

**RICHLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MARCH 21, 2017**

The Richland County Board of Commissioners met on March 21, 2017 at the Richland County Courthouse with Commissioners Sid Berg, Nathan Berseth, Tim Campbell, Rollie Ehlert and Dan Thompson. Others in attendance were Administration Personnel Bailey and DeVal; State's Attorney McBeth; and a Daily News Reporter.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

First Responders Breakfast - Will be held at 7:30 AM on March 28<sup>th</sup> at the Wilkin County Board Room.

FEMA Projects - Waiting on appeals for Elma & Duerr Projects and closeouts on Homestead, Liberty Grove and Moran Projects.

Sky Warn Training - Will be held at 6:30 PM on April 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Law Enforcement Center Basement. This training is open to the public.

Active Shooter Drill - The Drill will be held at NDSCS on April 12<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-5:00 PM.

**DEB FLACK - REVISIONS TO ON-SITE SEPTIC REGULATIONS**

Deb Flack and Aaron Johnson, an Environmental Health Practitioner with Fargo-Cass Public Health requested Richland County Ordinance O-17 regarding On-Site Septic Regulations, be amended to incorporate revisions, which will make the code uniform across the state of North Dakota.

Johnson reported there is not a statewide septic code that is governed by the State Health Department and the current structure and regulation of septic systems varies within the state; there is also no statewide licensing and reciprocity of licensing for septic installers. The proposed revisions will create one uniform code. The new structure will create a single installer license database that allows for reciprocity across local boundaries in ND and no septic installer or company will pay for more than one annual installer license. Uniform training for septic installers will be developed and conducted statewide. The new code will cover and regulate any new septic system installations and existing septic systems that fail, are expanded, or perform other work.

Following discussion a motion was made by Berg to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the Richland County Ordinance amending Requirements for On-Site Sewage Treatment Systems; motion seconded by Thompson. Vote was unanimous.

## **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

Highway Personnel in attendance were Lowell Bladow, Ron Hohenstern and Moriah Herding.

Culverts under 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue - Co Rd 10 West of Walmart - At the March 14 Commission Meeting the Board discussed a request from the City of Wahpeton to cost-share in this project - the Board discussed paying for the cost of the culverts and Bladow was directed to follow-up with the City.

Bladow reported he has been in contact with the Wahpeton Public Works Director who thanked the Board for offering to participate in the project.

A motion was made by Berg to pay for the culverts for the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Co Rd 10 project west of WalMart; motion seconded by Ehlert. Vote was unanimous.

County-owned Property in Great Bend - The contractor has begun to clean up the property and haul debris to the landfill. The Highway Department will bring in dirt to level the area.

ROW Acquisition Policy - The current policy was approved by the Board in 2000; changes were discussed in 2011 to increase dollar amounts but the Policy was never amended by a motion of the Board.

A motion was made by Thompson to amend the Policy to reflect an increase in the dollar amounts to \$500 and \$1000; motion seconded by Ehlert. Vote was unanimous.

### Other Department Matters -

- Berseth received correspondence from the NDDOT with a listing of bridges needing corrective action
- Berg received a call from Wes Berg concerning a road restriction, the Highway Dept has also spoken with Wes Berg

Culvert Bids - Bids were opened at 9:00 AM - the only bid received was from TruNorth Steel/Fargo. A motion was made by Campbell to accept the bid from TruNorth Steel; motion seconded by Thompson. Vote was unanimous.

## **MISC/CORRESPONDENCE**

A motion was made by Campbell to increase the fee for County Burials from \$2250 to \$2500; motion seconded by Berg. Vote was unanimous.

## CRAIG OLSON/NANSEN TWSP - FARM EXEMPTIONS

Olson stopped by the meeting to discuss the property tax exemption for farmers. He has concerns with the income worksheets and also how they are being implemented in the County. With the new implementation and because of his farming partnership he is now considered a businessman and no longer a farmer. He questioned why this is changing now, why the implementation was not being done county-wide and why only a few counties implement these rules.

McBeth commented that federal tax considers their Partnership a Farming Activity but the State of North Dakota considers it differently; cash rent is non-farm income per code. The County is just following state law.

Tax Director Sandy Fossum joined the meeting. She explained the Verification Worksheets were sent to all active farmers in 12 townships. The verification process was broken into three groups due to the three year stipulation on the application.

The Board discussed -

- the intent of the law
- why not all counties are implementing the rules
- unfair to not implement county-wide
- abiding by what the law dictates
- this issue is something the Legislature will need to clean up

Following discussion a motion was made by Ehlert to send the income worksheet or the affidavit form if requested, to all "active farmers" in the County; motion seconded by Berg. Voting NO was Berseth. The remainder voted Yes and the motion carried.

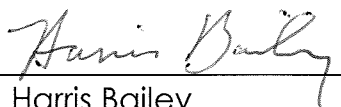
## UPCOMING MEETINGS

April

- 4 Commission Meeting
- 6 5-County Meeting
- 18 Commission Meeting

Being there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 A.M.

ATTEST:

  
Harris Bailey  
Auditor/Administrator

  
Nathan A. Berseth  
CHAIRPERSON  
Board of Richland County Commissioners