

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FEBRUARY 15, 2022**

February 15, 2022 – 8:30 a.m.

Members present: Chairman Burianek, Commissioners Skorheim, Anderson, Barta and Brintnell.

The meeting was called to order and bills were reviewed.

At 9:00 a.m. the Pledge of Allegiance was recited and the meeting opened with the **public hearing** for the resolution to change the treasurer's position from elected to appointed. No one appeared for the public hearing.

**Commissioner Barta moved to approve the February 1, 2022 regular meeting minutes, monthly bills, and additions of meeting notices, county property, risk manager position, Housing Authority and Bylin Dam.** Second by Anderson. Motion carried.

The County has an individual who wants to purchase one of the county properties in Park River with a house on it. He has left a check for the back taxes. Their plan is to tear it down and build a garage. The house is secure but still contains household items. Since the county has never had this situation before the auditor will request that the sheriff and new owner do a walk through together for the initial entrance into the property.

There will be a township officer meeting/workshop on February 22, at the Park River City Hall from 1-3 pm. A township meeting on March 8 at 2:00 at the Park River City Hall and the local township meetings on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

Stacie Sevigny, Developer for Red River Regional Council, presented the 2021 Self Help Program. The objective of the program is to promote community betterment projects within the Walsh County communities. There were 11 requests for projects. Discussed criteria and request for reimbursement. **Motion by Anderson to approve the requests up to \$1,000.** Second by Skorheim. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Tracy Laaveg, Coordinator for the Walsh County Historic Preservation, presented the CLG Grant Application and discussed the current projects. **Motion by Brintnell to approve and sign the grant application.** Second by Barta. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried. **Motion by Anderson to appoint Sarah Johnston and to reappoint, Agatha Frisby, Tracy Laaveg and Shannon Brazil to the Historic Preservation Commission.** Second by Skorheim. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Chairman Burianek and Commissioner Skorheim attended a zoom meeting on Bylin Dam. They are looking at redoing Bylin Dam in 2024 at a cost of \$9,000,000. The county share would be \$600,000. Plans would be to do it in one season.

Ed Sevigny, Tax Director, presented data and some maps on gravel pits. He drove through all the gravel pits that he has knowledge of, most of which are in Lampton, Medford and Vernon Townships. Using the Sidwell Program 600 more acres were added with a net change

of \$287,669. Currently Walsh County's rates are \$3,000 per acre for active pits, \$450 for inactive and \$1000 for stock pile. Other counties range from \$1,000 to \$7000 with \$5,000 being the average. It's been some time since Walsh County has done anything with gravel pits so we will start with sending out increase notices.

Dan Stenvold, Park River City Mayor and Dustin Slaamod Park River City Attorney, appeared to discuss the Application for Property Tax Incentive for Nathan Kjelland owner of Golden Valley Vet Clinic. They do not qualify as a new business but meet the expanding business criteria. Park River City approved the zero taxes for 5 years. **Motion by Skorheim to approve the Application for Property Tax Incentive for Golden Valley Veterinary Clinic at a 100% tax exemption for 5 years.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried. Commissioner Skorheim offered to represent the County on the board.

JR Steele, Assistant State's Attorney appeared to discuss the Rural Attorney Recruitment Program. The program was created in the last legislative session to assist counties and rural areas in retain attorneys. The guidelines and process were explained. The salary for the 5 year period was discussed with HR and would work with the county's pay plan. **Motion by Anderson to allow participation in the Rural Attorney Recruitment Program.** Second by Brintnell. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Derek Gowan, Craig Jones and James Bergman representing BTAG presented the Oslo Region Joint Powers Agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to allow local entities to work together to provide flood control. Their hope is that funds would come from federal and state government. Houston Engineering says this will work. Currently it will cost us nothing, can't incur debt and will provide clout for the group. Would like 11 entities to sign on the agreement. They currently have 4 townships and the City of Oslo. The County and the Walsh County Water Board will continue to have discussions.

Scott Kraft, president of North Stars Youth Hockey Association, Jodi Jelinek president of the Park River Figure Skaters and Richie Sherlock, hockey board member, appeared to discuss arena security and maintenance. Scott provided an estimate from Polar Communications for 12 security cameras that they would like to install throughout the arena due to vandalism. The cost would be split 3 ways between the hockey program, skaters and the fair board. Discussed the monthly fee and if the fair board could pay for the 6 months that the arena isn't in use. Should work with the fair board. Also discussed possibly changing to a key fob system and replacing doors as future projects. The leaking roof was also discussed and will be added to the wish list for CARES and ARPA funds.

Jason Johnston, Highway Superintendent, appeared for the following:

- Gave an update on HB 1505. Has project numbers now so they can be put out for bids. More funding may be available for additional projects.
- The Fordville Bridge has been removed and work continues on it.
- The PT Shaft for the snow blower is held up in Canada.
- The V-Plow has been installed on the truck and has already been used.
- The \$46,000 bill for the truck is not covered by the warranty. They claim the warning light was on for 1 ½ hours.

- Presented a proposal to replace fuel tanks. It was recommended that they be budgeted for next year.
- There are 6 fuel tanks located in within the courthouse, Chase Building and the Adm Building. They will be removed sometime in the future.

Discussed the risk manager position. Jason & Kelly would rather it come to the auditor's office which they feel is a better fit. After a lengthy discussion about it and weather it was other duties as assigned, if it was in someone's current salary, or if an additional salary should be given for the duties. **Motion was made by Brintnell to keep the risk manager position with Kelly Lessard with no additional compensation.** Second by Skorheim. Upon roll call vote Anderson, Brintnell, Skorheim and Burianek voted yes. Barta voted no. Motion carried.

The first reading of the Section 4.8 Holiday was considered to be January 4, 2022 when the commissioner approved following the state holiday schedule and put Martin Luther King Jr Day back on the list of holidays effective immediately. **Motion by Barta to approve the second reading of the Section 4.8 Holiday policy.** Second by Brintnell. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Commissioners reviewed and accepted the updated portfolio list. It will be forwarded on to the employees.

Commissioner Barta mentioned that HUD is discussing the fundamental right to vote for residents living in public housing. It shouldn't be an issue as Walsh County is a vote by mail county.

Reviewed the wish list for CARES and ARPA funds. Items were added to the wish list and some were removed. Items to begin with are replacing 7 new radios for patrol cars to make them compatible with the new SIRM System as well as communication equipment and services. Replacing carpet in main hall way in Adm Building as well as the siding on the building with holes or where siding is torn. Folding and insert machine which can be used by any county office. Digital Preservation of commissioner proceedings with future annual maintenance to come out of county general.

Ernie will reach out to HR to move forward with hiring for the treasurer's office.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

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Lawrence Burianek, Chairman

Attest:

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Kris Molde, Auditor