

September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Finley, ND

The Steele County Commission meeting was called to order at 8:00 am. Present were Chairman Richard C. Strand, Commissioners Ted Johnson, Brandon Krueger, Brian Tuite and Russell Walcker.

The Steele County Commission meeting was recessed for the Steele County Park board meeting. The Steele County Commission meeting reconvened at 8:09 am.

There were no additions to the agenda.

Commissioner Krueger requested a change to the August meeting minutes with the removal of the word "substantial" as he feels that is a subjective statement.

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

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

Courthouse lighting was discussed. Commissioner Walcker will talk with North Star Electric to see what his suggestions are.

Veteran Service Officer Dennis Lindstrom joined the meeting to update the commission on his department.

An update was given by Lindstrom regarding the gaming at Golden Lake Acres and the addition of E-tab machines. The Park board would need to put in a request to the Finley Improvement Association for funding request. The storm shelter project would be an option for this funding source.

Sheriff's Department was not present to provide an office update due to illness.

Steele County Water Board requested to reschedule due to a board member being absent.

Auditor Wigen provided an overview of the estimated notices that went out in August, as well as the process for the public budget meeting September 8<sup>th</sup>. A special budget meeting will need to be held to finalize budgets prior to the October Commission meeting.

NDSU Regional Director, Lesley Lubenow and Extension Agent, Amber Stockeland, joined the meeting to discuss the future of the extension office. Lubenow stated several options to fill the position, including fill as temp. with possibility of becoming a permanent position and utilizing surrounding area agents to fill the gaps. Johnson could potentially come back to her position once her three-year commitment is up at NDSU. Lubenow will move forward with the posting of Johnson's position at the request of the commission. She stated the starting salary for county agent is 45,200 with a bachelor's degree and 50,200 with master's degree of which Steele County is responsible for half of the salary. The position will take a few months to be posted through NDSU.

Mike Bassingthwaite with Interstate Engineering met with the board to discuss the County Road 11 project and update the commission regarding a meeting he had with Commissioner Strand and Commissioner Krueger. Funding for the project was discussed with an estimated total cost of 2.3 million now and Steele County would be responsible for 20% amounting in approximately \$460,000 if it is done as a federal aid project. Steele County would need to forgo the request for bond reimbursement in order to borrow ahead on federal aid share for this project.

Bassingthwaite advised of recent bridge inspection findings for bridge 113.9 down to a 9 ton posting from 23 tons. Bridge 114.10 remained at a 20 ton rating, and bridge 112.08 (NW of 113.9) downgraded to a 5 ton rating from 23 tons.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to move forward with the County Road 11 project using federal aid. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded Commissioner Walcker to take a short recess at 10:01 am. The meeting was reconvened at 10:09 am.

States Attorney Charlie Stock met to review the suggested policy manual verbiage for changes and information requested of him.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to restrict access to individual offices outside of business hours unless otherwise authorized by the department head. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to add an additional hour of vacation for employees at 49 months of service. With lack of a second, motion failed.

A motion made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to approve the security camera posting and verbiage to the manual. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Krueger, seconded by Commissioner Tuite to accept wording for exempt employees, including offices of DES and Public Health, with options to look at other offices on an individual basis. Roll call vote: Johnson – No, Krueger – Yes, Tuite – Yes, Walcker – No, Strand - Yes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tuite, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to change time keeping requirements from .30 minutes to .15 minutes. Roll call vote: Johnson- No, Krueger – Yes, Tuite- Yes, Walcker - Yes. Motion carried.

Legally the county does not need to post any positions internally or externally per States Attorney Stock.

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

Kathryn Good, Public Health Nurse, joined the meeting via phone to answer vaccine booster questions for the board.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Krueger to approve Amber Stockeland as the department head of Steele County Extension with signing authority, along with a P-card. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Walcker to adjourn the meeting at 11:48 am.

  
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Chairman – Richard C. Strand

  
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Auditor – Emily Wigen