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BOARD OF PEMBINA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS

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August 3, 2021

8:30 AM

Board of Pembina County Commissioners met at 8:30 AM in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Courthouse with the following members present: Jim Benjaminson, Laverne Doyle, Nick Rutherford and Hugh Ralston. Available by telephone: Hetty Walker. Also present were Zelda Hartje, Certified Assessor, and Terin Riley, Fleming, DuBois & Fleming, LLP.

Chairperson Doyle called the meeting to order at 8:34 am.

Motion made by Nick Rutherford and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to approve the July 15, 2021 special meeting minutes as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to approve the July 20, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Jim Benjaminson and seconded by Nick Rutherford to approve the agenda with the following additions: fund transfer, omitted property, 911 signage billing, a County deed, freezer bids and Ms. Flanders. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Commissioner Rutherford informed Ms. Flanders he did not receive the questions from Fleming, DuBois & Fleming, LLP which were to be presented to the Board for Ms. Flanders to send to the Attorney General. Ms. Flanders stated a letter, which was composed on her office letterhead without her permission, disseminating her signature and prepared by Terin Riley on the bottom, had been emailed to the Board of Equalization members, County Auditor and herself. Ms. Flanders expressed her opinion on the manner in which the letter was presented and discussed her opinion of the letter composed by Ms. Riley. Ms. Flanders stated due to the questions presented in the letter composed by Ms. Riley, she is not aware of a question that remains to be answered by the Attorney General. Ms. Flanders will not be sending the letter presented by Ms. Riley to the Attorney General. Ms. Riley stated the reason she used Ms. Flanders' letterhead was because it was her understanding the letter was to be composed by the Fleming, DuBois & Fleming office, be presented to Ms. Flanders who would present to the Attorney General unedited.

Raffle permit request received from St Joseph Preservation Society. Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Nick Rutherford to approve the raffle permit as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Commission discussed forming a Soils Committee. A Soils Committee job description, membership requirements and an application will need to be compiled. An ad will be placed in all county newspapers with eligibility criteria for committee members. Motion made by Nick Rutherford to appoint five committee members, consisting of one individual from each Commission District plus one alternate from each District. Zelda Hartje, Certified Assessor, asked what the timeline would be to complete the assessments. Appeals reviews should be completed prior to February 1, 2022. Seconded by Jim Benjaminson. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Discussion followed on an application deadline for individuals interested in serving on the Soils Committee. Motion made by Nick Rutherford and seconded by Hugh Ralston to set the application deadline as Tuesday, August 31, 2021. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to authorize the Chairperson to sign the County Deed for the sale of Parcel 32-0280010 in the City of Neche, as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Samantha Weeks, 911/IT/GIS Coordinator/Dispatch Supervisor, updated the Commission on personnel changes in the Dispatch department. The Dispatch department is fully staffed at this time. Samantha informed the Commission that the Criminal Justice Information Services agreement presented to the Sheriff Department for approval remains unsigned. Samantha presented the signed Criminal Justice Information Services agreements with the Cavalier Police Department and the Pembina County State's Attorney and asked where she would send the agreement for the Drayton Police Department. Commissioner Rutherford stated she should forward the agreement to the Drayton City Office. The Dispatch department is unable to assist these entities without signed agreements, which must remain in a binder in the Dispatch department for audit purposes. Commission discussed the 3D Specialties billing for 911 signage with Ms. Weeks. Devin Johnson, Highway Supervisor, stated he did not have sufficient funding to pay for the signs. Ms. Weeks stated she is building a reserve for the SORN communications and doesn't have excess funds. Commissioner Benjaminson suggested the Highway Department and 911 split the cost of the signage. Ms. Weeks was receptive to the idea. The Auditor will visit with Devin to see if feels his department has sufficient funding to split the cost of the signs. Discussion followed on issues with Wi-Fi connections and the need to obtain a quote for a better Wi-Fi since it is utilized more now than it has been in the past. Samantha Weeks informed the Commission that she received a very positive report from the EMS Council on Dispatch operations since the relocation has taken place. Samantha discussed a personnel issue that occurred a couple of

weeks ago, and stated she reported the incident to his Supervisor. Commissioner Rutherford suggested the portfolio holder visit with the department.

Julie Hardy, Public Health Director, updated the Commission on the proposed office relocation. Jill Denault, Northern Valley Human Service Zone Director, stated she would not be able to give up the front reception area or the file room. This would leave only 5 offices for the Public Health Department to utilize, which is not sufficient space for the Public Health Department employees, exam rooms and storage. Discussion followed on the possibility of the State having all Human Service Zone employees return to the workplace. Commission feels the proposed move will need to be put on hold.

Julie expressed her concerns with Covid-19 numbers now increasing in Pembina County. She is requesting the Commission be aware of the possibility of enforcing another mask mandate, since the authority to enforce a mask mandate is now under local control. Vaccinations in Pembina County are increasing now that the Delta variant, which has greater transmissibility, is becoming the dominant variant.

The following bid was received on the 5.8 cubic foot freezer:

Kelly Cluchie: \$75.00

Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to accept the bid of \$75.00 from Kelly Cluchie. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Commission reviewed the July payroll and claims. Motion made by Nick Rutherford and seconded by Hugh Ralston to approve the consent agenda as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Mikka Willits, Tax Director, reviewed four properties that may need to be added as Omitted Properties. Most of these properties are Farm Residence Exemption applicants that had not returned an application or did not follow through on obtaining the Gross Income Statement required to be filed with the application. Omitted Property hearings were held August 2, 2021. Five individuals completed the required paperwork prior to their scheduled hearing and two appeared for the hearings. All were approved for the Farm Residence Exemption. The following properties were reviewed for not returning the Farm Residence Exemption application:

Parcel 13-1850000–N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ & N 20 Ac of S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec-35 Twp-161 Rang-051

Parcel 20-3330000 – N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec-28 Twp-163 Rang-052

The following property did not return the Gross Income Statement with their application:

Parcel 06-4140000 - NE $\frac{1}{4}$; Sec-25 Twp-162 Rang-054

The following property was missed during assessing:

Parcel 20-2470010 – Pt SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec-114 Twp-163 Rang-052

The following property was an Auditor's correction:

Parcel 02-0350015 - Pt SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$; Sec-05 Twp-162 Rang-055

Per NDCC 57-14-04 the Board of Commissioners must review and agree with adding these values to the tax rolls for tax year 2021. Motion made by Jim Benjaminson and seconded by Nick Rutherford to approve the addition of the above described omitted properties for the 2021 tax year. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – yes; Nick Rutherford – yes; Hugh Ralston – yes; Hetty Walker – yes. Motion carried.

Ms. Willits discussed a mobile home that has three years of delinquent taxes due. The owner passed away in 2020. The landowner contacted Ms. Willits regarding moving the mobile home and stated he would be willing to pay the 2019 and 2020 taxes, but is requesting the 2021 taxes be forgiven. Motion made by Nick Rutherford and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to forgive the 2021 taxes. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – yes; Nick Rutherford – yes; Hugh Ralston – yes; Hetty Walker – yes. Motion carried.

Commission reviewed the 2022 County General and Non-General proposed budgets. Commission will be reviewing further on Wednesday, August 4, 2021 and Thursday, August 5, 2021. Dawn Mandt, Red River Regional Council Executive Director, is scheduled to meet with the Commission Wednesday, August 4, 2021 at 11:00 am.

Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to adjourn the meeting. All voting in favor; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.