrolet Tahoes from Stan Puklich Chevrolet at a price of \$38,876.00 per vehicle. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried

Knutson presented the December 2020 reimbursement for the COVID CARES Act amounting to \$192,615.27. Knutson explained two different ways of reimbursing funds to cities within McLean County that had 2020 Policing Contracts with the county. The first option was a full month of reimbursement for their contract amount and the second included a reduction for overtime. Knutson feels that the amount of overtime withheld in the last reimbursement was enough to cover the overtime accrued for 2020 police contracting.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to reimburse cities at rate calculated by the Auditor without overtime included. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson requested a salary increase for Deputy Auditor Kayla Oberlander to \$45,733.10. Oberlander has been with the department since March 1, 2013. A salary adjustment would take place on January 1, 2022, due to her completion of eight years of service in her current assignment and not being at the first step of the second quartile. Knutson would like the adjustment to be given now since we have enough funds in the current year's budget and the new hire's salary would be only \$812.44 below her salary after the new hire's successful completion of probation.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to approve an adjustment in annual salary for Oberlander to \$45,733.10. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Received and ordered filed the fee collection report from the Recorder's Office in the amount of \$8,917.50 for the month of January.

Received and ordered filed the fee collection report from the Sheriff's Department in the amount of \$1,023.36 for the month of January.

Knutson introduced Aimee Schmit who was recently hired to fill the vacated Deputy Auditor position.

Knutson discussed funding that will be available to the county through ND Department of Transportation (NDDOT). The NDDOT will be sending information out to the counties as they receive it.

Knutson presented the financial recap for period ending January 31, 2021. She presented data showing property tax collections are at 53% for 2020 or \$9,891,351.57; government reimbursement revenues totaled \$307,288.46 which is a reduction from 2020 which amounted to \$364,771.74; and fees and miscellaneous revenues totaled \$310,010.93 which increased over the 2020 amount of \$98,786.61.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to approve the following vouchers and P-Card purchases as presented for payment including the full amount of \$629.16 to Ryan Oberg:

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

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

There being no further business, the chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, February 16, 2021. The commission minutes and agenda can be found on the county website at <http://www.mcleancountynd.gov>.

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Barry Suydam, Chairperson

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Beth A. Knutson, Auditor