

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

## BOARD OF PEMBINA COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S PROCEEDINGS

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March 3, 2026

9:00 AM

Board of Pembina County Commissioners met in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Courthouse.

Chairperson Hardy called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Roll call: Patrick Hardy, Scot Becker, Blaine Papenfuss, Darin Otto, Andrew Cull. A quorum was declared.

Also, in attendance were: Zelda Hartje, Rachel Ramsay, Public Health Director; Lisa Keney, Tax Director; Nikki Anderson, Extension Administrative Assistant.

Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Scot Becker to approve the agenda with the addition of Nikki Anderson's outside employment request. All voting in favor; motion carried.

The public comment section of the meeting started at 9:02 AM.

The public comment section of the meeting closed at 9:18 AM.

Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Scot Becker to approve the February 17, 2026 meeting minutes. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Auditor Gapp presented the County Township General Fund Balance Certifications form required by the North Dakota State Treasurer to the commission for certification and approval for the chair to sign. Motion by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Darin Otto to certify and have Chairman Hardy sign. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Auditor Gapp presented a letter from the State Court Administrator. They are presenting two options for the clerk of district court services for the 2027-2029 biennium. The commission can elect to enter into a funding agreement for services or elect to provide clerk services at the county's own expense. Motion by Darin Otto and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to enter into a funding agreement with the State Court Administrator for the 2027-2029 biennium. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Nikki Anderson addressed the commission asking for approval for her outside employment change. She has been the assistant softball coach for Cavalier/North

Border and has accepted the head coach position. She stated the hours have not changed. Motion by Darin Otto and seconded by Scot Becker to approve her outside employment as the head softball coach. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Jeff Daley of KLJ presented the Pembina County Highway 44 project design engineering agreement. He stated the goal is to get it completed in 2026. He stated himself and Devin will be meeting with American Crystal regarding the plans possibly next week and see where everyone is with things to continue on. Motion by Darin Otto and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to have the chairman sign the agreement. All voting in favor, motion carried. Devin asked if a couple commissioners would also attend the meetings with American Crystal. Commissioner Becker stated he would be interested in attending.

Devin stated there was a bid letting last Friday for the Hensel box culvert replacement and stated the low bid for Project BRC-BRJ-3400(051) was in the amount of \$704,086.50 by Gladen Construction, Inc. It came in below the engineer estimate.

Mr. Daley gave update on the County 12 bridge project. It is scheduled to be bid in May. He also discussed the ER Project north of Leroy on the bridge. This one is also scheduled to be bid in May. He stated there are 3 structure rehabs scheduled to be bid in May as well.

Devin discussed the award through the Flex Funding Bridge Project 107-29 by Garder. The design engineering is covered locally and the construction and construction engineering will be covered through the Flex Fund award. That will be bid out early next year. Devin stated it is down to a ten-ton rating.

Devin handed out the current culvert policy. He would like the commission to review it and discuss it at the first meeting in April.

Discussion on Human Resource. Commissioner Cull stated he went to a lot of the department heads and asked their opinion on an in-house human resource person. He stated the majority was for it and some stated they didn't feel it was necessary. States Attorney Fontaine stated the policy manual states any grievance is to go to the human resource department and/or the States Attorney. He stated the on-call HR people are not communicating back when contacted. He stated he is the one dealing with all HR issues at this time. He stated with this trial schedule, he doesn't always have time to deal with HR issues. He stated he does not have an issue handling them, he's just concerned that he may not always be available to handle them right away. He stated he is not sure if a fulltime position is necessary or not. Commissioner Becker asked States Attorney Fontaine if he feels the department heads are the front lines for HR issues. States Attorney Fontaine said absolutely because that is what the policy states. He stated issues are to be brought to the department head first and follow the policy from there. Commissioner Becker stated maybe someone could come into the county and do a presentation for department heads. States Attorney Fontaine stated he feels

department heads do need to have a general knowledge base of HR issues. States Attorney Fontaine stated from his perspective more training and more information is never a bad thing. States Attorney Fontaine stated one idea could be to reach out to Cavalier County to see if they would possibly be interested in sharing an employee. Discussion on how to fund a fulltime position was discussed. After the last fulltime person left, it was not budgeted for again. States Attorney Fontaine stated he would open the discussion with Cavalier County's States Attorney.

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

Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss to adjourn the meeting. All voting in favor; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:59 AM.