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BOARD OF PEMBINA COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S PROCEEDINGS

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February 20, 2024

9:00 AM

Board of Pembina County Commissioners met in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Courthouse. Chairperson Cull called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Roll call: Jim Benjaminson, Laverne Doyle, Blaine W. Papenfuss, Darin Otto, and Andrew Cull. A quorum was declared.

Also, in attendance are: Zelda Hartje, Melissa Morden, Clerk/Recorder, Garret Fontaine, States Attorney, and Marcus Ramsay, Chief Deputy.

Motion made by Jim Benjaminson and seconded by Darin Otto to approve the agenda with the following additions: Rachel Ramsay with office updates and Angelle French with the 2023 ½ Mill Self-Help grant. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to approve the February 6, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Auditor Schlittenhard presented a quote, in the amount of \$24,171.13, from Midwest Investigation & Security, Inc. for the installation of ICT Controlled Access doors. Kelly Cluchie, Maintenance Supervisor, has contacted the company to get a breakdown of the quote showing the cost for the Courthouse and the cost for the Law Enforcement Center. Kelly feels it may be best to do one building this year and the other building next year. Kelly has not heard back from the company. Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to table a decision until the next meeting to see if Kelly receives the requested information. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Auditor Schlittenhard discussed the Clerk of Court contract renewal with the Commission. There are two options that the Board could choose. The Commission could enter into a funding agreement for the 2025-2027 biennium and receive reimbursement for providing clerk services or elect to provide services at the county's own expense. If the Commission continues the contract as is, the state would reimburse for .89 FTE(s). Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Laverne Doyle to enter into a funding agreement with the state for the 2025-2027 biennium. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Auditor Schlittenhard updated the Commission on the boiler replacement project. The boiler has been ordered and the submittal drawings have been received, approved and returned. There is an expected lead time of 16 weeks for delivery of the new boiler, putting the installation date as mid-June.

Auditor informed the Commission she was contacted by Jill Denault, Northern Valley Human Service Zone Director, regarding reappointments to the Northern Valley Human Service Zone Board. Ms. Denault is requesting the Commission reappoint Laverne Doyle, Janne Myrdal and Debra Fraser to the positions. Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Darin Otto to reappoint Laverne Doyle, Janne Myrdal and Debra Fraser to three (3) year terms to the Northern Valley Human Service Zone Board. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Rachel Ramsay, Public Health Director, discussed the Pembina County Opioid Settlement Funds Plan she is required to submit to the Behavioral Health Division of the ND Department of Health & Human Services. Pembina County Public Health has developed the plan to address opioid misuse in Pembina County by increasing the availability of naloxone, promoting safe disposal of prescription medications and providing access to the CredibleMind digital platform for improvement of mental health by prevention, early intervention and evidence-based self-care. The plan will be revisited on a regular basis and adjusted to meet local conditions using existing resources. Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to approve the Pembina County Opioid Settlement Fund plan as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Ms. Ramsay updated the Commission on the staff meeting her office held regarding the retirement of Denise Dame. Currently the staff feels they could absorb some of the duties, but may need to reassess in the future and hire a part-time Administrative Assistant. The Commission thanked Ms. Ramsay and her staff for taking on the additional duties and being conscientious of taxpayer money.

Lisa Keney, Tax Director, updated the Commission on concerns from individuals regarding the guidelines and documentation requirements for soil modifiers and if the Tax Office has the authority to set modifiers. Ms. Keney reviewed NDCC 11-10.1-05 which explains the duties of the County Director of Tax Equalization. Ms. Keney reached out to the state, who recommended review of the Guide to Assessing Agricultural Land in North Dakota. The guide, which states the importance of establishing criteria for using the modifiers and determining a set percentage or valuation procedure by which each modifier will reduce the valuation of the land, which will ensure county-wide consistency and equity in the assessment process. Lisa also reached out to other counties, including Ramsey, Richland, Steele, and Walsh to see what their processes are. They also require pictures for some of their modifiers. Lisa realizes change isn't easy, but stated we are moving in the right direction.

Culvert request received from Park Township to replace two 60" x 28' culverts with two 60" x 40' culverts in the SE¼ of Section 13 of Park Township. The township will be doing a major road project in 2024 and would like to update the culverts prior to doing the road work. Devin stated he feels the township should install 50' culverts versus the 40' culverts. The request has been approved by two township officers and Devin Johnson, Highway Superintendent. The Water Board had no comment. Motion made by Jim Benjaminson and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to authorize the culvert replacements up to 50' in length. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Three culvert requests and two drainage permit applications were received from American Crystal Sugar Company. The first culvert request is to install a 2' x 44' culvert for a new approach to create access to the factory's parking lot in the W½NE¼ of Section 14 of Drayton Township. The second culvert request is to install a 2' x 80' culvert for a new access road, for use by Transystems trucks, on the south end of the existing beet piling site with access to Old Hwy 44, in the NE¼ of Section 23 of Drayton Township. The third culvert request is to install a 2' x 50' culvert on the west side of the new piling slab, to allow for expansion of the existing beet piling site, in the NE¼ of Section 23 of Drayton Township. Drainage permits were requested for ditch work along Old Hwy 44 and 81st St. The culvert requests were approved by two township officials and Devin Johnson, Highway Superintendent. Drainage permits were approved by the Water Board and Devin Johnson, Highway Superintendent. Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to approve all culvert requests and drainage permits as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Devin Johnson, Highway Superintendent, and Jeff Daley, Kadramas, Lee & Jackson, updated the Commission on the Bowsmont bridge project. The Corps has approved the project and sent the permit. Jeff reviewed dates to hold the bid opening. Discussion followed on a completion date for the project. Jeff updated the Commission on the two structures on County Road #4, the delay in bid openings for five projects due to lack of funding through the ND Department of Transportation which includes the Bowsmont bridge and Hensel bridge projects, and the 17 structures rehabs.

Angelle French, Pembina County JDA Director, met with the Commission regarding the transfer of funds from the county to Pembina County Job Development Authority. It was decided the Pembina County JDA will take over ownership and management of their finances now that they have a full-time director. The balance at the end of 2023 was \$151,149.13. Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Laverne Doyle to authorize the transfer as presented. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – yes; Blaine Papenfuss – yes; Darin Otto – yes; Andrew Cull – yes. Motion carried.

Angelle French, Pembina County JDA Director, met with the Commission to discuss the 2023 ½ mill "Self-Help" funding grants. Pembina County budgeted \$16,500.00 for the 2023 grant program to support up to \$1500.00 for each of Pembina County's eleven

cities. Due to a lack of participation from some cities and inquiries from other cities to submit more than one application, the Pembina County Commission revised the program guidelines to allow full benefit of the program for participating cities. Each city can now submit up to two applications for two separate projects. City Park districts or other non-profit organizations can apply for a project if agreed to by the City, however the city must be the applicant and specify which application is the priority if only one is funded. The deadline for applications was December 15, 2023. Pembina County received thirteen requests for projects totaling more than \$1,253,382.00. Total requests for this year's program are \$18,211.00. Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to award \$16,500.00 as follows for the 2023 ½ Mill "Self Help" Program:

Priority 1 projects - Bathgate City - \$1,500.00, Cavalier City - \$1,500.00, Crystal City - \$1,500.00, Mountain City - \$1,500.00, Pembina City - \$987.50, St Thomas City - \$1,500.00, Walhalla City - \$1,500.00

Priority 2 Projects: Bathgate City - \$1,105.00, Cavalier City - \$1,105.00, Mountain City - \$1,105.00, Pembina City - \$987.50, St Thomas City - \$1,105.00, Walhalla City - \$1,105.00. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – yes; Blaine Papenfuss – yes; Darin Otto – yes, Andrew Cull - yes. Motion carried.

Commission reviewed the claims. Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Darin Otto to approve the consent agenda as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Laverne Doyle to adjourn the meeting. All voting in favor; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:38 AM.