

May 6th, 2025, Steele County Commission Meeting

The Steele County Commission meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. Commissioners Perry Brown, Brandon Krueger, Richard Strand, Brandon Oxtan, and Chris Grandalen were present. Auditor Jana Flaten and DES manager Ben Gates were also present.

Commissioner Krueger motioned to approve the April minutes, seconded by Commissioner Brown. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

There is one addition to today's agenda- Co Rd 10 ditch.

The Steele County Park Board meeting began at 8:16 am.

The Steele County Commissioner Meeting reconvened at 8:22 am.

Gates discussed the Jacobson Lawn care quote and said that if we let them know if it is approved, they could mow today. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the Jacobson Lawn care quote, seconded by Commissioner Brown. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

The commissioners discussed the option for the current lawn mower: should sealed bids be accepted or an auction? Also mentioned that Northwood Lawn spraying would not be needed, as it is on the Jacobson Quote.

Ben Gates and Mike Bassingthwaite (Interstate Engineering) discussed graveling; about 33.5 miles will be done, and they want to get bid paperwork out. They will award the bid in June. An incentive date will be in early August to complete the gravel jobs. Commissioner Brown motioned to have Mike get the bid packet together and send it out, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Gates talked about the summer help. One guy started yesterday, and two more will begin on May 19th. The road crew is working extra hours to seal cracks during the nice weather. There have been no qualified blade operator applications.

Gates asked the commissioner to reimburse Kyle's cell phone. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve Kyle's cell phone reimbursement, seconded by Commissioner Brown. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Gates also discussed the Burn ban/Fire declaration and would like the commissioners to adopt/approve this. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the fire declaration, seconded by Commissioner Brown. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

A discussion was held about architectural firms that have sent a proposal regarding outside repairs. The committee includes Wayne Beckman, Ben Gates, and Commissioner Grandalen. There will be a meeting/interview in May for these four firms. Gates will report back in June.

Commissioner Oxtan went over the ambulance meeting board. Everything went well, Brandon Oxtan, Kyle O'Brien and Mike Stromsodt are members from Steele County.

Golden Lake is asking to approve this summer's raffle for the Association. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the raffle, seconded by Commissioner Oxtan. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

The state sent out a revised PRC list to include trust applicants. Flaten is asking the board to approve the list and will get the new paperwork submitted to the state and update it in Taxwise. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the updated PRC list, seconded by Commissioner Grandalen. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Flaten discussed the abatements that Casey Olson had for the commissioners to approve. Commissioner Krueger motioned to approve the abatements, seconded by Commissioner Brown. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Flaten discussed new hours for the courthouse. It was discussed to reduce lunch to a half-hour instead of one hour and to get rid of summer hours and have regular hours throughout the year. She proposed Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 1 p.m., with no lunch. This would be a total of 37 hours a week instead of 37.5 hours. Flaten talked with all employees and received positive reviews from everyone. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the new courthouse hours starting on May 27th, 2025, seconded by Commissioner Grandalen. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Dennis Kubischta asked the commissioners to sign a 50th anniversary proclamation for the Steele County Vietnam Veterans. Awards will be given at the memorial services. Commissioner Brown motioned to approve the declaration, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Mike Bassingthwaite (Interstate Engineering) discussed the seal coating bids. Bids came in lower than normal, which is great. Fog coat was discussed, and we can use Prairie Dog funding to fund it. The pros and cons were then discussed. This can be added when they do the chip sealing this summer.

Discussions were held about the Fugleberg drain. The commissioners have decided to go with the recommendation of the water board. Discussions about the water drainage and the culvert are getting worse and will need to be replaced by the county.

Sheriff Beckman asked the commissioners to pay Sady for her work done in the sheriff's office, now that she is the treasurer, but she has been taking on more duties in the sheriff's office. He is asking for \$3,600.00 to be added to her salary for her office work. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the added salary, which Commissioner Grandalen seconded. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Megan Vig called the Steele County Weed Board to order at 9:15 am. Discussing the noxious weeds and reviewing the Steele County list, it was decided to add water hemp to the list. Commissioner Grandalen motioned to add water hemp to the noxious weed list, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Commissioner Strand motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Oxton. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

The Weed board adjourned at 9:20 am.

The Steele County Water Board gave an update on ongoing projects. Elm River Dam is great and asked Townships for updates. A discussion was held about beaver dam permits, drain tile and all FEMA projects are wrapping up. They also gave an update on the Fugleberg drain and Hanson Drain.

Commissioner Brown motioned to approve the bills, seconded by Commissioner Strand. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Commissioner Strand moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Krueger. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:36 am.

Brandon Oxtan- County Chairman,

Handwritten signature of Brandon Oxtan in cursive script, underlined.

Jana Flaten -County Auditor

Handwritten signature of Jana Flaten in cursive script, underlined.