

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DECEMBER 16, 2019**

December 16, 2019 - 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Madam Chairman Anderson, Commissioners Barta, Burianek, and Wild. Absent was Commissioner Skorheim.

Madam Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Burianek to approve the December 3, 2019 regular and special meeting minutes and addition of KLJ. Second by Wild. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Barta had requested GIS/parceling expenses for the last six years from the tax director. The list shows the significant savings the county has captured since Sevigny has come on board and can do a majority of the work himself.

Sharon Lipsh, Highway Superintendent, appeared for the following:

- Introduced the new truck driver for Adams, Jerry Lowe.
- Wade from KLJ shared that Jon has taken on a new position so Wade and Jeff will be handling more of the daily duties and clients. Wade thanked Lipsh, the commissioners and the county for their continued business.
- Presented a utility permit for Polar Communications for relocation of fiber optic cable due to oil spill along county road 7. **Motion by Barta to approve Polar Communications utility permit: TWP 158N, RGE 56W, SEC 18, Walsh County Road #7 for fiber optic relocation.** Second by Burianek. Upon roll call vote, all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Lipsh provided the annual number of campers and visitors at Homme dam to the RRRC so they can move along in the grant application process for potential storm shelters.
- DMP forms needed to be updated from the mandatory webinar the Commissioners completed. They also signed the training roster.
- Gave a possible return date for an employee that has been out since August on medical leave.
- Requested permission to fill 2 vacant positions. **Motion by Barta to fill vacancies for a Park River Blade Operator and for the Sign Maintenance position.** Second by Wild. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Lipsh provided estimated damages from the fall 2019 flooding, but is still waiting for some invoices and amounts from some townships.
- Barta asked for updates on bridges. Nodak has filed a suit against Ferguson for the Forest River Bridge. The Gudajtes bridge that was hit by a beet lifter is in the State's Attorneys' office.
- Burianek asked about a bridge count for Walsh County. Lipsh stated that it is a work in progress.

Sheriff Ron Jurgens requested permission to fill a vacant deputy position due to a recent resignation. **Motion by Burianek to fill the vacant Sheriff's Deputy position.** Second by Wild. All voted yes on roll call vote. Motion carried.

Jurgens informed the commission that he has formed a working group for strategic planning for the jail issues. The group's first meeting is January 10th.

Ed Sevigny, Tax Director, appeared for the following:

- Gave an update on 2020 Ag Land Values. The preliminary 2020 calculations from Sidwell came back with an estimated average value of \$906 per acre once all the manual adjustments are applied. Based upon the 2019 recommended average value per acre, Walsh County would be sitting at about 89.8%. Sevigny will wait until he gets the 2020 average value per acre from NDSU before making a recommendation on the final soil valuation schedule for the 2020 assessment.
- Shared that the legislature changed some income qualifications for the Farm Residence Exemption program. His office is updating the data base and is in the process of sending out 2020 Farm Residence Exemption letters and applications. Burden falls on the resident to prove they qualify for the program.

Twila Novak, Social Service Director, was seeking permission to transfer social service's two vehicles to the zone. **Motion by Wild to transfer the titles for the 2016 Chevy Traverse and the 2015 Ford Expedition to the Northern Valley Human Service Zone.** Second by Burianek. Upon roll call vote all vote yes. Motion carried.

Novak shared that there is an outstanding Foster Care bill with Essentia Health for medical bills not covered by medical assistance. The bill is Walsh County's responsibility. If not paid, the county would likely be sued by Essentia Health for damages. Novak negotiated the bill from \$17,608 down to \$10,000. **Motion by Wild to pay \$10,000 to Essentia Health for the Foster Care medical expenses.** Second by Barta. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Deputy Auditor, Sondra Richardson, shared a quote from NRG to replace 7 network switches. These switches should resolve the many computer issues that have arisen in the courthouse over the last few months. **Motion by Barta to approve the NRG quote for \$7,284.53 for 7 network switches and installation labor.** Second by Wild. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Commissioner Barta would like an oil pipeline revenue report from the Auditor for the January meeting or an update as to when the information will be available.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Karen Anderson, Madam Chairman

Attest:

Sondra Richardson, Deputy Auditor