

RICHLAND COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
August 6, 2024

The Richland County Board of Commissioners met on August 6, 2024 with Commissioners Nathan Berseth, Tim Campbell, Rollie Ehlert, Terry Goerger and Perry Miller. Others included Administration Personnel Fossum and South, State's Attorney Kummer, Jesse Sedler, Sarah Erickson, Brett Lambrecht, Steve Burian, Kelly Klosterman, Jeff Brecker and several visitors.

A motion was made by Cambell and seconded by Berseth to approve the agenda as amended. Vote was unanimous.

A motion was made by Cambell and seconded by Ehlert to approve the minutes of meeting July 23 and Budget Meetings July 23. Vote was unanimous.

A motion was made by Berseth and seconded by Ehlert to approve the Treasurer's Report. Vote was unanimous.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Sedler gave a brief update on the following highway activities:

Drain Tile – Started last Monday, about 8 miles left to finish.

CO RD 16 – Knife River is starting to move equipment in.

CO RD 2N, 3, 8, and 26 – Damon talked to Duinincks, they plan to start mid to late August.

Patch work was completed on the west and east sides of Christine.

Miller asked if the patchwork was permanent in Christine. Sedler stated that the patchwork through town is, but the west side will get tilled down again.

Slide repair N of Mooreton – Comstock is looking to start towards end of the month.

Goerger asked about CO RD 1 patch repair. Sedler stated that Shrackey's should have it completed by the end of this week.

STEVE GJERDEVIG – FOOD CONTRACT

The Board asked Gjerdevig if he knew when the Wilkin County Housing Agreement for the Jail was supposed to be finalized. He stated that it should almost be complete.

States Attorney Kummer stated that it should be relatively quick, but it will need signatures from Wilkin County Commissioners, so that could delay the start of the agreement.

Steve Gjerdevig stated that he is proising a new food contract for the Jail. He reported that the current meal plan with St. Francis costs approximately \$16,000 per month and includes lunch and dinner. The proposed meal plan with Wilkin County will include breakfast, lunch, and dinner and will cost approximately \$14,000 per month. Gjerdevig also anticipates annual savings of \$30,000 on groceries and \$15,000 on paper trays if the new contract is approved.

Gjerdevig stated that Wilkin County would prepare the menus and meals and be responsible for the annual health inspection.

Campbell asked if the proposed contract was a 1-year contract. Gjerdevig stated that it was a 1-year contract.

Fossum asked if this would completely remove St. Francis from the equation. Gjerdevig stated that it would.

Gjerdevig stated he would like to have the new contract start September 1, 2024.

A motion was made by Berseth and seconded by Goerger to approve a new food contract out of the Jail. Vote was unanimous.

Gjerdevig asked the Board to consider promoting CO Roxanne Mitchell to Sargeant. PREA (Prison Rape and Elimination Act) has three different aspects: PREA investigator, PREA coordinator, and PREA manager. Gjerdevig has been acting as investigator, Buckhouse has been acting as coordinator, and Mitchell has been acting as manager. PREA states that these positions must be in a supervisory role. Gjerdevig stated that Mitchell is not currently in a supervisory role, but has taken on the task of PREA manager and has knocked it out of the park. She has been an excellent mentor to her team members, and they appreciate her as a leader.

Berseth asked if Sheriff Ruhl has approved the promotion. Gjerdevig stated that he had.

Campbell asked if HR has also approved. Gjerdevig stated yes, he spoke with Sandy yesterday.

Fossum stated that it is her understanding that we need to have Mitchell promoted to stay in compliance with PREA.

Berseth asked what the fiscal impact would be. Fossum stated that it would be a \$5600 increase to Mitchell's salary.

A motion was made by Cambell and seconded by Goerger to approve the promotion presented by Steve Gjerdevig to be effective September 1, 2024. Vote was unanimous.

STEVE BURIAN – RRVWSP

Steve Burian presented a user update for the Red River Valley Water Supply Project. Burian gave an overview of project benefits and history of the project.

Burian sees our community using the water in two ways: sell the water to thirsty industries who will treat it on their own and managed aquifer recharge.

The Red River Valley Water Supply Project is asking potential users to complete the following:

Memorandum of Commitment – July/August

Project Participation Agreement – December

Ehlert asked how long it would take to fill Wahpeton's aquifer. Burian said he would have to do some math, but would get back to the Commissioners with an answer.

Burian stated that MN entities cannot be direct members of the project. If Breckenridge wants to participate, another entity would need to advocate for them and work out an agreement.

Commissioner Miller proposed having a joint meeting this week with interested parties to work on a Memorandum of Commitment. Miller stated he would organize the joint meeting.

PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Fossum emailed a revised preliminary budget to the Commissioners prior to the meeting for review. She stated that she met with Jill Breuer to adjust starting wages for Dispatch; they were able to agree on a competitive starting wage. Fossum also adjusted steps for some of the Correction Officers so they would not be making less than Dispatchers. With these changes, the three new positions, and the 5% plus a step cost-of-living adjustments, Fossum is \$6000 over the amount allotted by the Commissioners.

Berseth asked what the average increase was with 5% and a step. Fossum stated that it was about 7.1%. Berseth stated that he thought 7.1 seemed aggressive.

Ehlert agreed and said that he felt the Commissioners had been working to correct wages over the last few years.

The Board of Commissioners asked Fossum to prepare the final budget with 4% plus 1 step on the scale for salary increases.

A motion was made by Berseth and seconded by Campbell to approve the preliminary budget. Vote was unanimous.

VISITOR DAVID STORM

David Storm stated that he came into the Courthouse to pay his property taxes last week and he wants to know why his property taxes have gone up so much.

Commissioner Miller asked if he was referring property taxes on his home. Mr. Storm stated that it was his business and his home in Wahpeton.

The Board of Commissioners explained that the City of Wahpeton has its own Assessor, so they would be the ones to reach out to if he has concerns.

Mr. Storm voiced that he was upset about the valuation of a property in Barrie Township. He stated that Richland County must have only assessed the land because that owner pays less in taxes than he does.

Fossum explained that the mill levies in Barrie Township are much lower than Wahpeton.

Commissioner Campbell began to explain that Assessors must be compliant with the state of North Dakota. Mr. Storm walked out of the meeting room and did not return.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A) HSZ Board – No report.

B) Buildings & Grounds – Commissioner Miller reported that the Courthouse project is about a month ahead of schedule. The ceiling will start going in on the main floor next week.

C) Public Health – Internal changes coming, discussed at last meeting.

D) JDA/JPA – No report.

E) Weed Board – Commissioner Goerger reported that they are still looking at funding through the LAP program.

F) Soils Committee – No report.

G) Park Board – No report.

H) Administration – Fossum asked the Commissioners why Restitution is under States Attorney Kummer's supervision instead of the Sheriff's Office or Corrections. Fossum explained that it is difficult for States Attorney Kummer to supervise the position because she is not in the same area. The Board of Commissioners advised Fossum and States Attorney Kummer to meet with Sheriff Ruhl to discuss.

MISC/CORRESPONDENCE

Fossum reported that Richland County received a letter from Breckenridge Public Schools asking for a donation. She stated she would write them back to let them know we aren't able to make charitable donations.

Fossum reported that NDACo and NDCCA will be doing a County Tour in Richland County on September 11th at 9:00am.

A motion was made by Campbell and seconded by Miller to approve the payment of the bills. Vote was unanimous.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

August

20 Commission Meeting

September

3 Commission Meeting

17 Commission Meeting

October

1 Commission Meeting

15 Commission Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 10:14 A.M.

ATTEST: _____

Sandy Fossum
Auditor/Administrator

CHAIRPERSON

Perry Miller
Board of Richland County Commissioners

The following claims were approved for July, 2024

PAYROLL (inclusive)

General	\$	285,021.85
County Highway	\$	101,813.16
911 Communications	\$	58,304.19
County Agent	\$	7,531.06
Veterans Service	\$	10,278.67
Weed Officer	\$	740.00
Public Health Fund	\$	85,767.09
Income Maintenance	\$	68,459.10
Foster Care	\$	13,979.61
Child Protective Svc	\$	34,939.02
Parent Aid	\$	4,643.30
Family Soc Worker	\$	5,333.41
Social Services	\$	70,193.35
In-Home Care	\$	20,783.44
Admin Support	\$	16,429.80
PAYROLL TOTAL	\$	784,217.05

EXPENSES: ** Refer to resolution records

County General Accounts	\$	295,198.68
County Highway	\$	149,085.36
Bridge Replacement	\$	3,947.85
Road & Bridge Equipment Fund	\$	61,557.62
Prairie Dog Disbursements	\$	-
15 Mill Road	\$	-
Emergency Assistance Donation	\$	-
Emergency Fund	\$	-
911 Communications	\$	70,390.32
NDRIN	\$	317.80
Capitol Improvement	\$	-
Water Rescue	\$	-
Special Response Team	\$	142.54
Civil Asset Forfeiture Fund	\$	-
K9 Dog Donations	\$	-
American Rescue Plan Funds	\$	718,568.50
County Agent	\$	2,750.02
Veterans Service	\$	5,711.68
Veteran Assistance Donation	\$	-
Weed Control Levy	\$	1,883.01
Public Health	\$	41,424.43
Haz Chem Fund	\$	-
Income Maintenance	\$	23,918.64
Foster Care	\$	5,788.17
Child Protective Svc	\$	9,652.36
Parent Aid	\$	1,466.10

Family Soc Worker	\$	2,251.33
Social Services	\$	26,241.36
In-Home Care	\$	11,304.13
Admin Support	\$	12,451.81
HSZ Board	\$	-
Safety Permanency Fd	\$	-
Foster Care	\$	-
Unallow Fed Costs	\$	-
General Assistance	\$	-
American Rescue Plan Funds	\$	-
State Medical Levy	\$	70.36
Three Rivers Crisis Center	\$	1,057.08
FEMA Disaster Reimbursement	\$	-
Garrison Div	\$	70.36
Domestic Violence	\$	210.00
Twsp Share Gas & Oil	\$	-
TeleComm Tax Fund	\$	-
State Aid Distribution	\$	17,084.94
Jail Concession	\$	-
Sobriety Test Fund	\$	-
SEMCA	\$	864.01
County General Accounts	\$	-
Diversion Settlement	\$	1,346,431.96
ND Income Tax W/H	\$	9,124.19
Sr Citizen Fund	\$	631.55
Historical Society	\$	155.47
Co Agent Special	\$	850.09
Soil Cons District	\$	63.81
Water Mngt Levy	\$	2,162.64
Joint Water Resource	\$	105.54
Estimated Real Estate Tax	\$	-
Current Tax Holding Fund	\$	-
EXPENSE TOTAL	\$	2,822,933.71
 TOTAL PAYROLL & EXPENSES	\$	 3,607,150.76

ATTEST: _____
Sandy Fossum
Auditor/Administrator

_____ CHAIRPERSON
Perry Miller
Board of Richland County Commissioners