Minutes of the Board of Ward County Commissioners

March 5, 2024

The regular meeting of the Ward County Commission was called to order by Chairman/Commissioner Fjeldahl at 9:00 AM with Commissioners Anderson, Olson, Rostad, and Weppler present. Also present were department heads Brock Gilstad, Dana Larsen, Emily Burkett, Jason Blowers, Kelly Haugan, Kerrianne Boetcher, Kristi Frederick, Kristin Kowalczyk, Lolly Gorze, Marisa Haman, Noreen Wilkie, Robert Roed, and Roza Larson.

Marisa Haman, Auditor/Treasurer, added Sentinel Program Meeting notes to agenda item 11A – Receive and File.

Moved by Comm. Rostad and seconded by Comm. Anderson to approve the agenda with added Receive and File document. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Weppler and seconded by Comm. Rostad to approve the minutes from the Regular Commission Meeting on February 26, 2024, the Special Commission Meeting for Interviews on February 26, 2024, and the Special Commission Meeting on February 26, 2024 with two grammatical revisions. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Olson to approve regular bills totaling $126,383.65 and HS Zone direct bills totaling $13,287.99.

Chairman Fjeldahl questioned the payment made to EAPC Architects Engineers and Vision Zero bills from the Ag Expo in Bismarck.

Dana Larsen, Highway Engineer, came forward to explain that the payment to EAPC is for the addition being added to building C that is just getting started. Mr. Larsen also confirmed that Molly Schoen, Vision Zero Coordinator will sometimes travel outside the county to work with the other 4 Vision Zero Coordinators and that the funds are reimbursed as a pass though from the state.

Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Anderson to open the public hearing at 9:09 AM regarding Petersen application for outlot 4 plat and variance for the following described property: Proposed Outlot 4 being a portion of Gov't Lot 12 of Sec 3-152-85 Rice Lake Twp. Roll called; all voted yes, motion carried.

The applicant is proposing to create a parcel containing 0.50 acres for future residential use. The variance is required as proposed parcel is less than Ward County 2.00 acre requirement. Planning Commission recommends approval of the variance application based on finding of facts.

No one from the public came forward to speak to this issue.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Weppler to close the public hearing at 9:10 AM. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Anderson to approve the outlot 4 plat and variance for Petersen as presented. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Comm. Rostad spoke about LithTec™ a new road construction product that was presented at North Central ELMER JESME meeting. He would like to see if the product could be demonstrated on one of the Ward County roads.

Dana Larsen, Hwy Engineer, came forward to state that the Highway Department is currently working with a consultant, Federal Highway and the NDDOT on a demonstration project for five different types of products on a 5-mile stretch of highway.

Jay Fischer, VP of L&Q International, came forward and gave a brief introduction on the product LithTec™. The product is not currently being used in the state of North Dakota but they currently are waiting on approval for grant money from the NDDOT.

Mr. Larsen suggests bringing the discussion on LithTec™ to the next Highway Meeting and all were in agreeance.

Brian Billingsley, AICP, City of Minot Community & Economic Development Director, came forward to speak on proposed updates to the Minot Renaissance Zone. Mr. Billingsley presented four proposed amendments and a change to the Renaissance Zone Map.

There was discussion on the proposed changes to the Renaissance Zone Map and the amount of residential properties that would be included in zone 2F. Comm. Olson questioned the purpose of the Renaissance Zone and if such a big block with a large amount of residential properties meets that purpose.

Chair. Fjeldahl questioned the tax abatement for 5 and 8 years for commercial properties and 5 years for a residential property that has increased the true and full value by 20%. The tax abatement for properties that qualify would be 100%.

Comm. Weppler posed a question regarding accessibility issues and if a change has been made to requirements when getting Renaissance approval that accessibility is available for all. Mr. Billingsley stated that it is not in the state legislation but it is a condition that could be put into the development plan by local government.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Rostad to pull Amendment 3 for further discussion and approve all other amendments as presented. Motion withdrawn.

There was discussion on wanting more time to review the proposed amendments.

Moved by Comm. Anderson, seconded Comm. Weppler to table discussion on proposed updates to the Minot Renaissance Zone until the next meeting and more information can be obtained. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Kelly Haugan, Emergency Management Director, came forward to present the updated Ward County Emergency Operations Plan.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Olson to approve the Ward County Emergency Operations Plan as presented. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Anderson to approve the tax roll adjustments as presented. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Beth Pietsch, Planning and Zoning Administrator, appeared regarding three Outlot Plat Applications.

Application for an Outlot Plat from Clinton Olafson for the following described property: Proposed Outlot 1 being a port of NWSW & SWSW Sec 10-156-82, McKinley Twp. The applicant is requesting to parcel an outlot containing 10.56 acres for future agricultural use. Ward County zoning applies, with the township recommending approval. Planning Commission recommends Approval of the Outlot Plat Application based on finding of facts and staff recommendations.

Moved by Comm. Anderson, seconded by Comm. Weppler to approve the Outlot Plat Application from Clinton Olafson as presented. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Application for an Outlot Plat from Al Zahursky for the following described property: Proposed Outlot 3 being a portion of SW of Sec 15-151-83 Rushville Twp. The applicant it proposing to create parcel containing 7.07 acres for agricultural use to expand farmyard. Ward County zoning applies and Rushville is an unorganized township. Planning Commission recommends Approval of the Outlot Plat Application based on finding of facts and staff recommendations.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Olson to approve the Outlot Plat Application from Al Zahursky as presented. Roll Called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Application for an Outlot Plat from Alex and James Degenstein for the following described property: Proposed Outlot 6 being a portion of Outlot 1 and an unplatted port. of SWSE Sec 27-157-85 Mayland twp. Planning Commission recommends Approval of the Outlot Plat Application based on finding of facts and staff recommendations.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Rostad to approve the Outlot Plat Application from Alex and James Degenstein as presented. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Lolly Gorze, Human Recourses Director, appeared with the following pay amendments: L. Fixsal, Jail; J. Hannah, Facilities; B. Gilstad, Veteran's; M. Shearer, HSZ; and L. Peterson, Facilities.

Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Anderson to approve the payroll amendments as presented. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Marisa Haman, Auditor/Treasurer appeared.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Rostad to receive and file the following correspondence: Economy at a Glance dated February 2024 and Sentinel Program Meeting notes. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Weppler to receive and file the Ward County Recorder Annual Report. Roll call; all voted yes; motion carried.

Marisa Haman, Auditor/Treasurer presented an email from Minot Central Dispatch requesting reallocation for ARPA funds they had previously been awarded.

Moved by Comm. Weppler, seconded by Comm. Olson to approve the change to use ARPA funds for a call/training simulator.

There was discussion regarding the letters being sent to the applicants of ARPA funds and knowing the amount of ARPA funds available for reallocation before approving the request.

Roll call; Comm. Weppler voted yes; Comm. Rostad, Olson, Anderson and Chair. Fjeldahl voted no, motion Failed.

Moved by Comm. Rostad, seconded by Comm. Weppler to approve raffle for Souris Valley Amateur Radio Club. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Anderson, seconded by Comm. Weppler to approve the Board Guidelines and have them sent out to all current boards and members. Roll called; all voted yes; motion carried.

Comm. Olson gave update on the continuing coroner services discussion. In roughly half of the counties the sheriff is named the coroner. It was discussed and agreed upon to continue with posting the Request for Proposal for Coroner Services.

At 10:10 AM with no further business, the meeting was adjourned.