

The following are "unofficial minutes", subject to change at the next meeting.

## BOARD OF PEMBINA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS

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February 2, 2021

9:00 AM

Board of Pembina County Commissioners met at 9:00 AM in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Courthouse with the following members present: Jim Benjaminson, Nick Rutherford, and Hugh Ralston. Available by telephone was Hetty Walker. Absent: Laverne Doyle.

Vice-Chairperson Rutherford called the meeting to order.

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

Auditor presented a letter from the ND Department of Transportation (NDDOT) notifying them of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) funding the state received for highway infrastructure. NDDOT will be sharing the funds with the 12 major cities and 53 counties, per the regular distribution formulas for both the County and Urban Roads programs. These funds are eligible up to 100% federal and do not require a local match. The funds can be combined with other federal funds; however, they cannot be used to match federal funds. Once these funds are obligated, they need to be spent in their entirety and cannot be de-obligated. These funds must be obligated by September 30, 2024. Any unspent funds on a project will go back to the Federal Government. Pembina County will be receiving \$77,596.19.

Auditor presented the Department of Human Services letter of approval of the Northern Valley Human Service Zone's Plan dated November 20, 2020. The plan will have a start date of January 1, 2021. Auditor also informed the Commission of the Zone reimbursement to Pembina County for Indirect costs. Pembina County received \$34,148.51 in indirect cost reimbursement. Cavalier County retained \$14,235.00 for hosting fees for the Zone making the reimbursement to Pembina County \$19,913.81.

Zelda Hartje, Historic Preservation Committee member, unable to attend. County Auditor presented the Pembina County Certified Local Government 2021-2022 Historic Preservation Fund Grant application to the Commission for review.

Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Hetty Walker to authorize the Vice-Chairman to sign the grant application as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Commission discussed the house in Crystal which was foreclosed on for back taxes. The asbestos has been removed from the house and the house will be demolished by the Highway Department in the spring. A request was received from Shane Feltman to remove an electrical service box which had been installed in the home but was never paid for by the former homeowner. Motion made by Jim Benjaminson and seconded by Hugh Ralston to allow Mr. Feltman to remove the electrical service box from the home prior to demolition. The county will work with Mr. Feltman to ensure the box can be removed prior to demolition of the property. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Auditor informed the Commission that the Court Facilities Improvement Grant submitted by Pembina County was approved in the amount of \$15,001.57.

Pembina County Auditor, Linda Schlittenhard, informed the Commission of the 2020 NDIRN reimbursement of \$3,620.50. NDRIN refunds a portion of the fees back to the counties based on the number of documents recorded in 2019. In addition, the NDRIN Board approved a refund of 100% of the print revenue generated by the pages purchased from each member county. The document count refund amount will be deposited into the Document Preservation Fund. The print revenue will be deposited into the County General Fund to be used at the discretion of the county.

Discussion followed on lifting the "limited access" procedures for county offices. Commission will visit with Public Health and the local health officer prior to making any decision to lift the procedures. Discussion followed on employees choosing to travel domestically or internationally. Public Health now has BinaxNow test kits available for rapid testing for COVID-19. Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to have all county offices remain on limited access and require employees to complete a BinaxNow test and test negative prior to returning to work if they travel. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Hugh Ralston – yes; Hetty Walker – yes. Motion carried.

Revel Sapa, Veteran's Service Officer/Human Resource Director, informed the Commissioners that she currently is working with 75-100 Veteran's.

Kay Braget, Clerk/Recorder, met to formally inform the Commission of her decision to retire the end of May 2021. Kay thanked the Commission for all their support over the years. Discussion followed on filling the vacancy in house. Ms. Braget feels both of the current Deputy Clerk/ Recorders would be very capable of filling the position. Revel Sapa, Human Resource Director, also present. Discussion followed on designating the office as an appointed office versus an elected office. Ms. Sapa reached out to Chuck Horter, NDACo Human Resources Coordinator, regarding the process for redesignation of the office. Ms. Sapa will

visit with the current deputies regarding their interest in interviewing for the position. Advertising for the vacant Deputy Clerk/Recorder position will be placed with Job Service, on the Pembina County website and in all county newspapers. The Commission thanked Ms. Braget for her 37 years of service to Pembina County.

Sheriff Terry Meidinger discussed a request from the Grafton City Police Department to monitor their NCIC after 5:00 PM on weekdays and all day Saturday and Sunday. Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to deny the request. Discussion followed. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Mikka Willits, Tax Director, present for abatement hearing. The application is for abatement on property described as E1/2 NW1/4 (Govt Lots 1 &2) of Section 31 of Midland Township– Parcel 17-1300000. The request is to lower the true and full value from \$287,925.00 to a value of \$152,514.00, for a difference of \$135,411.00 for the 2019 tax year. Midland Township approved the abatement request at their April 2020 Equalization meeting. An error was made on the assessment of the property. After reviewing the parcel, Ms. Willits updated the valuation which included state mandated increases and changing the unattached garage assessment from a commercial assessment to a residential assessment. The new valuation for the property will be \$157,206, for a difference of \$130,719 for the 2019 tax year. Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to approve the abatement request using Ms. Willits' calculations. Discussion followed. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Hugh Ralston – yes; Hetty Walker – yes. Motion carried.

Deputy Clerk/Recorder, Missy Morden, introduced Kari Agotness, Northeast Judicial District Judge. Judge Agotness began her duties as NE Judicial Judge February 1, 2021.

Commission reviewed the consent agenda, consisting of the January payroll and claims. Motion made by Jim Benjaminson and seconded by Hugh Ralston to approve the consent agenda as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Hugh Ralston and seconded by Jim Benjaminson to adjourn the meeting. All voting in favor; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:40 AM.