

Commissioner Meeting
January 5, 2021

Commissioner Marke Roberts called the meeting to order at 9:00. Present were Joel Hamar, Jerry Walsh, John Hokana, Dean Simek, and Marke Roberts. Resident Cindy Bagley was also in attendance. The media was not present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Additions to the Agenda

Tax statement mailing issues

5 County meeting

The minutes for the December 15, 17, 22 and 29th meetings were reviewed. A correction was made on the minutes from December 15th on a roll call concerning an application for property tax exemption, which showed a unanimous vote of yes, which is corrected to state a no vote from Roberts. Hokana made a motion to approve the four sets of minutes with that change and corrections. Simek seconded. Motion carried. Discussion followed concerning the need to explain corrections made to the minutes.

Clerk of Court Andi Schimke joined the meeting via electronic means at 9:20. Sheriff Chris Estes joined the meeting at 9:25.

Seeing there was no old business, Hokana made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25. Walsh seconded. Motion carried.

Sheppard called the meeting back to order at 9:25.

Sheppard asked for nominations for Chairman for the year 2021. Simek made a motion to nominate Marke Roberts. Hamar seconded. Motion carried.

Roberts asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. Hamar made a motion to nominate John Hokana. Simek seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion followed concerning portfolio appointments for 2021. Discussion followed concerning adding another Commissioner to the Highway portfolio, as it is a large portion of the tax dollars collected each year. Portfolio will need to remember to inform Sheppard in cases where open meeting laws may be applicable so that a notice can be posted of a meeting. Roberts made a motion to appoint Walsh, Hokana, and Simek to the highway portfolio, Hamar and Roberts to the Courthouse portfolio, and Hokana on the Health District and Human Services portfolio. Hamar seconded. Motion carried.

Commission reviewed the list of Board members for the different county boards. A position on the Park Board which is county wide and a position for the Weed Board, preferable on the eastern side of the county, will be advertised in the Times Leader.

Simek made a motion to pay the vouchers, to include the addition of a bill to the Post Office for box rental in the amount of \$76.00 for the States Attorney's office. Walsh seconded. Motion carried.

Commission discussed with Estes about the need for space in the courthouse during the basement project. Commission stated Estes could use the Commissioner room and that they will meet in a different room during the time of the project.

Colliers International representative Mike Manstrom joined the meeting at 10:28.

Treasurer Wonada Lematta joined the meeting at 10:29 to update the Commissioners on the mailing of tax statements. Lematta stated she had received numerous calls concerning residents not receiving their tax statements, or only receiving a portion of their tax statement. PreSort Plus had been hired to fold and mail the statements for 2020, as had been done also in 2019. The County has had an increase in cost to resend out tax statements and will be requesting a discount from PreSort Plus. The County has not had a problem with them in the past but do not plan on using them another year.

KLJ Engineer Bryan Tykwinski and Highway Superintendent Jeff Hagen joined the meeting at 10:43.

Manstrom discussed with the Commission on the financing of the basement project. Total cost of using a bond issuance through Colliers versus using a mixture of the USDA funding, along with a bond issue through Colliers was discussed. The Colliers bond issue is at a lower interest rate, but has a fee associated with the bond issue. The fee would have to be paid with either source of funding.

Manstrom stated the Commission should sign a reimbursement resolution that states that the County would be reimbursing themselves for expenses that occur before the bonds are issued. The

County will not be able to do that if the resolution is not signed. Hokana made a motion to sign the resolution. Simek seconded. Motion carried. Walsh made a motion to choose Colliers International for the financing of the basement project. Hamar seconded. Roll call vote with Hamar yes; Walsh yes; Hokana yes; Simek yes; Roberts yes. Motion carried.

Walsh made a motion to put the bond payback amortization schedule at 10 years, which lowers the interest rate charged, and should not increase the amount of mills currently charged to the tax payers. Hamar seconded. Discussion concerning the length of time on the amortization schedule. Roll call vote with Hamar yes; Walsh yes; Hokana yes; Simek yes; Roberts yes. Motion carried.

Residents Linda Roney and Phil Roney joined the meeting at 11:35. The Commission took a short recess and returned at 11:36.

Sheppard presented the Quit Claim Deeds for the six parcels sold or transferred during the tax sale in November. Hamar motioned to sign the deeds. Simek seconded. Motion carried.

A petition had been delivered to the Auditor's office from concerned citizens about County Road #3 east of Oakes leading to the cemetery. The petition is requesting the paving of the road, stating that it is in dire need of a vast improvement. The petition, which is on file at the Auditor's office, reads:

We need the Commissioners support to help pave the County Road to the Cemetery. It is in dire need of a vast improvement! It's truly a disgrace when there is a funeral procession and the road is unsafe with potholes. We've lived in this town our whole lives and it is disgusting to see our main roads become impassable and cannot believe our commissioners would let one of Oakes' main roads remain in this condition and continue to deteriorate!

Linda Roney read a letter she had written to the Commission concerning the status of the road and the reasons they feel it should be fixed. Phil Roney stated that the road is not getting better. Hamar presented a video he had taken of driving down the road so that all Commissioners could see the state of the road. Commission stated that they realize the state of the road but the funds are limited and they have a lot of other roads that need to be fixed. Discussion followed concerning the money the County has put into the road in the past in the amount of approximately \$90,000 in pothole repairs and resealing, and also spent \$240,000 on the road further east this spring and summer when the road was under water. The cost would be a minimum of approximately \$400,000 for that 1.30 miles of road. Tykwinski stated that he could try to apply for funds from the state of North Dakota to assist in fixing the road. Funding has been turned down in the past, but stated they could submit another application. Roberts stated he appreciated the work they had put into the petition, and they know that the road needs to be fixed, but have no funds at this time to repave the road. Linda Roney stated that they are asking the Commission to do their best they can. No action was taken at this time.

Hagen discussed with the Commission on updating the Bobcat that the highway department uses. The program had been cancelled but now has been picked up by Bobcat of Gwinner. The County can trade their current Bobcat they have used for three years and pay \$6,332.72 for a new Bobcat. The new Bobcat is bigger, but no attachments will have to be purchased. The current Bobcat has 260 hours on it and new Bobcats cost approximately \$70,000. Walsh made a motion to replace the old Bobcat with the new Bobcat. Simek seconded. Motion carried.

Hamar updated the 5-County meeting that was held at the end of December. Discussions concerning Prairie Dog funding, rural septic systems rules, and the inability of Water Boards to charge applicants the full cost required on tile applications were on the agenda at the meeting.

Hamar made a motion have Roberts sign the eligibility application to add Jerry Walsh on the list of people able to purchase items for the county at North Dakota State Surplus Property. Simek seconded. Motion carried.

Hokana made a motion to adjourn at 1:00.