

**McLean County Commission Proceedings – Special Meeting
Thursday, April 2, 2020**

A special meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 2:31 p.m. by Chairperson Steve Cottingham. Present were Commissioners Cottingham, Steve Lee, and Barry Suydam by telephone. Also present were: Auditor Beth A. Knutson, Chief Deputy Auditor Lori Foss, and Deputy Auditor Nancy Leidholm.

Knutson explained Executive Order 2020-13 stating that in the interest of public health and safety and in support of the COVID-19 public health crisis and the declared state of emergency in North Dakota, it is essential to suspend the operation of certain election laws, so the right to vote in North Dakota can be exercised by all eligible citizens; establishing a secure mail ballot drop box; and suspend the requirement that each county establish polling places no later than the 64th day before the election. The executive order also allows for county election boards to begin opening and processing mail ballots up to five days prior the election. Tabulation of the processed ballots may not be done until 7:00 p.m. on election day. Knutson informed the commission that applications will be sent out by the Secretary of State’s Office at their expense. The expense of mailing out ballots will be the county’s expense as in the past. The county will provide two assistive ballot marking devices (ExpressVote) in the county courthouse during normal hours of operation for the period of time beginning 40 days prior to the election through election day. Knutson stated that this would remain in effect for the duration of the declared emergency.

Knutson informed the commission that she had spoken to Three Affiliated Tribes Councilman Fred Fox in regards to this issue and he saw no concerns but requested a letter be sent to the council for signing. She had not received that back at the time of the meeting.

Moved by Lee, seconded by Suydam, to adopt the following resolution:

McLean County Resolution Regarding June 9, 2020, Primary Election Process

The McLean County Commission operating under their authority provided by NDCC § 16.1-04-02 & 16.1-11.1-01 and in consideration of the Governor’s declared emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic hereby declares by resolution that all previous county polling locations shall be eliminated for the Primary Election to be held on June 9, 2020, as allowed by the Governor’s Executive Order (2020-13) on March 26, 2020.

The County Commission further declares under their authority provided by NDCC § 16.1-11.1-01 to conduct the June 9, 2020, Primary Election by way of Vote-by-Mail Ballot. The Commission encourages all qualified citizens to take every opportunity to Vote-by-Mail Ballot prior to the June 9, 2020, Primary Election.

Dated this 2nd day of April, 2020.

Attest:

Beth Knutson, County Auditor

McLean County Commission

By: _____

By: _____

By: _____

Roll call vote: Aye: Lee, Suydam, and Cottingham. Nay: None. Motion Carried.

There being no further business, the chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 7, 2020. The commission minutes and agenda can be found on the county website at <http://www.mcleancountynd.gov>.

Steve Cottingham, Chairperson

Nancy Leidholm, Deputy Auditor