

Forman, North Dakota  
December 7, 2021

The Sargent County Board of Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. with the following members present: Jason Arth, Lyle Bopp, Mark Breker, Richard Ruch and Jerry Waswick. Also present were Margie Johnson, State's Attorney Assistant; Dave Jacobson, County Resident; and, Pam Maloney, Sargent County Auditor. Jayne Pfau, State's Attorney, was present through technology off & on through the meeting.

Pam Maloney, County Auditor, called the meeting to order to organize for 2022.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Nominate Jason Arth for Chairman, term ending on December 5, 2022. (Breker/Waswick) Motion that nominations cease and to cast a unanimous ballot for Jason Arth. (Bopp/Waswick) Upon Roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Arth accepted his election, and assumed control of the meeting as Chairman of the County Commission.

Nominate Richard Ruch for Vice-Chairman, term ending on December 5, 2022. (Waswick/Bopp) Motion that nominations cease and to cast a unanimous ballot for Richard Ruch (Bopp/Waswick) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Bopp made the following portfolio appointments: 1 – Jason Arth; 2 – Jerry Waswick; 3 – Mark Breker; 4 – Lyle Bopp; 5 – Richard Ruch.

Set regular 2022 monthly meeting dates as the first and third Tuesdays of each month, other than the first meeting in October, when the board will be attending the NDACo conference. This meeting will be moved to Wednesday, October 5. (Bopp/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to authorize Auditor to pay utility bills and withholding taxes. (Ruch/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to authorize the Treasurer to invest county funds. (Ruch/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Approve November 16, 2021 minutes as presented. (Waswick/Breker) Motion carried unanimously.

Approve agenda as amended. (Waswick/Bopp) Motion carried unanimously.

Dave Jacobson informed the board that, although he has been asked by the public, he will not be submitting a letter of interest for Commissioner Waswick's vacant position. He stated that the board should concentrate on replacing Commissioner Waswick with someone from the Gwinner area.

The auditor provided the board with information from the neighboring counties regarding road department wages. The commission will review & discuss further at the next meeting.

The condition of the west parking lot was discussed. It is not very smooth & there are ridges where the employees and the public could trip and fall. The road department will be requested to take a look at it & see if anything could be done with it now that the ground is frozen.

The board discussed the SENDCAA Board vacancy. Motion to advertise for interested persons to fulfill this vacancy. (Breker/Waswick) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was held on the Opioid Settlement. North Dakota's Attorney General is asked local governments to give up any settlement money received to a state controlled fund. Until there is a clear allocation agreement for the opioid settlement in North Dakota, we are being advised by our private representation not to opt into the North Dakota settlement until there is a clear allocation agreement. Motion to not opt into the state's settlement at this time. (Waswick/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to move forward with the 2.7% Cola increase for all county employees for 2022. (Waswick/Breker) Upon roll vote, motion carried unanimously

Tyler Newborg, Fair Board Member, arrived at the meeting. He stated that all nine positions on the board are currently filled. The 2021 fair had a better turnout overall, although attendance at some events was down due to the heat. They are starting to schedule for next year's fair & are also looking forward to 2023 to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sargent County Fair. They are requesting additional funding, if possible, to assist with better entertainment & possibly, to get a carnival for the 100<sup>th</sup> celebration. They are also looking to replace the sign on the highway for better visibility and advertising.

Motion to appoint Bill Anderson, Rutland; and Mark Bopp, Forman; to the Job Development Authority Board as Members-at-Large – terms to expire December 31, 2024. (Waswick/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. These applications were the only applications received.

Appoint Luke Anderson, Forman to the Job Development Authority Board as Forman City's Representative – term to expire December 31, 2024. (Waswick/Arth) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Appoint Terry Dusek, Milnor, to the Job Development Authority Board as Milnor City's Representative – term to expire December 31, 2024. (Waswick/Breker) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Travis Paeper, Sheriff, arrived at the meeting.

Approve beer and liquor licenses for 2022 to: Olivia and Austin Stenvold, CDPB, LLC, Tewaukon Township, rural Havana; and Kate & Paul Mund, The Field dba the Schoolhouse, Hall Township, DeLamere, pending the state's attorney's approval. (Breker/Ruch) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was held on recent employee terminations/resignations. One employee was terminated due to a violation of policy & Federal DOT guidelines prompted the termination. Another resigned due to a complaint by the public involving HIPPA regulations. The state's attorney will send out a letter outlining the rights of appeal to these employees. Clearer policy might be needed for these procedures. The personnel board will do some further research.

Approve Ryan Johnson, Gwinner, as Sargent County's Coordinated Regional Interoperability Bound (CRIB) Representative. (Waswick/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Approve NRG Technology Services Contract for 2022 in the amount of \$36,297.96. (Waswick/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Wendy Willprecht, Emergency Manager/911 Coordinator, arrived at the meeting.

Brenda Peterson, Health Unit Administrator, arrived at the meeting via technology. She stated that the COVID case numbers haven't been below 20 for some time. There are currently 28 active cases in Sargent County. She reported that there is a new variant of the COVID virus. The Health Board has approved the Health Department to be closed from December 23 until January 3.

Discussion was then held regarding the Living Local application, which features alerts & updates, events calendars, school updates, church information, volunteer first responders, push notifications & a business directory. There is no charge for it at this time (for two years), but its success will depend upon the administrator pushing out content. Ms. Willprecht has agreed to be the administrator for this project with Bryan Johnson, Chief Deputy Sheriff, also helping out when needed. However, she is requesting to become a full-time 35-hour week employee to do so. She then would receive full benefits that the county offers. At this time, she is working 32 hours week (four eight-hour days). Motion to move Ms. Willprecht to a full-time status at a 35-hour week position which would enable her to qualify for all county benefits allotted to full time employees. (Ruch/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously. Ms. Willprecht's Water Resource Secretary position has no bearing on this qualification & the hours should be put in outside of her 35 hour work week.

Discussion was held regarding Commissioner Waswick's vacancy. It was decided to invite the candidates for a short twenty minute interview on Tuesday, December 21 beginning at 1:30 in the afternoon. They will make their decision following the interviews that day, or at following meeting.

The commission discussed the roundabout that ND DOT is planning to install at the intersection of Hwy 32 & Hwy 13 east of Gwinner. They believe that this would not be a good idea, due to truck traffic and Bobcat traffic. Motion to write a letter in opposition to the decision of a roundabout at this intersection due to the unique circumstances of this intersection. They will talk to Ms. Willprecht, Emergency Manager/911 Coordinator to compose the letter. (Waswick/Ruch) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Tim Faber, Road Supervisor, arrived at the meeting.

Commissioner Ruch reported on the Township Officer's Meeting he had recently attended. He said most of the township personnel there were very satisfied with the road conditions at the present time. He also stated that he advised them that the county would be reconsidering the application by residences next season, only applying at intersections, curves & railroad tracks. It was also brought up that at the next township officer's meeting, a discussion should be held regarding the Application for Drainage Work within County Road Right-of-Ways, as many in the county don't seem to realize approval and permission is needed for any work done in county road rights-of-way.

Commissioner Bopp stated that the new custodian has requested several items to be purchased. As long as there is nothing over \$500, Commissioner Bopp, as courthouse commissioner, can approve the requests.

Motion to approve an Application for Drainage Work within County Road Right-of-Way for Ed Erickson, Jr, Milnor, to clean silt blown in ditch along the N1/2 Section 5-131-54 – Shuman Township. This work has already been done, due to the fact that it would have been a safety hazard if it had not been completed before freeze-up. No further work should be done on this project unless approved by the road supervisor. (Waswick/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Discussion on a setback for trees on county roads was held. There is no setback on county roads, they just have to be out of the road right-of-way.

Commissioner Breker provided an update from the Sargent County Job Development Authority. One house has been built at Riverside Building Center in Lisbon and will be moved next spring to the new addition in Forman. Two more houses will be built, but they will be built at their locations, which are yet to be determined.

Motion to give Sargent County employees a full day holiday for December 23<sup>rd</sup>, which would normally be their half day holiday for Christmas Eve. (Waswick/Bopp) Roll Call Vote: Yes – Arth, Bopp, Ruch and Waswick. No – Breker. Motion carried. Therefore, the courthouse will be closed all day, Thursday & Friday, December 23 & 24, 2021. The county buildings will also be closed Friday, December 31, as New Year's Day falls on Saturday, so policy dictates that employees get Friday for their holiday.

Mr. Faber stated that the roads are looking good and that the plows are ready for snow removal when necessary.

There is a bridge on County Road #7 through the gulch that will need to be looked at next spring and also one on the Sargent/Jackson township line that has been requested to cut down the sides.

Motion to give all county employees, including part time and the former custodian, a \$500 Covid Performance Award. (Waswick/died for lack of second)

Motion to get a quote from a licensed contractor to remove the asbestos in the fairgrounds auditorium by the next meeting. (Waswick/Bopp) Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

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JASON ARTH – CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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