

March 2nd, 2021
Finley, ND

The Steele County Commission meeting was called to order at 8:16 am. Present were Chairman Richard C. Strand, Commissioners Ted Johnson, Brandon Krueger, Brian Tuite and Russell Walcker.

Agenda Additions – Colgate project funding request from Heather Erickson

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to approve the minutes with amendments from Krueger. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

The monthly HR and office reports were reviewed. A floor cleaner request from the new janitor was briefly discussed. The board would like to check local vendors for something similar. Badging will move from Gates to Czapiewski, the website will also move from Gates to Idso. The six-month review period for the Public Health Nurse and Clerk of Courts has ended. Chairman Strand will do a probation review for those two departments.

A motion was made by Commissioner Krueger, seconded by Commissioner Walcker to approve a two percent raise for Good and Foss. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Public Health Nurse, Kathryn Good, provided a COVID-19 vaccine update. Good will no longer wait list citizens for the vaccine.

Discussion was held by the board regarding the county wide mask mandate. Good proposed changing to a mask advisory instead of a mandate. Discussion was held by the commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Krueger, seconded by Commissioner Tuite to down grade the mask mandate to an advisory, at the recommendation of Public Health Nurse Kathryn Good. Roll call vote: Johnson – no, Tuite – yes, Krueger – yes, Strand – yes, Walcker – yes. Motion carried.

The discussion moved to changing the Courthouse from appointment only. After input from Good, Gates and Sheriff Beckman, the courthouse will remain by appointment only until the April meeting. Department heads will decide if masks are required in their office. It will be a personal choice whether to wear a mask in the commission meetings.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to hire an LPN/RN to assist with COVID-19 vaccines. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Road Superintendent, Reed Oien, expressed interest in purchasing a new fuel tank and keep the existing tank. The board recommended looking at this at budget time. Oien presented gravel bid specifications for 34 mills total of class 5 gravel to be hired out. Additional spot graveling will be done by the Steele County Highway Department.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to advertise for gravel bids for 34 miles of class 5 crushed gravel. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Emergency Manager, Ben Gates, presented generator quotes. Gates has not received any updates regarding the generator grant he put in for. The board will continue to wait on possible grant funding.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to approve and sign the two-year GIS maintenance contract with Sidwell as presented. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Gates provided a department update including the lighting grant and the courthouse doors.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walcker, seconded by Tuite to accept the quote from North Star to do the courthouse lighting project. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Gates discussed obtaining the signed Memorandum of Understanding with Don Huso for his work on the 2019 and 2020 Floods. Huso will be paid out for his time spent working on the 2020 Flood.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to take a short recess. The Steele County Commission meeting was called back to order.

Discussion was held regarding the 911 Coordinator position. Gates will fill the role until someone is hired. An ad will be placed for two weeks and follow up interviews will be arranged. The board will pay Gates \$1,325.80 additional for the month of March for 911 duties.

AVHSZ Director, Kim Jacobson, was unable to attend the meeting as scheduled. The Commission requested the AVHSZ director be placed on the agenda every other month for a department update.

A motion was made by Commissioner Krueger, seconded by Commissioner Walcker to pay Trail County the additional indirect cost invoice for AVHSZ and request Zone Director, Kim Jacobson, to attend commission meetings every two months to provide an update. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Tax Director, Amy Czapiewski, discussed the Westfield township building permit noncompliance. Several attempts to contact the owner have been made. Sheriff Beckman will deliver a letter to ensure it is received. New building permit received from Colgate township for a public park and shelter area in Colgate.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Walcker to approve the building permit for Colgate township. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

The county sales ratio figures were reviewed. Czapiewski recommended increasing the Agland from .50% to 1%. Residential sales will be looked at as well. Czapiewski requested additional time to assess the farm exempt properties that were missed by Vanguard.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to move forward with the Purchasing Card program. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Extension Agents, Amber Stockeland and Angie Johnson, joined the board to discuss the open secretary position. Johnson opened discussion regarding the possibility of hiring full time person to fill the position. The board will revisit that request during the budget season. An ad will be placed for the current position and will interview as needed. Johnson advised the township officers Spring meeting

will be held March 31st at 8:00 am at the Finley Auditorium. Private pesticide training will begin soon. Johnson would like to utilize the basement for this as well as the 4-H leaders council meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Walcker to approve the bills as presented. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Commissioner Walcker, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned.



Chairman – Richard C. Strand



Auditor – Emily Wigen