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**COMMISSIONERS**

**Doug Berg, Chairman**

**David Lagein, Vice Chairman**

 **Matt Oderman**

 **Robert Hallaway**

 **Lance Teubner**

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**TOWNER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MINUTES**

May 4, 2021

The Towner County Commissioners met in regular session on May 4, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. in the meeting room of the county courthouse. Chairman Doug Berg called the meeting to order. Present were Vice Chairman David Lagein, Commissioners Matt Odermann, Bob Hallaway and Lance Teubner

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Odermann and seconded by Teubner. All Commissioners voted aye, motion carried.

Motion to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2021 regular meeting was made by Lagein and seconded by Hallaway. All Commissioners voted aye, motion carried.

States Attorney Josh Frey addressed an open records request from Marvin Tuomala regarding the posting of 45 mph signs for trucks on County roads. Frey stated that it took a while for him to respond, as a thorough research was required. Frey stated that nothing was found in past minutes, engineering records or after visiting with Ken Teubner and Larry Halverson that made him think the required measures were taken by the County to have the signs posted. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to remove the 45 mph signs as they are unenforceable. Odermann, Hallaway and Teubner voted aye. Lagein and Berg voted nay. The motion passed.

Extension Agent Lindy Berg asked for City water to be provided at the County weed shed. Road Supervisor Kevin Rinas stated he would also like City water at the County shop. Berg and Rinas had talked to the City about getting water. The cost of hooking up to City water was discussed. Rinas and Berg would get an estimate and come back to the Commissioners. Rinas presented a cost estimate for 2 bridges in Maza Township. The estimate was $2.86 million with the County share at $534,000. There is still one easement that is not signed for the project east of Cando scheduled to be bid June 11, 2021. Everything has been submitted to the NDDOT including a request for proposals for construction engineering. If Towner County cannot produce a signed easement for all parcels by May 26th, the bid will be pulled. Checks for people who have submitted signed easements were discussed and tabled until June when the Commissioners would know if the final easement had been signed and received.

Sheriff Bob Kennedy stated he had submitted a grant request for a security system for the Courthouse and the Armory. Kennedy stated the burn ban seemed to be going well as there had been no major events of fire or burning even in the extremely dry conditions. Motion to approve the burn ban to red flag days through June 8th by Odermann, seconded by Lagein. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Lori Beck asked for approximately $21,000 of the CARES ACT money to pay for radios for the fire departments. No decision was made at this time on the request.

Maintenance Supervisor Bill Voight stated they were starting on replacing grant approved windows in the Courthouse on Monday.

Becky Raddohl was on hand to request a waiver of the Armory fees for the Entrepreneur Club. Raddohl stated all the money earned during the event was put back into the Community. Due to policy issues, the request was denied.

Mike Britain, County Parks, stated he was working with District Health on getting the Armourdale toilet permitted. Britain had contacted the highway department about signs for Snyder Lake. He is still waiting to hear back on the signs. A dock at Snyder Lake was discussed. Britain priced a 16’ aluminum dock at $1,417 plus delivery. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to allow up to a $4500 expenditure on a dock in order to get a size and quality that would last for several years. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Britain stated there was playground equipment at the parks that are not safe and was looking for someone to remove it. Commissioner Lagein suggested Ron Rodenbiker.

Ben Bucher, Towner County Hospital, stated a request to put the additional mill levy for the Hospital was missed and the levy expired in 2021. In order to avoid a special election, Bucher ask the Commissioners to commit $75,000 for 2022 budget and the issue would be placed on the June 2022 ballot. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to commit the $75,000 to be levied for the hospital as it had been for the previous 20 years. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Odermann stated he would like his preference to use CARES ACT Money for the levy noted. Mr. Bucher stated they have done some strategic planning and are looking at some major remodeling projects. May 12th the architect and engineer will be on site and Bucher invited the Commissioners to be present for the event.

Shannon Uecker, North Risk Partners, who was contracted to provide Towner County with HR Consulting services was on hand to address the Towner County Commissioners. Ueker explained his roll and availability to Towner County. Ueker stated he had met with department heads on Monday, May 3rd. He stated that Towner County Department heads are conscious of the budget and their dedication to the taxpayer. Ueker stated that he was available to the Commissioners and department heads for services including human resource mentoring, employer/employee relation issues, discipline and termination issues, education on documentation, employee investigations, and management coaching. Ueker stated Commissioners play a key role in the management of human resources and made a recommendation to Commissioners to follow the organizational chart in determining how issues were to be resolved. Issues Uecker reported, after visiting with department heads, that may be areas of concern were teamwork, communication, protocols and chain of command, and that trust had been diluted. Uecker stated that by working with the Commissioners and the department heads, he felt a better culture could be obtained within a year. A recent employee survey was discussed and recommendations made on how to deal with what were determined to be 5 core messages derived from the survey. Employees will be informed of what is being done.

Tax Director Bonnie Good was on hand to go over assessment results to date. Commercial and residential tolerances must be 90-100%. Hendrickson had manually forced depreciation on selected parcels, so his seven Townships had dropped below tolerance. Good would have to re-do the depreciation correctly and the matter would have to be addressed at the County Board of Equalization. Mrs. Good gave her resignation to be effective June 20-December 20, 2021. The Tax Director position was discussed and tabled.

Motion by Lagein, seconded by Hallaway to approve zoning permit for Thomas Vesterso and Lyle Morlock. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Lagein to approve a conditional use permit for the mining of sand and gravel to Knife River Materials. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to deed foreclosed properties back to the Cities of Cando and Perth. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Motion by Odermann, seconded by Teubner to approve the bills. Upon roll call vote, all voted aye.

The next meeting was set for June 1st.

The meeting adjourned by motion.

ATTEST:

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Joni M. Morlock Doug Berg, Chairman

Towner County Auditor/Treasurer Towner County Board of Commissioners