

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 15, 2021**

June 15, 2021 – 8:30 a.m.

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

The meeting was called to order and bills were reviewed.

At 9:00 a.m. the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Commissioner Anderson moved to approve the June 1, 2021 regular meeting minutes, monthly bills and additions of Housing Authority appointment and Pembina Drain. Second by Barta. Motion carried.

The Walsh County Housing Authority would like to appoint Leah Skjerven to replace George Walstad. **Motion by Barta to appoint Leah Skjerven to the Walsh County Housing Authority.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

An informational meeting will be held today, June 15, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. with the Pembina County Water Resource District at the Walsh County Courthouse in the Farmers Room. The proposed Pembina County Drain 80 would affect Glenwood, Martin and Farmington Townships in Walsh County.

If enough budgets are submitted there will be a budget meeting on June 22nd with more budget meetings set for July 6th.

Jennifer Lindenberger, secretary/treasurer for the water board appeared on behalf of the Walsh County Water Board in regard to the Park River Snag and Clear. The assessment would be .50¢ an acre with a 50/50 match. **Motion by Burianek to approve the Park River Snag & Clearing Assessment.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all vote yes. Motion carried.

Briefly discussed the American Rescue Funds.

The Commissioners re-convened as the County Tax Equalization Board at 9:30 a.m. Ed Sevigny, Tax Director and Val Dalbey, Deputy Tax Director were present.

Ed met with Assessor Sobak and Bjorn Flaten to discuss land use for the parcel that was appealed. The land use was changed to marshland with the township board approving which reduced the value for Flaten.

Ed also met with Nick Ziegelmann from Grafton City and William Cookman on his appeal. With the sale price of the property and the 40'x 48' addition the recommendation was to keep the value at \$60,000.

Ed Sevigny presented the 2020 sales ratio with residential being at 84.7% and commercial at 94.5%. The average value per acre for agricultural land in Walsh County is \$940.90 which is up 2.07% from last year. Total true and full valuation for 2021 is \$1,165,250,052. An increase of \$37,406,344. With the approved Ag land increases of 2% and increase of 8% on residential structures in Cleveland, Dewey and Golden Townships Walsh County is now within tolerance. Reviewed each township and city assessment sheet and their increase or decrease in local assessments. Many of the townships had changes to residential property with many farm exemptions coming off. The farm exemptions have been an abuse of the system with previous tax directors not enforcing the process. He will do the last 12 townships next year and then start a 3 year rotation for farm exemptions. Most of the cities residential went up. After the local equalization and County equalization changes, the indicated changes needed for commercial in Walsh County was 4.94% and the residential was 9.972%. This means Walsh County should be within the tolerance allowed by the State Board of Equalization. The revenue brought in from assessing some of the townships and cities is approximately \$15,000. Just about covers the tax director's share of the deputy's salary. **Motion by Barta to approve the 2021 County Tax Equalization assessments as presented.** Second by Brintnell. Upon roll call vote, all voted yes.

Ron Jurgens, Sheriff, appeared to discuss the following:

- With dispatch leaving the LEC Building and the recent incident at the jail DOCR came back for another inspection and has recommended that the county purchase portable radios for the jailers. **Motion by Anderson to accept the quote from Motorola for 3 portable radios at \$6,200.55.** Second by Brintnell. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried. It was also recommended that 2 jailers be on duty at all times. This would mean adding 2 additional staff to cover all the shifts. Will add the positions to his budget.
- Working on a strategic plan for the jail. Will meet with Grand Forks County to discuss possible options as well as with Pembina and Cavalier County to discuss a possible regional jail. Staffing is already an issue with the jail. Would we have the same issue with a regional jail? Commissioner Skorheim and Anderson currently are on the committee.

Brent Nelson, Emergency Manager, appeared for the following:

- Has received some calls in regards to the fire ban and fireworks and community displays. There are no regulations for vendors. If the fire index is "high or less" fireworks are allowed. If the index is "very high" no fires or fireworks would be allowed. When the index is set in the morning it is for "all day", even if it rains or the humidity and wind changes later in the day. **Motion by Brintnell to allow local communities with scheduled firework displays to coordinate with fire chiefs and use common sense when preparing for the event.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- With dispatch moving into the Adm Building Nelson was wondering if he should continue with budgeting for the LEC Building. At this time the budget process will remain the same.

- Depending on what happens weather-wise in the next 2 weeks the county may want to consider a Drought Declaration at the next meeting.

Sharon Lipsh, Highway Superintendent, appeared for the following:

- Would like to continue waxing the floors in the courthouse on a rotating basis. The lower level needs to be done this year and would like to have the bathrooms done as well. Will put out for bids or advertise for services.
- Would like to work on beautifying the campus grounds, removing some bushes and the hedge. Will get bids to mud jack back sidewalk as it slopes towards the building. Last month we had water in the boiler room because of the sloping.
- **Motion by Barta to approve the drainage permit for K-Bro Farms, Rushford Township Section 29.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote, all voted yes. Motion carried.
- **Motion by Anderson to approve the utility permits for Nodak Electric Walshville Township, Section 26/35 and Kensington Township, Section 9/10.** Second by Brintnell. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Paving will begin on June 28th.
- Asked about financing the Forest River to I-29 Paving Project. Will check into financing through public finance or Bank of North Dakota. The county share will be \$511,121.43. That doesn't include the engineering cost.
- No date has been set for the bridge tour. It looks like it will probably be in September.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Dennis Skorheim, Chairman

Attest:

Kris Molde, Auditor