

McLean County Commission Proceedings

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

The second regular February meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Chairperson Curt Olson. Present were Commissioners Olson, Steve Cottingham, and Steve Lee. Also present were Auditor Beth A. Knutson; Deputy Auditor Lynda Snyder; Road Superintendent Jim Grey; Director of Disaster Emergency Services Noelle Kroll; Computer Operations Director Lori Foss; State's Attorney Ladd Erickson; Michael Leingang; Eric Johnson; and Jon Martin of Wold Engineering

Leingang stated his concern with the way off-road vehicles are being are being operated as he has witnessed the damage to ditches causing unsightly trails near his residence and around McLean County. Discussion followed.

Erickson proposed a reactive approach regarding the misuse of off-road vehicles in all areas of McLean County. He suggested following the lead of Burleigh County as they are adopting new ordinances to address the same issues. He stated he will look into adding something to the McLean County Planning and Zoning Ordinance this summer regarding careless, reckless, and negligent use of off-road vehicles.

Foss presented quotes for ToughBook laptops and related software. The hardware quote was from Group Mobile Int'l to purchase eight Toughbook laptops for \$22,295.48. The software quote was from NRG Technology Services to purchase eight licenses for Microsoft Office for \$2,559.68. Foss stated that both quotes were in the 2026 budget.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to authorize purchase of the Toughbook laptops from Group Mobile Int'l in the amount of \$22,295.48 and the Microsoft Office licenses from NRG in the amount of \$2,559.68. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Foss reported that she will be attending the North Dakota Society for Human Resource Management State Conference held on September 23-25, 2026 in Grand Forks and would like approval to register before February 28, 2026 to receive the early bird discount. The board voiced its approval of Foss attending the conference.

Kroll presented materials for an Integrated Preparedness Plan Workshop (IPPW). Kroll requested permission to identify five to seven threats, hazards, and risks for McLean County. Discussion followed. Kroll identified seven items included armed assault, epidemic (human and livestock related), dam failure, hazardous materials release, utility disruption, cybersecurity, and train derailment. Commission was in agreement with the selection. Discussion followed.

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

Kroll presented notice that the Fiscal Year 2025 Emergency Management Performance Grant was received with a 50/50 cost share of the total project amount of \$46,398.00.

Kroll requested burn restrictions be effective immediately for 2026. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the 2026 Fire Emergency Burn Restrictions as follows:

2025 Fire Emergency Burn Restrictions for McLean County, North Dakota

February 18, 2026

Whereas, McLean County, North Dakota has and is expected to continue to endure periods of dry conditions with significant vegetative fuels available; and

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

Whereas, McLean County, has either sustained or been threatened with rural fires in the past and McLean County Emergency Management Office has consulted with local fire departments; and

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

Whereas, the cost of emergency response, inordinate equipment wear/tear and the fire damages could exceed available McLean County resources; and

Whereas, McLean County, wishes to regulate activities within McLean County, which pose a potential hazard for such loss, should the present weather conditions continue.

Now, therefore it be resolved, that the Board of McLean County Commissioners declares a Fire Emergency and Automatic Burn Restriction effective when 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, effective immediately through December 31, 2026.

What's Included (when the ND Rangeland Fire Danger Rating is Very High, Extreme and/or a Red Flag Warning)

No Open Burning: includes burning of leaves, grass clippings, garbage/pits, ignition of farm or crop residue/land, hay land, sloughs, construction debris, fallen trees, fireworks (ground & aerial) and campfires/bonfires/recreational fires.

What's Excluded

Controlled Devices: only when device(s) (gas, charcoal, wood-fired/pellet grills, patio fireplaces and chimineas, gas camp stoves, and smokers/pellet grills) is/are on a hard, non-organic surface and 15' away from vegetation and an extinguisher or water is available on site.

Any individual who willfully violates this burn restriction is guilty of a Class B misdemeanor (North Dakota Century Code 37-17.1-10.1; maximum sentence of 30 days in jail and a \$1,500.00 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.

Burning is Prohibited if the Fire Index is in Extreme Category as Issued by National Weather Service (North Dakota Administrative Code – Title 33.1 Article 15 Chapter 4)

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 18th day of February, 2026.

Curt Olson, Chairman
McLean County Commission

Attest:

Beth Knutson
McLean County Auditor

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

Grey requested spring load restrictions be put into effect as of February 18, 2026 at 6:00 a.m. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the following resolution implementing load restrictions as requested.:

Resolution

Whereas, NDCC '39-12-03 provides that whenever any highway will be seriously damaged or destroyed by reason of deterioration, rain, snow, or other climatic condition unless the weight of vehicles, trucks, or other commercial vehicles thereon is limited, local authorities may by resolution impose restrictions as to the weight of the vehicles and the same shall be noticed by erection of signs designating the provisions of the resolution at each end of the portion of the highway effected thereby; and

Whereas, the Board of McLean County Commissioners has determined that highways which are under its jurisdiction may be seriously damaged by reason of deterioration, rain, snow or other climatic conditions unless the weight of vehicles, trucks, or other commercial vehicles thereon is limited;

Therefore, it is hereby resolved; that 6 ton per axle not to exceed 65,000 pounds road restrictions are imposed on all McLean County asphalt roads except McLean County 18/3rd St. SW to the Rainbow Energy Center; that 6 ton per axle not to exceed 65,000 pounds road restrictions are imposed on all other McLean County roads except McLean County Road 16/39 ½ Ave NW extending 7 miles south of Riverdale to the Fisher Industries (Sand and Gravel) Plant.

It is hereby ordered that the McLean County Highway Superintendent shall cause notice of such restrictions to be posted at each end of the portion of the highway effected thereby. Road restrictions imposed shall begin within 24 hours after said signs have been erected.

Dated: This 18th day of February, 2026.

McLean County Board of Commissioners:

Curt Olson – Chairman

Steve Cottingham

Steve Lee

Attest:

Beth A. Knutson, Auditor

It is hereby resolved that the above-stated road restrictions are hereby removed.

Dated: This ___ day of _____, 2026.

McLean County Board of Commissioners:

Curt Olson – Chairman

Steve Cottingham

Steve Lee

Attest:

Beth A. Knutson, Auditor

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

Grey presented a department update stating that tree work continues and some blading has been completed. He also stated that County Road (CR) 8 has been crack sealed.

Martin of Wold Engineering stated that he received some clarification on use of Prairie Dog grant funds for the county wide paving project. Discussion followed.

Grey opened the following bids for gravel crushing: Gravel Products, Inc bid the crushing and stockpiling at \$5 per ton, Fisher Sand & Gravel bid the crushing and stockpiling at \$8 per ton, and Sundre Sand and Gravel bid the crushing and stockpiling at \$3.90 per ton. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to accept gravel crushing bids from Gravel Products, Inc and Sundre Sand and Gravel. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to move Falkirk Mining Company’s public hearings previously scheduled for March 3, 2026 to March 17, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented the City of Underwood Police Contract for signing. Discussion followed.

Knutson stated that the updated Coroner’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) was received and signed by Ben Gehring. Discussion followed.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded but Lee, to approve the new Coroner’s MOA with Ben Gehring. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Assistant Director of Tax Equalization Elizabeth Patterson joined the meeting.

Knutson presented the funding agreement with the State of North Dakota for the Clerk of Court for 2027 through 2029 and will be reimbursed for 1.61 full time equivalent employees She stated that she discussed the agreement with Clerk of Court Gwyn Bosch and they both felt the funding agreement was still the best option for the county. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to notify the State of North Dakota that McLean County would like to continue to operate under a funding agreement with the State of North Dakota for the McLean County Clerk of Court position. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey opened the bids received for equipment rentals from Hanson’s Excavating Inc. and Sundre Sand & Gravel.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to accept both equipment rental bids submitted. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Patterson presented an application from the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting held on February 18, 2026.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Olson, to concur with the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the conditional use permit submitted by Eric and Leissa Johnson of Hawley, Minnesota, involving land located in Outlot A in the NW¼NW¼ of Section 27, Township 145 North, Range 79 West, to construct a non-farm structure on agricultural land. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to approve the Local Raffle Permit Application submitted by Skyfest Over Fort Stevenson for a raffle to be held at Fort Stevenson State Park on May 25, 2026, with prizes listed as kites with total prize value of \$300.00. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented an amended lease with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She stated the lease is to maintain a public road in Garrison and the easement needs to be amended due to relocation of a new boundary marker. The original easement was signed in 2012. Discussion followed. The commissioners asked that the subject be tabled until the next meeting when Road Superintendent Jim Grey was present.

Knutson presented information on the new Special Assessment District and stated Rainbow Energy Director of Projects Jon Price has reviewed the information and approved the parcels included. She also presented petitions for improvement districts signed by each land owner in the district.

Knutson also presented the Century Code requirements for the county when levying special assessments. She stated that even though we have the signed petitions from the landowners, they are not voters as stated in Century Code and she prepared a resolution to be signed by the board of county commissioners to levy the special assessment. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to advertise open board positions on the Special Assessment Committee to members of the new special assessment district as well as all other current board openings. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to adopt the resolution creating the new special assessment taxing district. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson stated that maintenance of this road and plowing in the winter once the road project is completed needs to be addressed and if necessary, a Memorandum of Understanding should be considered. Discussion followed.

Chairperson Olson recessed the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

Chairperson Olson reconvened the meeting at 9:52 a.m.

Extension Administrative Assistant McKenzie West and NDSU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent Sarah Bedgar joined the meeting to give an update on NDSU Extension activities. Bedgar presented a quarterly narrative to the Commission. Discussion followed.

Knutson provided an update on the amended lease with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She stated that Grey confirmed the county maintains the road and this amendment is removing .5 acres from the original lease. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to amend easement #DAWC45-2-12-8013 in our lease with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

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

Unpaid Voucher 1045 totaling \$105,619.64

• Chase Drug Store	Inmate Meds	826.49
• CHI St Alexius Health Garrison	Inmate Medical	1,317.33
• City Of Washburn	Water-Law Enforcement Center	80.53
• Dacotah Paper Company	Copy Paper	199.29
• Dacotah Paper Company	Toilet Paper	47.89
• Diffely's Repair, LLC	Oil Changes	558.79
• Diffely's Repair, LLC	Idler Pulley	182.99
• Garrison Farmers Union Oil Co	Tire Repair, Mount and Balance	70.00
• Garrison Rural Water District	Park Rural Water Usage	68.36
• Gladen Construction Inc.	Lost Lake Fish Passage	87,421.22
• Information Technology Dept	First District Health Wide Area Network	58.80
• Information Technology Dept	Wide Area Network	470.40
• Information Technology Dept	Adobe Acrobat – Auditor	39.60
• Information Technology Dept	Vesta and SIRN	2,617.27
• Information Technology Dept	Disaster Emergency Services Wide Area Network	58.80
• Information Technology Dept	Azure Active Directory	7.85
• Information Technology Dept	Intune	6.60
• Information Technology Dept	Intune	6.60
• Information Technology Dept	Office 365 Basic	533.00
• Information Technology Dept	Law Enforcement Center Wide Area Network	1,450.00
• Information Technology Dept	Wide Area Network, Office 365, Adobe, VPN	1,751.05
• McLean County Implement	Battery, Core Deposits, Accessories	218.03
• McLean County Implement	Battery Booster Pack	164.99
• Montana Dakota Utilities	Gas-Courthouse	65.80
• Montana Dakota Utilities	Gas-Law Enforcement Center	917.41
• Mercer County Sheriffs Dept	Inmate Housing	2,325.00
• Midcontinent Cable Co	Cable Television-Law Enforcement Center	161.90
• ND Weed Control Assoc	2026 Membership Dues	285.00
• NorDak North Publications	Job Postings	493.56
• Project Arcadia LLC	ID Cards	15.99
• Quadient Finance USA Inc	Postage Machine	2,000.00
• Rough Rider Industries	T-shirts for Inmates	125.00
• Runnings	Shop Supplies	299.61
• Scotts Hardware	Batteries, Ground Fault Tester, Bulbs, Etc.	101.93
• Sirchie	Evidence Tape	38.08

- Wex Health Monthly Administration Fee 99.00
- Wilton Farmers Union Oil Co Oil Changes 520.49
- Wilton Farmers Union Oil Co Coolant 14.99

Unpaid Highway Department Voucher 1046 Totaling \$9,893.92

- B-First IndustrialClip Kits, Nuts, Plow Bolts, Etc. 980.67
- Dakota Fluid Power Inc Cylinder Repair 1,636.17
- Garrison City Water, Sewer, Garbage-Highway Department 53.72
- Garrison Farmers Union Oil Co Oil and Liquefied Petroleum Gas 376.05
- John Deere Financial Parts 2,124.00
- John Deere Financial Fuel, Oil, Grease 958.69
- Johnsen Trailer Sales, Inc Parts 1,207.74
- McRandall Mobile Glass Install Front Windows 1,200.00
- Montana Dakota Utilities Gas-Highway Shops 1,103.91
- Nordak North Publications Gravel Bids and Equipment Rental Bid Advertising 198.00
- S And J Hardware Lithium Battery, Shovel Handles 54.97

Unpaid Direct Deposit Voucher 1047 Totaling \$27.00

- Anna Six Reimburse Emergency Medical Services Training 27.00

Unpaid Payroll Vouchers Totaling \$343,773.28

- ND Public Employees Retirement January 2026 Payroll 8,235.00
- ND Public Employees Retirement January 2026 Payroll 234,215.52
- ND Public Employees Retirement January 2026 Payroll 101,322.76

Unpaid On Demand and Manual Check Vouchers Totaling \$43,254.24

- Wex Bank Fleet Card Gasoline 13,324.00
- Dacotah Paper Towel Roll, Bleach, Battery, Etc. 351.40
- Eide Bailly LLP 2024 Audit to Date 26,250.00
- Forms & Fulfillment Serv Inc Check Stock 96.84
- ND County Commissioners 2026 Dues 1,096.00
- Washburn American Legion Clint Hill Memorial Donation 2,000.00
- ND Secretary of State Notary - Kroll 36.00
- Western Frontier Insurance Renew Notary Bond-Kroll 100.00

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

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 10:21 a.m. The commission minutes and agenda can be found on the county website at <https://www.mcleancountynd.gov>.

Curt Olson, Chairperson

Lynda Snyder, Deputy Auditor