

Forman, North Dakota
June 2, 2015

The Sargent County Board of Commissioners met at 1:30 p.m. with the following members present: Mike Walstead, Bill Anderson, Sherry Hosford, and Jerry Waswick. Absent: Dave Jacobson. Also present were County Auditor Pam Maloney; Lyle Bopp, States Attorney; and Paige Cary, the Sargent County Teller.

Sandy Hanson, Tax Director arrived at the meeting. Also present were Trent Nelson & Paul White, Sargent County taxpayers. The Board of Review and Equalization proceeded to organize for 2015. The tax director recommended no changes to the commercial values at this time, as there are not enough comparable sales upon which any change in valuation could be based, and the County will be doing a complete re-valuation starting in the fall of 2016, to be in place for the 2017 equalization. Motion to approve the recommendation of no changes to commercial properties within the cities and townships, pursuant to the recommendation of the Tax Director. (Waswick/Anderson) Roll call vote: Yes – Waswick, Anderson, Hosford, & Walstead. Absent: Dave Jacobson.

Sandy next presented 2015 county average value per all cropland/agricultural acreage as set by the ND State Tax Commissioners Office. The State Board of Equalization has made the decision to allow a 10% tolerance on agricultural lands from the 100% value as set by the State Tax Commissioner. According to Ms. Hanson's computation the county average for Sargent County would require a 9% increase across the board for all agricultural lands which would equal an average of \$889.62 per acre or 95.3% of the 2015 value as determined by the State of North Dakota. Motion to approve the recommendation of a 9% increase on all agricultural lands in Sargent County. (Waswick/Anderson) Roll call vote: Yes – Waswick, Anderson, Hosford, & Walstead. Absent: Dave Jacobson.

Trent Nelson of Forman appealed the valuation assigned to some vacant lots that he owns in the City of Forman that had been approved by the Forman City Council. The lots are overvalued in his opinion. The Tax Director explained that there are many factors included in the valuation of vacant lots, including: front footage; lot depth; map factor; etc. Vacant lots also have a 50% vacancy factor included in the valuation formula. Motion to change the vacancy factor for all vacant lots to 60% instead of 50%. (Hosford/Anderson, unanimous)

Paul White requested that a house & shop on his farmsite should be farm exempt. He does have a renter living in the house whose income is farm based. The shop building is used for farm activities, also, as it houses farm equipment, according to Mr. White. The state's attorney's opinion was that if Mr. White provides a rental agreement for his renter for 10 acres where the buildings are located, that the buildings could qualify for the farm exemption as they are used for agricultural purposes. This should be brought to the Township, first, and could be considered at the next Commission meeting, June 16.

Sandy requested that the residential equalization be recessed until June 16, 2015, as she had just received Milnor City's assessment book that morning so was unable to have final figures for a recommendation. Motion for the Board of Review and Equalization to recess until 11:00 a.m., June 16. (Anderson/Hosford, unanimous)

Three Applications for Abatement or Refund of Taxes which had been filed were addressed. The first two abatement applications were filed by James & Ione Lunneborg, on the S1/2 of NW1/4 & SW1/4; and NE1/4 of Section 31, Shuman Township, requesting an inundated lands adjustment for 2014. The other abatement application was filed by Randy Pearson, on the NW1/4 in Section 10, also in Shuman Township, requesting an inundated lands adjustment for 2014. Shuman Township approved the abatements. Concur with the township. (Anderson/Waswick, unanimous)

Approve minutes of May 19, 2015 meeting as corrected. (Hosford/Anderson, unanimous)

Merrill Engquist, Sargent County Road Supervisor; and, Damon DeVillers & Jesse Sedler, Interstate Engineering; arrived at the meeting. Damon had brought construction & engineering contracts for the three 2015 Surge projects on County Roads 2, 10 & 14 for the board's approval. Motion for the chairman to execute and sign the construction contract with Mark Sand and Gravel. (Hosford/Anderson, unanimous). Motion for the chairman to execute and sign the engineering contract with Interstate Engineering. (Anderson/Waswick, unanimous). Damon reminded the board that a Regional meeting will be held in West Fargo on July 27th to approve projects for the 2016 Surge monies and that the Commission should prioritize road projects before that time.

Merrill Engquist informed the board that Tom Manley, Equipment Operator III, has resigned as of June 11, 2015. Motion to accept resignation with reluctance and regret. (Waswick/Anderson, unanimous)

Motion to advertise in the local newspaper and with Job Service for Equipment Operator III. (Waswick/Hosford, unanimous)

Discussion held regarding how to handle complaints commissioners receive about road problems. The Road Supervisor stated that complainants should be referred to him and he will take the complaint & try to resolve the issue. Engquist also updated the board regarding the blade/vehicle accident last month. There was no damage to the county's equipment and neither party was seriously injured. R & A Contracting will start on the county shop roof repairs sometime in August. Some graveling has been done, but the wet conditions have slowed down the process.

Travis Paeper, Sargent County Sheriff, arrived at the meeting to discuss the mowing of the courthouse grounds. At the last meeting, it had been decided that the custodian would take over the duty, as it is in his job description and he is willing to do it. Mr. Paeper stated that he believed he had a verbal contract to continue with the mowing in 2015 and would like to continue to mow the grounds. He had also found in the April 2010 minutes where it had been decided that mowing services for the Courthouse yard would be contracted out. Travis Paeper; Jerry Waswick, Courthouse Commissioner; Joe Butler, Custodian; & Sherry Hosford, Police Commissioner; will meet together and bring a recommendation on the best course of action to the next meeting of the County Commission.

Motion to appoint Gordon Phillips as park board member to replace Ray Nelson who resigned as of May 19, 2015. Term ending January 1, 2017. (Anderson/Hosford, unanimous)

Motion to appoint Geneva Waswick and Edwin Heinert to the Planning Commission. Terms ending June 15, 2019. (Hosford/Anderson, unanimous)

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

MIKE WALSTEAD - CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

PAM MALONEY - AUDITOR