

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF WALSH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**

September 7, 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 Barta moved to approve the August 17, 2021 regular meeting minutes, monthly bills, motor grader bids, Lankin Shop, railroad, JDA position, employee survey, ARPA update and veterans service position. Second by Brintnell. Motion carried.

Auditor informed commissioners that the County has received \$1,033,445.00 in ARPA Funds. ARPA funds can be used for broadband and Tim Olson, from Polar Communication would like to come and discuss broadband for the Forest River/Minto area. It has also been suggested that the funds can be used for digital preservation of commissioner proceedings and development of searchable archives.

The deadline for the Veterans Service position is September 12th. To date 4 applications have been received.

Commissioner Barta informed the commissioners that the JDA Director will be retiring in December. He recommended that the hiring committee attend the next commission meeting to offer feedback to filling the position and possible options. Auditor will reach out the JDA.

Dawn Mandt, Stacie Sevigny, Jake Schmuck and Jake Wiensch from Red River Regional Council were present to discuss Walsh County Economic recovery and resiliency. Discussed housing, parks and rec, the 2020 census declined by 5% but 900 people moved into the county. Highlights of the town hall meetings previously held were quality of life, places to live and communication. Walsh County has had 27 major disasters in 27 years, we are always in recovery mode. Red River Regional Council is working with Destination Developer Roger Brooks on enhancing communities and getting people engaged.

Larry Tanke, Daryl Campbell and Albin Jallo from the water board were present to provide an update.

- Discussed cost sharing on Snagging and Clearing.
- Will be meeting with the state in regard to Matejcek Dam as well as attending a virtual meeting in regards to Fordville and Bylin Dams.
- Drain 87 needs sluffing and culverts needing to be replaced due to rusting out.
- Drain 71 needs to be regraded due to an error from previous engineering.
- North Salt Lake is dry. Cleaning out drop structure.
- Cleaning out 1-2 miles on Drain 31.

Brent Nelson, Emergency Manager, appeared for the following:

- Received a bill from Steamatic for the deep cleaning of the LEC Building. Will pay for it out of the CARES Funds.
- Only 1 proposal was received from Destined Multi Services LLC, for the daily cleaning of the LEC Building. The bid is almost double what Bonnie's was charging. They are out of Park River. At this time no references were provided but Brent will request them and ask for a counter offer. Discussed hiring a non-benefited part time person for the LEC building.
- A dispatcher has resigned. Still need 7 dispatchers to cover all the shifts 24/7. **Motion by Anderson to advertise to fill the dispatch position.** Second by Burianek. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Hope to have dispatch in the Adm Building by November 3rd.
- Did a start up on the generator in the Adm Building. Someone is interested in the old generator in the LEC Building and is willing to take it out if they can have it. Will put it on the county auction. Samson's can expand the LEC capacity with added breakers and move currents around. This would provide lights for the jail and would be an improvement from where we are at. **Motion by Barta to accept the bid from Samson's Electric for \$1660 to expand the LEC generator capacity.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Provided a copy of the approved Hazard Mitigation Plan for August 20, 2021 through August 19, 2026.
- Was asked about weeds along the railroad. Brent has had some conversations with the railroad and will pass on the railroad phone numbers so that commissioners can call as well.

Sharon Lipsh, Highway Superintendent, appeared for the following:

- Presented a utility permit for Nodak Electric to cross County Road 2 to replace overhead line with underground. **Motion by Burianek to approve the utility permit for Nodak Electric, Section 26, Walshville Township.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Presented paving loan documents for signature. Loan is for \$515,000 at 2% interest rate and can be paid off sooner should we want to. **Motion by Barta to sign documents for the loan.** Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Strata reached out to Sharon to see if we would be interested in getting a proposal for gravel bids. It allows us to lock in a price. The County independently tests the gravel.
- Presented a copy of the 2019 application for special road fund projects which we could submit for the new round of grants. It would pave the road to boat landing and campground. The County share would be approximately \$83,000. Will submit grant for Homme Dam Project.
- A meeting was held with the Vernon Township Board, highway superintendent, water board, state and Dan Fischer. The bridge will be replaced with two 108" X 56' long 5x10 gauge with lifting hooks. Final cost will be approximately \$45,000.
- Norton Township signed a letter for replacement of a bridge between sections 26/35 and the pipe has been ordered.
- Reviewed letter for right of way violations and presented a list of current violators. The county can deny requests for permits if they are in violation of right of way policy.

Motion by Burianek to send out right of way letters to those in violation and May 1st of next year Sharon will check for compliance and follow ordinance for those out of compliance. Second by Barta. Upon roll call vote all vote yes. Motion carried.

- Presented a bid from Steamatic to clean the vents in the courthouse. One business provided a bid without even touring the building. **Motion by Anderson to accept the bid from Steamatic for \$6387 to clean the air system.** Second by Burianek. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.
- Will bring motor grader bids to the October 6th commission meeting as we have a motor grader buy back for \$165,000 up.
- Had motor grader training last week.
- There is no update on the Lankin Shop.
- Bridge tour is tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

Motion by Brintnell to cancel the uncashed warrants/checks that are more than a year old. Second by Anderson. Upon roll call vote all voted yes. Motion carried.

Auditor will RSVP for all the commissioners to attend the NDCCA Caucus meeting on September 15th.

Commissioner Barta gave a sewer update. A board has been set up with board member appointments. The new statewide size is 17,000 to 21,000 which is too large. Barta provided contact information for Tom Schimelfenig.

All department heads have met in regard to the administrator position except for the treasurer.

Report of county offices for fees collected during August: County Recorder \$8,233.00 and Sheriff fees \$2,130.41

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Dennis Skorheim, Chairman

Attest:

Kris Molde, Auditor