McLean County Commission Proceedings

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

The first regular July meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairperson Steve Lee. Present were Commissioners Lee, Steve Cottingham, and Curtis Olson. Also present were Auditor Beth A. Knutson; Deputy Auditor Lynda Snyder; Road Superintendent James Grey; Patrol Lieutenant Cody Meadows; and Washburn Public School Superintendent Dr. Penny Veit Hetletved.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, to approve the minutes of the meetings held on June 3, 2025 and June 17, 2025, as submitted. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey presented an update on department operations stating that blading and graveling continues. He also stated that they will begin mowing county right-of-ways and notice will be advertised for two weeks prior to this taking place.

Grey requested permission to advertise for one or more temporary, part-time employees to complete necessary mowing. He reported that a Max area blade operator has resigned and there is still a position to fill in Washburn so the gravel crew would have to shut down to do the mowing. Discussion followed.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve advertising for two seasonal Equipment Operator I's to be employed for no longer than four months. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey stated that Sundre Sand & Gravel Inc has gravel available for the county's use at the Strecker Gravel Pit. He also stated that as soon as crops come off, the Shafer Gravel Pit near Roseglen will also be ready.

Grey presented two proposals for mowers, RDO in the amount of $30,256.36 and McLean County Implement in the amount of $41,487.01. Discussion followed.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, to approve purchasing the John Deere mower from RDO Equipment in the amount of $30,256.36. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Grey presented a utility permit request from McLean Sheridan Rural Water District to bury 2" HDPE rural water pipeline in the right-of-way on the south side of 6th Street SW in Section 1, Township 148 North, Range 82 West. The pipeline will tie in to an existing line on the west side of 24th Avenue SW and head west for approximately 0.7 miles before exiting the right-of-way and onto private property. Discussion followed.

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

Grey presented a utility permit from Falkirk Mining Company to install two culverts of twelve-inch HDPE pipes at ditch level to be used for overload cabling. Discussion followed.

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

Knutson presented the new NDSU Extension Service office space lease agreement with Mike and Jamie Nelson. The new agreement has increased from $6,600 annually to $10,000 annually for the next five years. Discussion followed.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Olson, to accept the new lease agreement as presented. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented salary and benefit data for a School Resource Office (SRO) for the Washburn School District. She stated that the data is for the months of August through December of 2025 and that remaining ARPA funds are available for payment of this year's salary. Discussion followed.

Hetletved discussed funding for the SRO and the need for this position in the Washburn School. Discussion followed.

Meadows stated that he would like to advertise the position as soon as possible to both internal and external applicants. Discussion followed.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve contracting with the Washburn School District to add the SRO position and immediately advertising for the position. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented the Pledge of Securities received from TruCommunity Bank for the period ending June 30, 2025. The total public deposits were $23,813,400.35 and the total pledged securities were $25,231,189.34 with an overage of $1,417,788.99.

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

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the Dakota Central Human Service Zone (DCHSZ) Transfer of Funds resolutions and the McLean County Auditor's Sweep Account Transfer of Funds resolution. Roll Call: Aye: Olson, Cottingham, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

DCHSZ Transfer of Funds and McLean County Sweep Account Transfer of Funds resolutions are on file in the McLean County Auditor's Office.

Knutson requested to prorate seasonal camping spots for two reservations made late in the season. A refund was requested within 24 hours due to the full cost being charged for the few remaining months of the season. Discussion followed.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Cottingham, to approve prorating the seasonal contracts for both reservations. Roll Call: Aye: Cottingham, Olson, and Lee. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson stated that salaries have been added to the preliminary budgets utilizing a 2.5% cost of living adjustment to salary schedule steps with an across-the-board 2.5% increase for eligible employees. Additional scenarios will be presented with the final budget review of each department.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Clerk of District Court. Salaries increased from $164,467.19 to $171,442.06 and Court-Appointed Counsel decreased from $25,000.00 to $20,000.00. Total budgeted amount presented $201,942.06.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Juvenile Court with no changes. Total budgeted amount presented $2,000.00.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for McLean County Park Board. Salaries decreased from $56,615.44 to $52,745.70 and Fuel increased from $2,800.00 to $3,000.00. A line item for 50-amp upgrade to park hook-ups in the amount of $150,000.00 was added. Total budgeted amount presented $233,545.70.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Weed Control Board. Health insurance increased from $27,000.00 to $31,000.00; Retirement decreased from $16,300.00 to $16,260.00; and Repairs decreased from $6,000.00 to $600.00. Total budgeted amount presented $249,354.00.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for South Sakakawea Narcotics Task Force. Salaries increased from $60,000.44 to $62,208.55; Medical Insurance increased from $27,000.00 to $31,000.00; Medicare increased from $900.00 to $925.00; Retirement increased from $10,000.00 to $11,000.00; Meals/Travel increased from $2,000.00 to $3,500.00; Telephone decreased from $1,800.00 to $1,000.00; Fuel/Oil/Vehicle Maintenance increased from $4,000.00 to $10,000.00; Other (Cellebrite) increased from $6,100.00 to $8,900.00; and Miscellaneous decreased from $8,000.00 to $0.00. Total budgeted amount presented $134,362.31.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for County Commission. Salaries increased from $74,062.03 to $78,856.21. Total budgeted amount presented $83,856.21.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Auditor. Salaries increased from $265,726.29 to $326,726.61 and training increased from $2,000.00 to $3,000.00. Total budgeted amount presented $331,226.61.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Dues/Memberships. Lewis and Clark RCD decreased from $13,327.00 to $11,275.00. Total budgeted amount presented $33,654.00.

Knutson presented the proposed budget for 2026 for McLean County Fair Board. Electricity decreased from $6,000.00 to $5,000.00; Telephone decreased from $1,000.00 to $600.00; Capital Improvements increased from $7,300.00 to $9,400.00; Repairs decreased from $13,000.00 to $10,000.00; Premiums increased from $9,000.00 to $9,800.00; Miscellaneous decreased from $3,500.00 to $2,500.00; Livestock-Open increased from $9,000.00 to $10,000.00; Contract Labor increased from $4,000.00 to $4,500.00; Special Assessments increased from $7,000.00 to $9,200.00; and Water/Sewer increased from $1,200.00 to $2,000.00. Total budgeted amount presented $92,500.00.

Underwood City Mayor Roxanne Kapanke joined the meeting.

Computer Operations Director Lori Foss joined the meeting.

Foss presented the proposed budget for 2026 for GIS Implementation. Total budgeted amount presented is $0.00.

Foss presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Flexible Benefits-Medical and Child Care with no changes. Total budgeted amount presented is $1,000.00.

Foss presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Superintendent of Schools. Salaries increased from $3,167.23 to $3,325.59 and Award/Contests decreased from $5,500.00 to $4,750.00. Total budgeted amount presented is $8,675.59.

Foss presented the proposed budget for 2026 for Computer Operations. Salaries increased from $102,385.67 to $104,945.31; Training/Conventions decreased $500.00 to $0.00; Ink & Toner decreased from $250.00 to $100.00; NDACo Annual Tech Contract increased from $46,000.00 to $52,560.00; Exchange E-Mail Accounts increased from $5,350.00 to $7,946.00; VPN Accounts decreased from $600.00 to $200.00; Adobe Subscriptions increased from $420.00 to $450.00; Anti-Virus Protection decreased from $400.00 to $300.00; Cloud Based Backup decreased from $2,220.00 to $2,212.00; Capital Outlay decreased from $51,000.00 to $43,550.00; and Archive Social Contract increased from $4,188.00 to $4,500.00. Total budgeted amount presented is $226,813.26.

Land Use Administrator Todd Schreiner, Assistant Director of Tax Equalization Elizabeth Patterson, and Property Assessor Ryan Oberg joined the meeting.

Kapanke discussed taxpayer's concerns with current property values and assessed taxes in Underwood. Discussion followed.

Received and ordered filed the fee collection report from the Recorder's Department for the month of June in the amount of $10,670.50.

Received and ordered filed the fee collection report from the Sheriff's Department for the month of June in the amount of $2,380.60.

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.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 10:01 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	Lynda Snyder, Deputy Auditor