Meeting Minutes

Attendance

The Richland County Board of Commissioners met at 8:00 A.M. October 20, 2026 at the Richland County Courthouse with Commissioners Terry Goerger, Nathan Berseth, Rollie Ehlert, Tim Campbell and Perry Miller. Others included Administration Personnel Fossum and South, State's Attorney Kummer, Melissa Brown, John Manstrom, Damon DeVillers, and Daily News Reporter Manisha Reddy.

Call to Order

Commissioner Goerger called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M. A motion was made by Miller and seconded by Ehlert to approve the agenda. Vote was unanimous (5-0).

Public Comment

There were no requests submitted for public comment.

Melissa Brown – Staffing Request

Tax Director Melissa Brown addressed the Commission to request to advertise for a full-time assessor. Brown said one of the assessors is retiring December 4th and she would like to get the position filled. The county currently assesses 13 out of 14 cities and 35 out of 36 townships, which includes approximately 4000 commercial and residential structures.

The Commission asked Brown if the department would consider absorbing the position and increasing duties and wages for the remaining staff. Brown said she is worried that the assessments will fall behind and that the office already has a heavy workload. Commissioner Berseth suggested that AI tools could be used to assist the department, now that assessments are caught up. Commissioner Campbell said a study should be done, and new job descriptions should be written if additional duties are going to be assigned and suggested that Brown meet with Human Resources before a final decision is made.

A motion was made by Berseth and seconded by Ehlert to have Human Resources and the Tax Director look at pay scale and options for replacing or not replacing the assessor who is retiring. Vote was unanimous (5-0).

Highway Department

Commissioner Ehlert gave the following updates regarding Highway activity:

Federal Highway Bill expired September 30, 2026, no bridge money.

NDDOT would like us to get both road and bridge projects shelf ready in case there are leftover funds from other states for 2027 through 2030.

No new news on Prairie Dog or Flex Funding, but the Prairie Dog buckets have filled.

Damaged motor grader had been returned from the shop but will have to go back in for leaky wheel seal. Two other blades have injector issues and will need to go in for service.

Crew is getting trucks ready for winter.

New hire, Brady Wieser, started Monday, October 19th.

Miscellaneous/Correspondence

Correspondence from ND Water Users Association – Joint Water Convention is December 8-10 in Bismarck.

Correspondence from Interstate Engineering – Invitation to 50th Anniversary Luncheon at Hughes Shelter on Tuesday, October 27th.

Unfinished/New Business

The Board of Health vacancy was briefly discussed. A classified ad for all expiring board terms will be published twice in November, Board of Health was added to the publication.

Commissioner Ehlert reported that the Correctional RN has agreed to move from a .6 FTE to a .8 FTE until the end of January to help while the department is short staffed. A motion was made by Ehlert and seconded by Berseth to increase the FTEs for the Correctional RN from .6 to .8 until January 31, 2027. Vote was unanimous (5-0).

A motion was made by Ehlert and seconded by Berseth to advertise for 2 RNs for the Health Department. Discussion ensued about whether it was best to wait until after the new director was hired to advertise for the new positions. The Commission advised having the application deadline close November 20th.

Voting NO was Campbell, the remainder voted yes, and the motion carried (4-1).

Upcoming Meetings

November
3 General Election
16 Canvass Board
17 Commission Meeting

December
1 Commission Meeting

15 Commission Meeting

Reports Filed

Sheriff's Department – Revenue & Expenses for September 2026.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 A.M.

Certification

Attest:

_____	_____CHAIRPERSON
Sandy Fossum Auditor/Administrator	Terry Goerger Board of Richland County Commissioners