

McLean County Commission Proceedings

Tuesday, March 3, 2021

The first regular March meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairperson Barry Suydam. Present were Commissioners Barry Suydam, Steve Cottingham, and Steve Lee. Also present were Auditor Beth A. Knutson, Highway Superintendent Jim Grey, Disaster Emergency Services Manager/Risk Management Officer Noelle Kroll, Chief Deputy Sheriff Richard Johnson, Deputy Auditor Diane Blumhagen, and Ralph Mancini of BHG News Service.

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

Knutson introduced Diane Blumhagen who was recently hired to fill the vacated Deputy Auditor position.

Highway Superintendent Jim Grey was present with an update on department operations. He reported that the weather has been nice enough to start blading the roads, they are also planning to send out two crack filling crews. Grey discussed that there are a few vehicles that he had planned to send to the next auction, however he recently had an offer of \$2,000.00 for the both of them. The discussed are a 2010 Dodge Charger and a 1989 Chevrolet Pickup. Steve Lee asked if we have to advertise the vehicles, Knutson explained that advertising is only required for equipment sold for over \$1,000.00.

Moved by Lee, second by Cottingham, to approve the sale of the two vehicles. Roll call vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey informed the commission that there has only been a few applications for the Equipment Operator II/Sign Tech position. He requested that the advertisement be extended out to see if more applications would be received. The commission agreed to extend the advertisement.

Commissioner Lee had received a few calls on County Road 8. Grey responded that it was bladed last week, but he would take another look at it. Lee stated that more repairs may be needed other than just blading. Lee also brought up the closure signs on the road that had been discussed at the previous meeting leading to Falkirk. Grey explained that there is a Dead End sign there, along with the Road Closed barricade. Lee asked if the sign can be moved any closer to Highway 83. Grey responded that it is as close to the right-of-way as it can be, however another Dead End sign can be placed on the other side of the road. All commissioners agreed to the placement of another Dead End sign.

DES Manager Noelle Kroll was present to discuss a burn ban for McLean County. The burn ban, if approved, would be effective immediately and would depend on the North Dakota Rangeland Fire Danger Rating.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to adopt the 2021 Fire Emergency Declaration and Burn Ban as follows:

2021 Fire Emergency and
Automatic Burn Ban
for
McLean County, North Dakota

March 2, 2021

Whereas, McLean County, North Dakota is under abnormally dry conditions compiled with significant fuel supplies resulting in extreme fire potential and lack of significant snow coverage throughout the winter months; and

Whereas, all available resources remain committed to protecting life and property; and

Whereas, the impact of fires could threaten the health, well-being, and safety of citizens in McLean County; and

Whereas, the cost of emergency response and the inordinate equipment wear may be far in excess of available County resources.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Board of McLean County Commissioners declares a Fire Emergency and Automatic Burn Ban (to include a ban on ignition of farm or crop land, hay land, sloughs, construction debris, fallen trees, campfires/bonfires, fireworks, leaves, grass clippings, charcoal grills and garbage/pits burning) remain in effect, until further notice, whenever the North Dakota Rangeland Fire Danger Rating is Very High, Extreme and/or a Red Flag Warning has been issued for McLean County, North Dakota thru November 1, 2021.

Any individual who willfully violates this burn ban is guilty of a Class B Misdemeanor (NDCC 37-17.1-10.1; maximum sentence of 30 days in jail and a \$1500.00 fine), and restitution of fire suppression costs may be sought from the court. the McLean County Sheriff's Department is authorized to issue citations to violators.

The North Dakota Rural Fire Danger Guide is posted on the McLean County website: www.mcleancountynd.gov or residents can contact the McLean County Sheriff's Office at 701-462-8103.

Dated at Washburn, North Dakota this 2nd day of March, 2021.

Barry Suydam, Chairman
McLean County Commission

Attest: _____
Beth Knutson
McLean County Auditor

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

Chief Deputy Sheriff Richard Johnson requested to hire a new Jail Chaplain as the current Chaplain Roy Erdahl wishes to retire. Johnson stated that Erdahl has agreed to continue with the position until a replacement has been found.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to advertise for the Jail Chaplain position. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Johnson stated the 911 system's install date is April 11, 2021. The program has currently been sent to the postal service for review and approval. The Postal Service may need six to eight weeks to review stated Johnson. The new system is from North Dakota Information Technology, so State Radio would also be implemented at the same time. Notification will be sent out to all parties as needed stated Johnson. McLean County has been moved up the list for implementation and should be ready the first part of May 2021.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the following General Fund Transfers totaling \$162,622.22:

- Transfer \$30,813.10 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to School Resource Officer (2909-3999-000);
- Transfer \$21,296.61 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to Disaster Emergency Fund (2925-3999-000);
- Transfer \$75,674.51 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to County Agent (2960-3999-000);
- Transfer \$25,337.10 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to Veterans Services (2920-3999-000);
- Transfer \$1,600.00 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to Jobs Promotion (8040-3999-000);
- Transfer \$5,755.00 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to Impound & Towing (2911-3999-000);
- Transfer \$1,000.61 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to County Owned Special Assess (2958-3999-000); and
- Transfer \$1,145.29 from General Fund (1000-2901-000) to McLean Rescue Boat (8041-3999-000).

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

Land Use Administrator Todd Schreiner and County Assessor Cailey Ferber joined the meeting with a recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting held on February 16, 2021.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to concur with the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the request from Allan Mautz for a variance of the setback requirements of the McLean County Zoning Ordinance involving land described as: Lot 35, Garrison Creek Cottage Site (St Mary Township). Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson explained to the Commissioners that the carryover from last year needs to be addressed. Knutson checked with Garrison State Bank & Trust and Bank of Turtle Lake. Bank of Turtle Lake has fees attached for any future withdrawals. Knutson suggested moving \$600,000.00 to Garrison State Bank & Trust. Knutson stated that if we go this whole year without touching the funds, maybe we should look at investing it for potentially a better rate of return.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to allow the Auditor to transfer up to \$600,000.00 to Garrison State Bank & Trust. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Suydam. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented the budget narrative for period ending February 28, 2021. She presented data showing property tax collections are at 87% collected 91% for 2021 or \$17,054,466.70; Government Reimbursement revenues totaled \$388,887.03 compared to \$474,129.20 in 2020; Fees and Miscellaneous revenues totaled \$398,035.04 compared to \$346,049.74 in 2020; and expenditures were at 9.18% of total budget for 2021.

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

Commissioner Lee visited with Dakota Central Human Service Zone Director Steve Reiser regarding utilizing some of the unoccupied offices in Social Services. Lee stated that Reiser would not have a problem if some of the area was used for new office space. Discussion followed regarding installing a security door to separate the areas and locks on the office doors. Commissioners requested the cost of doing these changes. Commissioner Suydam inquired if all of the budget was used. Knutson stated there is about \$3,000.00 left, which should cover the cost of the security door. Knutson also explained that the Office Furniture budget line item was increased by \$10,000.00 and that some of these expenses could possibly come out of that fund.

Knutson stated that the new cabinets and counter tops for the Extension Office shipped on February 25, 2021 and the other ones should ship March 2, 2021.

There being no further business, the chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 9:19 a.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, March 16, 2021. The commission minutes and agenda can be found on the county website at <http://www.mcleancountynd.gov>.

Barry Suydam, Chairperson

Diane L. Blumhagen, Deputy Auditor