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BOARD OF PEMBINA COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S PROCEEDINGS

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February 3, 2026

9:00 AM

Board of Pembina County Commissioners met in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Courthouse.

Chairperson Hardy called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Roll call: Patrick Hardy, Scot Becker, Blaine Papenfuss, Darin Otto, Andrew Cull. A quorum was declared.

Also, in attendance were: Zelda Hartje, Missy Morden, Clerk/Recorder; Rachel Ramsay, Public Health Director; Lisa Keney, Tax Director; Terry Meidinger, Sheriff; Cory Mortensen, Chief Deputy; Devin Johnson, Highway Superintendent; Jeff Daley, KLJ Engineering.

Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Scot Becker to approve the agenda as presented. All voting in favor; motion carried.

The public comment section of the meeting started at 9:02 AM.

The public comment section of the meeting closed at 9:18 AM.

Motion made by Andrew Cull and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to approve the January 20, 2026 meeting minutes with the addition of the word department after highway on page two. All voting in favor; motion carried.

Discussion on possibly having a meeting with the State Tax Department. Commissioner Cull asked Lisa Keney if she could reach out to Brian Kroshus and set a meeting regarding the tax valuations and where we stand. She stated the state would say it's under local control, but in regard to the last meeting, every tax payer is allowed to come in and be heard and can appeal the same issue year after year after year. Commissioner Papenfuss stated we are in compliance so he doesn't feel it is necessary. Chairman Hardy stated he is in agreement since we are in compliance, it's probably not necessary. Commissioner Becker stated he would like clarification on what was claimed to have been said by State Tax Commissioner Kroshus at the last meeting. Lisa stated she is going to be in Bismarck next week for meetings, and will reach out to him regarding what was stated at the last commission meeting.

Discussion on possibly having an in-house Human Resources Department. Commissioner Cull stated he feels the county should have an in-house human resources employee. He stated nothing is in the budget at this time for an employee but maybe it can be added for next year. Commissioner Otto stated he doesn't feel a fulltime position is necessary because there wouldn't be enough for them to do. Commissioner Becker stated he is very cautious of bringing in human resources as it can mushroom into something you had no intention of creating. He feels the department heads are the front-lines and he feels getting training for them would be the way to go so stuff is settled before it has to leave the building. Commissioner Otto again stated he feels having a part time person who isn't manufacturing problems to keep themselves busy would be best. Motion by Andrew Cull and seconded by Scot Becker to have this as an ongoing discussion and have the auditor reach out to Rick Trontvet. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Zelda Hartje, chairman of the Pembina County Historic Preservation Board, discussed a grant application she will be presenting at the next meeting. She stated she has to write a grant each year which is funded by the Department of the Interior. She stated Pembina County's Historic Preservation Board is under the umbrella of the county and that is why she has to have the commission approve and sign the grant. She stated there are seven people on this board. She said the board members are located throughout the county. She also gave a recap of all projects they are currently and planning on working on. She will have all the paperwork ready for the next meeting.

Lisa Keney gave an office update on the new Arc Pro program. She presented a quote from Sidwell to get all ArcGIS data transferred over to ArcGIS Pro. It needs to be moved because ArcGIS is officially being retired on March 1st. Sidwell maintains our maps for us and this program is essential for her office. She stated this quote is for the tax equalization office only. She stated anyone else who uses this program, will have to migrate over their own data. Motion by Blaine Papenfuss and seconded by Scot Becker to accept the bid contract as presented. Discussion followed. Lisa stated training hours are included. Roll call: Patrick Hardy, yes; Scot Becker, yes; Blaine Papenfuss, yes; Darin Otto, yes; Andrew Cull, yes. Motion carried.

Devin presented a culvert request from Minnkota Power Cooperative located at Twp 159, Sec 14, Range 51 on County Highway 44 where they are putting in a new substation at the beet plant. Motion by Andrew Cull and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to approve the culvert request. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Devin presented the flex funding award for bridges. Pembina County was awarded for 107-29 to be replaced. With the regular flex funding we received funding for County Road 44. We also got the ag grant. Park, Hamilton, Bathgate, and Akra townships were accepted as well. The ag grant was 1.6 million. County Road 44 was roughly 7.5 million. Park Township received roughly \$268,000.00, Hamilton received \$340,000.00, Bathgate

got roughly \$330,000.00 and Akra will be receiving roughly \$440,00.00 for their graveling projects. Discussion was held on the County Road 44 project.

Jeff Daley stated the structure west of Hensel will be bid at the end of February. He also stated the bridge project on County Road 12 is submitted to the DOT and will be wrapped up after they get back to KLJ. It is scheduled for an April bid date, but could get pushed back a month.

Mr. Daley stated the ER project by Leroy on County Road 12 is submitted and waiting for comments back from the state and slated to be bid in May. Jeff stated they are working on rehab projects as well. There are two that the plans are ready and slated to be bid in May.

One other ER project along County Road 55 was discussed. It is awaiting a signature from Chairman Hardy.

Devin discussed the possible speed limit change. He stated there are many factors that it would affect, not just the signs. There are slopes, rumble strips, guard rails, etc. that need to be considered. Mr. Daley said most of the ditches would require a 4 to 1 slope. Mr. Daley stated it could become costly to do this. Mr. Daley will check into what a study on this would cost.

Sheriff Meidinger met with the commission and stated they had a 2018 Chevy Tahoe Stonegarden vehicle they have to either give it to a different department or sell it. If they sell it, FEMA steps in and takes a minimum of \$500.00 or 10 percent of the sale price. The Stonegarden vehicles cannot be kept as a spare per the rules. He is asking if they can take the funds from the sale and put it into the sheriff's special trust and then put it towards equipping the next vehicle. Motion by Darin Otto and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to put it out on bids and put the proceeds into the sheriff's special trust. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Sheriff Meidinger gave an update on personnel changes in the department. Cory Mortensen has been appointed to Chief Deputy and Martin Burch has been promoted to Sergeant. He also stated there will be a jail inspection coming up in April. He stated last year they got a very good inspection and is expecting a good one again.

States Attorney Fontaine presented a project resolution to the commission on the project collapse. He stated they are in the stages of final drafts of the resolution for signatures. He stated a resolution is for a return of funds to Pembina County. He stated the county paid out funds. The number the commission decided on would be total amount paid and the remaining balance of the funds already paid would be returned to the county. He stated for public record Chairman Hardy, Commissioner Becker, Commissioner Papenfuss, Commissioner Otto and Commissioner Cull are all sticking with the original figure provided.

The Commission reviewed the January payroll and claims. Motion made by Darin Otto and seconded by Blaine Papenfuss to approve the consent agenda as presented. All voting in favor, motion carried.

Motion made by Blaine Papenfuss to adjourn the meeting. All voting in favor; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:52 AM.