

September 9, 2025, Steele County Commission Meeting

The Steele County Commission meeting was called to order at 8:12 a.m. Commissioners Brandon Oxtan, Perry Brown, Brandon Krueger, Richard Strand, and Chris Grandalen were present, as were Auditor Jana Flaten, Doug Lund, Deputy Rick Czapiewski, and Chad Aberle, representing the Finley Park Board.

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

There is one addition to the agenda- Sheriff tasers/camera.

The Steele County Park Board meeting began at 8:24 a.m.

The Steele County Commissioner Meeting was reconvened at 8:30 a.m.

Deputy Rick Czapiewski brought an estimate/grant for new cameras and tasers. The current equipment is seven or more years old and has no warranty; some have started not working correctly. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the estimate coming out of the overweight line to cover \$17,500.00, and the other \$6,000 will be covered by the grant. Commissioner Grandalen seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Reed presented the motor grade quotes, both of which are very similar. Funds will come out of sales taxes. Reed will order the Cat/Butler brand, and it will be delivered after the 1st of the year.

While the backhoe was rented, Culverts on CO Rd 8a, 16, 7, and 4 were replaced and/or fixed, and ditching was done on CO Rd 10. Fall mowing reminders need to be down by Oct 1st. Co Rd 6 culverts are level with the road and a few dams. The culverts are 6 inches higher than the water table. Both sides were cleaned to make sure water flows well. This will be down next week.

Suburban bid opening: We received 5 bids, with K. Zurface's bid of \$7,650.00 being the winning bid. Ben Gates will notify him. Commissioner Strand motioned to approve the bid, seconded by Commissioner Brown. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Mike Bassingthweight gave updates on the flex funding and 2026/2027 projects. He is still working with the Townships on their flex funds projects/applications. Chip sealing signs are going up and should start next week.

Charlie Stock gave an HR update and discussed the COLA adjustment and different ways to apply it so it is a net percentage between all employees. State attorney update: There are now 2 judges who rotate for Steele County.

The cabin on the courthouse grounds needs some fixing. Will double-check with grants and any historical grants that can be used.

Architect Bartlett West came and took pictures and walked around the grounds to get the first assessment of the building.

Commissioner Strand made a motion to approve both building permits, seconded by Commissioner Brown. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

2026 budget discussion. Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve a 2% COLA for all employees based on their wages. Seconded by Commissioner Strand. There was no further discussion, and all members voted aye. The motion carried.

Flaten discussed keeping the mills the same as last year, and any salary or budget cuts going forward should be moved to the Capital improvement/courthouse fund to keep taxes the same as last year. This is due to the new century code dealing with the 3% cap. Grandalen mentioned/asked if Hannah still wanted to clean or if we needed to budget for a part-time cleaner. Stock will discuss with Hannah.

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Handwritten signature of Brandon Oxton in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.

Brandon Oxton- County Chairman,

Handwritten signature of Jana Flaten in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.

Jana Flaten -County Auditor