** TOWNER COUNTY**

**COMMISSIONERS**

**Doug Berg, Chairman**

**David Lagein, Vice Chairman**

**Matt Oderman**

**Robert Hallaway**

**Lance Teubner**

PO Box 603

Cando, ND 58324

**Phone: 701-968-4340 Joni M. Morlock, Auditor/Treasurer**

**Fax: 701-968-4342**

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**TOWNER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**MINUTES**

June 1, 2021

The Towner County Commissioners met in regular session on June 1, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. in the meeting room of the County courthouse. Chairman Doug Berg called the meeting to order. Present were Commissioners Matt Odermann, Bob Hallaway and Lance Teubner. Commissioner Lagein was absent.

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 May 4, 2021 regular meeting was made by Odermann and seconded by Hallaway. All Commissioners voted aye, motion carried.

Extension agent Lindy Berg was on hand to present estimates for getting water to the County weed building. Motion by Teubner, seconded by Hallaway to allow Berg to move forward with the project. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Kevin Rinas presented a quote for dust control on a County road west of Bisbee. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to deny the request. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Jessica Tagestad, Wold Engineering and States Attorney Josh Frey were on hand to discuss an easement for right of way which could not be obtained for a project east of Cando. The eminent domain process was discussed. Motion by Hallaway, seconded by Odermann to start the process of eminent domain. A discussion was held. Upon roll call vote, all commissioners voted aye. Price increases in gravel were discussed for the project east of Cando. Concerns of the completion date for the project were discussed. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to pull the June bid. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

The building committee had gone over County policy #520 regarding the use of County equipment and vehicles and presented an amended policy. Motion by Odermann, seconded Hallaway to approve the policy as amended. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Motion to extend the burn ban for Red Flag burning thru July 6, 2021 by Odermann. Motion died for lack of a 2nd. Motion by Hallaway to extend burn ban thru July 1, 2021, seconded by Teubner. Upon roll call vote, Commissioners Teubner, Hallaway and Berg voted aye. Commissioner Odermann voted nay. Motion passed.

Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to approve a zoning permit for Kyle McConnell. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Motion by Oderman, seconded by Teubner to approve a conditional use permit for Central Power Electric Coop. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Motion by Hallaway, seconded by Teubner to appoint Joni Morlock the Title VI Coordinator. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to pay the bills. Upon roll call vote, all commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Commissioner Odermann stated the Armourdale vaulted toilet had still not been permitted.

Sheriff Kennedy stated the Sheriff’s department is on s summer schedule with an extra guy (the school resource officer). Kennedy stated this allowed them to allow for vacation and officer training.

Motion by Teubner, seconded by Odermann to create a new fund for the ARPA funds. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Motion to recess and reconvene at 10:00 a.m. as the Tax Equalization Board.

Tax Equalization Director Bonnie Good took control of the meeting. City properties were discussed. Hansboro omitted property, and Cando and Perth foreclosed properties were disclosed.

Township properties were discussed. Virginia Township properties were discussed first as the representative of Virginia Township had to leave. Tax Director Good recommended a different valuation on 2 parcels that the Virginia Township Assessor had come up with. The Virginia Township representative recommended Assessor Hendrickson’s value. The Virginia Township property owners were not present. Assessor Hendrickson stated that due to his misunderstanding of the use of the depreciation software, his calculation of depreciation for the 2 parcels was excessive. Motion by Commissioner Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to approve the County valuation recommendation for the 2 parcels in Virginia Township. Upon roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to approve late farm residence applications as presented. Upon roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. A property in Howell Township was discussed. An application for a Vacant/Retired farmer was received in January and approved. At the April Township Equalization meeting it was brought to the attention of the Director of Equalization/Assessor that the residence was being occupied by non-farmers, upon further discussion they would not qualify for the exemption, I indicated that I would follow up with a valuation to present to County BOE. A Notice of Increase was mailed to property owner address on record, no response received as of today. Motion by Teubner, seconded by Odermann to approve valuation. Upon roll call vote, all commissioners voted aye. A spreadsheet showing adjustments made by the County Tax Director to several parcels in several Townships was presented to the Commissioners. None of the property owners were present. Tim Hendrickson stated that after meeting with the Tax Director, he now had a better understanding of how the depreciation software worked, and that he had indeed calculated depreciation that was excessive on the parcels presented. Good stated that, of the properties Hendrickson assessed, 11 of the 44 residential and 7 of the 16 commercial parcels had excessive depreciation, and questioned the inconsistency of the issue. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Teubner to accept the 2021 County recommendations for adjustments to Townships as presented by the County Tax Equalization Director. Upon roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Motion by Teubner, seconded by Odermann to approve the inundated applications as presented. Upon roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

Motion to approve Commercial values as presented by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway. Upon roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Motion to approve Residential values as presented by Oderman, seconded by Hallaway. Upon roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Motion to approve Agriculture values as presented with no increase by Oderman, seconded by Hallaway. Upon roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

There was a motion to adjourn as the Board of Equalization and reconvene as Board of County Commissioners.

The Tax Equalization Director position was discussed. Motion by Oderman, seconded by Hallaway to advertise position as full time with salary DOE and have an interview committee with 2 Commissioners and the Auditor. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed. Bonnie Good would be present for the interviews in an advisory, none voting capacity.

Motion by Hallaway, seconded by Teubner to change Courthouse hours to 8:30-4:30 with staggered ½ hour lunches. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

The Commissioners discussed whether to offer full family health to employees. The cost to the County to do this was approximately an additional $271,000. Motion by Odermann, seconded by Hallaway to budget a 5% raise to employees for 2022 with no changes being made to health insurance at this time. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion passed.

The next meeting was set for. July 6th.

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