

McLean County Commission Proceedings

Tuesday, July 21, 2026

The second regular July meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 8:30 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; Chief Deputy Auditor/Computer Operations Director Lori Foss; Lewis and Clark Regional Development Group Executive Director Brent Ekstrom; Lewis and Clark Regional Development Group Director Derrick Becker; Lewis and Clark Regional Development Group Resource Development Specialist Micah Gear; Gravel Products Inc. Representative Max Schriock; and Gus and Sharon Rud.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to approve the minutes of the meetings held on June 16, 2026 and July 7, 2026 as submitted. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Foss requested a salary adjustment for Christian Uhlich promoted to Equipment Operator III. She presented a starting salary of \$65,578.21 which is a 2.12% increase over his current salary. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the salary adjustment as presented retroactive to July 1, 2026. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Foss requested a salary adjustment for Jacob Behles promoted to Equipment Operator II/Sign Technician. She presented a starting salary of \$58,502.49 which is a 5.90% increase over his current salary. Discussion followed.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to approve the salary adjustment as presented retroactive to July 1, 2026. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Foss presented preliminary budgets for Superintendent of Schools, Computer Operations, GIS Implementation, and Flexible Benefits-Medical and Child Care.

Grey discussed the issues with certain truck drivers violating one of our Road Agreements on County Road 22. He stated he feels it is now resolved with the Highway Patrol presence and a letter informing them of the violations. Discussion followed.

Grey also discussed additional issues brought to the Commission's attention including a letter received from the City of Turtle Lake, speed bumps and speed signs in Douglas Bay.

Ekstrom presented information on the Lewis and Clark Development Group and its various grant programs, housing assistance programs, economic development programs, and the Rural Health Transformation Program. Ekstrom spoke about the Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program available through the USDA Rural Development to provide low interest loans to expand existing meat processing businesses and build new operations throughout North Dakota. He also presented detailed information on the combined impact these grant funds could have on McLean County.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to concur with the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the application submitted by Gravel Products, Inc. of Minot, North Dakota (Jon Paul and Rachel Ravnaas, landowner), requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit involving 15 acres of land located in the west 65 rods of the S½SW¼SW¼, Section 15, Horseshoe Valley Township. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to concur with the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the application submitted by Rud Propane, LLP, d/b/a Rud Oil & Gas whose post office address is Center, North

Dakota, requesting a zoning change involving land described as Outlot B in NE4SW4, Section 8, Township 146 North, Range 82 West contingent upon a haul agreement being signed. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to concur with the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the application submitted by Leon and Darlene Philbrick of Garrison, North Dakota, requesting approval of a zoning change involving 19.1 acres of land located in Outlot B and road easement and Outlot C in NE¼, Section 19, Township 148 North, Range 84 West. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Cottingham, seconded by Lee, to concur with the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the application submitted by Layne and Melissa Reynolds of Garrison, North Dakota, requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit involving 1.69 acres of land located in Lot 1 of Outlot A in the W½NW¼, Section 34, McGinnis Township. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Cottingham, Lee, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Cottingham, to concur with the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the application submitted by Robert Biwer and Louise Murphy of Bismarck, North Dakota, requesting a variance of the setback requirements of the McLean County Zoning Ordinance involving land located in Lot 42, Snake Creek Cottage Site, Malcolm Township. Discussion followed. Roll Call Vote: Aye: Lee, Cottingham, and Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Knutson presented the 2026-2027 Court Service Contract for the City of Garrison.

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

Knutson presented the 2027 Contract for Boarding McLean County Inmates with Ward County.

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

Knutson presented the preliminary budget calendar requesting changes as the preliminary budgets and estimated tax statements are no longer required. She explained that year two of calculating the 3% cap has added additional work and training to ensure that the carryover is calculated correctly. Commissioners were in favor of the proposed changes.

Knutson presented the preliminary budgets for First District Health Unit, South McLean County Soil Conversation District, Sheriff, Sheriff Vehicles, Vehicle Impound and Towing, E911 Coordinator, Communications, McLean-Mercer Regional Library, Disaster Emergency Services, Water Resource Board, Recorder, Extension Agent, and McLean County Fair Board.

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 Olson. Nay: None. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m. The commission minutes and agenda can be found on the county website at <https://www.mcleancountynd.gov>.