

The following are "unofficial minutes" subject to change at the next meeting.

BOARD OF PEMBINA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS

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June 20, 2023

9:00 AM

Board of Pembina County Commissioners met in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Courthouse. Chairperson Benjaminson called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Roll call: Jim Benjaminson, Laverne Doyle, Blaine W. Papenfuss, Darin Otto and Andrew Cull. A quorum was declared.

Also in attendance are States Attorney Garret Fontaine, Lisa Keney, County Assessor, and Revel Sapa, Veterans Service Officer.

Motion made by Laverne Doyle and seconded by Andrew Cull to approve the agenda with the following changes/additions: ad in Walhalla Mountaineer for 175th celebration, Tax Director interview committee recommendation, Devin Johnson, Garret Fontaine. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Andrew Cull and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to approve the June 6, 2023 minutes as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

States Attorney Fontaine discussed the Rental of Road Machinery bid listing. An individual contacted the Auditor's Office questioning why they had not received the approved Rental of Road Machinery listing which is sent out to all successful bidders. The Auditor contacted the Highway Administrative Assistant who stated she did not receive a bid from the individual. The individual stated they left the bid in the Auditor's Office prior to the deadline. States Attorney Fontaine asked the Auditor if she searched the office. Auditor informed States Attorney Fontaine that after an extensive search of the office and other offices she was unable to locate the bid they stated was delivered prior to the deadline. States Attorney Fontaine presented two options to the Commission:

Option 1: Reject all bids and send notice to bidders to resubmit a bid.

Option 2: Reject the individual's bid because it was not located prior to the bid opening.

Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Laverne Doyle to go with Option 2 and reject the individual's bid. All voting in favor; motion carried.

States Attorney Fontaine informed the Commission that Monica Brusseau has resigned her position as the Victim Witness Advocate. Her last day as Victim Witness Advocate is June 30, 2023. Attorney Fontaine requested an ad be placed in all county papers as soon as possible to fill the position.

Commissioner Otto presented the interview committee's recommendation for the Tax Director position. The interview committee is recommending Lisa Keney be appointed as Interim Tax Director. Motion made by Laverne Doyle and seconded by Darin Otto to appoint Lisa Keney as Interim Tax Director. Roll call vote; Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – yes; Blaine Papenfuss – yes; Darin Otto – yes; Andrew Cull – yes. Motion carried.

Raffle permit request received from Devon Grube Memorial Fund. Motion made by Andrew Cull and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to approve the raffle permit as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Discussion followed on changing the date for the first meeting of July since Tuesday, July 4th is a holiday. Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Laverne Doyle to move the first meeting of July to Thursday, July 6, 2023. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Auditor presented numbers for the NDPERS Public Safety Retirement Plan for the Law Enforcement Center employees. Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Darin Otto to have the Auditor prepare a resolution for the July 6, 2023 meeting. Discussion followed. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Motion made by Andrew Cull and seconded by Darin Otto to allow July 3, 2023 as an additional paid holiday for this year. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – no; Blaine Papenfuss – no; Darin Otto – yes; Andrew Cull – yes; Motion carried.

Motion made by Andrew Cull and seconded by Laverne Doyle to approve the placing of an ad in the Walhalla Mountaineer for the 175th Celebration. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Lisa Keney, County Tax Assessor, presented a new home tax exemption application on Parcel 34-2230020 in the City of St Thomas. The exemption allows a two year tax exemption up to \$150,000.00 once the home is built and occupied. The City approved the request at their April 4, 2022 meeting. Motion made by Laverne Doyle and seconded by Darin Otto to grant the tax exemption for tax year 2023 and 2024. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – yes; Blaine Papenfuss – yes; Darin Otto – yes; Andrew Cull – yes. Motion carried.

Ms. Keney presented the letter she prepared for Shelli Myers, State Supervisor of Assessments, responding to the corrective action taken by Pembina County Board of

Equalization to correct the discrepancies and errors found during the 2022 Agricultural Land Review. Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to authorize Ms. Keney to forward the letter to Ms. Myers as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Ms. Keney requested the Commission present topics of discussion they would like covered by the State Tax Office during their meeting with Pembina County. No date has been set for the meeting yet. Lisa informed the Commission that Sidwell will be holding a virtual webinar for the Pembina County Commission and Tax Office on July 18, 2023 at 10:30 am. The Assessors Center for Excellence will also be holding a webinar on June 28, 2023 from Noon – 1:30 pm called "Building from Bias".

Board reviewed the May financial statement and claims. Motion made by Andrew Cull and seconded by Laverne Doyle to approve the consent agenda as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

A public hearing was held at 10:00 AM, as required in NDCC 61-16.1-09, on the proposed Snagging and Clearing project on the Tongue River in Pembina County. Those in attendance include Pembina County Water Board members Randall Emanuelson, Ted Juhl, Bill Gunderson, Don Kemp, and Rick Kendall, LuAnn Kemp, Water Board Secretary and Robert Fleming, Water Board Attorney. Paul LaClaire, Houston Engineering, and Larry DuBois also present. Paul gave a brief review of the project and presented a handout with pictures of the project to date along with a map showing the area that is planned to be completed this year, depending on funding availability. The Water Board is hoping to be on the August agenda with the North Dakota State Water Commission to see if cost share funding will be available for the 2023-2024 project year. Discussion followed on the assessment amounts, which are expected to remain the same as previous years, Ag Land and Woodland- .41/ac. and Non-Ag Land - .41/\$500 of taxable value. Larry DuBois discussed the erosion that has happened on his property since the snagging and clearing was completed. He has lost property due to the erosion and feels the project was not beneficial to his property. He is asking the project not be approved. A motion was made by Laverne Doyle and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to establish the Snagging and Clearing project and approve an assessment not to exceed .41/ac or .41/\$500 of taxable value for the 2023 tax year. Discussion followed. Roll call vote: Jim Benjaminson – yes; Laverne Doyle – yes; Blaine Papenfuss – yes; Darin Otto – yes, Andrew Cull - no. Motion carried.

Paul gave updates on the repairs on Drain 81.

Devin had to cancel his appointment and will reschedule for the July 6, 2023 meeting.

Motion made by Laverne Doyle and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to adjourn the meeting. All voting in favor; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:39 AM.