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BOARD OF PEMBINA COUNTY COMMISSIONER’S PROCEEDINGS

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September 19, 2023

Special Meeting – Budget Hearing

7:00 PM

Board of Pembina County Commissioners met in Special Session in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Courthouse to finalize the 2024 budget. Chairperson Benjaminson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

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

Others in attendance: Isaac Stegman, Angelle French, Konor Parker, Lacey Hinkle, and Robert and Linda Olgeirson.

Auditor presented comparisons of the 2022 mills and 2023 mills. Auditor also presented examples comparing the tax amounts for 2022 tax year and 2023 tax year, using different school districts and townships. Auditor reviewed the mandated increases in health insurance, retirement and additional employees required to be PREA compliant.

Commissioner Papenfuss explained the cuts in departmental budgets and some of the Special Revenue funds. Commissioner Cull suggested the floor be opened to the public allowing each individual 3 minutes to present their concerns.

The floor was opened to the public. Lacey Hinkle discussed the cut in the JDA budget and explained that she understands the obligation the county has to the county employees but is requesting mills not to be cut any further. Robert Olgeirson stated he heard that the valuations are going to be reverted to the 2022 valuations and asked how firm this budget is. Commissioner Papenfuss stated that we will not be going back to the 2020, 2021 or 2022 valuations. Commissioner Benjaminson stated that the State Equalization Board will meet on October 5, 2023 to determine if the county needs to make any changes to valuations. The county will have to follow the recommendations of the State. Mr. Olgeirson was told he would need to make an appointment with the Tax Office if he has concerns with the valuations on his property. Isaac Stegman asked the Commission to explain what they are voting on tonight. Commissioner Benjaminson stated that the final budget is being approved based on the 2024 preliminary budget

numbers. Auditor Schlittenhard stated that the county and township budgets cannot be increased from the preliminary budget. School District budgets have the option to increase their final budget from the preliminary budget numbers. Mr. Stegman stated that he has always heard that if valuations increase, mill levies decrease and requested to know why the mills didn't decrease. Commissioner Benjaminson stated several of these increases are due to the mandated increases explained earlier. Discussion followed.

Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Darin Otto to adopt the 2024 budget as presented. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle - yes; Blaine Papenfuss - yes; Darin Otto – yes; Andrew Cull - yes. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to adjourn the meeting. All voting in favor; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.