

The Barnes County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, November 21, 2023, with Cindy Schwehr, Vicky Lovell, Bill Carlblom, Pete Paulson, and Shawn Olauson present. Chairman Carlblom called the meeting to order at 8:13 a.m., roll-call was taken, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the Agenda was reviewed.

Planning & Zoning – Variance

Ms. Jenrich presented an application for a Setback Variance from Devin Hursman to build a Pole Barn 60” from center of road to the building side wall on Lot 4 Blk 2 of Homestead Subdivision, Sibley Trail Township, 24-143-58. Pete Paulson moved to approve the application; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll-call vote, with Cindy Schwehr voting “no”. DeLyle Mortenson spoke on issues with snow on the road.

Jessica Jenrich, Planning & Zoning Coordinator, presented an application for a 120’ Setback Variance from Mark Luessen for a double wide home on Auditor Lot 1 of NE ¼ Green Township, 07-139-59. Cindy Schwehr moved to approve the application with a 140’ Setback Variance; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll-call vote, with Vicky Lovell voting “no”.

Ms. Jenrich presented an application for a 60’ Utility Setback Variance from BEK Communications in Raritan Township, Sections 3, 4, 5-137-56. Shawn Olauson moved to approve the application; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll-call vote, with all members voting “yes”.

Jamies Smith reported on employee shortage in the Highway Department with more interviews coming up. The bicycle path bids came in under the engineers estimate. Jamie also presented the 2024 Employee Policy Manual and changes to policy were discussed. Cindy Schwehr made a motion to accept the Increment Weather changes to the policy as presented. Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with Vicky Lovell and Bill Carlblom voting “no”. Vicky Lovell made a motion to approve the 2024 Employee Policy Manual with changes as presented. Cindy Schwehr seconded the motion. Motion carried with all members voting “yes”

Tonya Duffy discussed new carpet quote from Valley Flooring and paint for the State Attorney’s Department offices using the New Equipment line item. Shawn Olauson made a motion to approve the carpet and paint project. Cindy Schwehr seconded the motion. Motion carried with all members voting “yes”.

Auditor – Minutes

Shawn Olauson moved to approve the November minutes presented. Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all members voting “yes”.

Commission Discussion

Pete Paulson spoke of Economic Development working on a few projects, the possibility of a proposal from the VSO taking on LaMoure County VSO and the museum is looking for someone to do their books. Shaun Olauson spoke on a hearing on a water issue for the Water Resource, Cindy Schwehr reported the Troubadours Concert is December 11th at the courthouse. Cocoa and cookies will be served. The parking lot is finished at the City County Health District. Vicky Lovell reported the audit is finished for the Housing Authority and is done with revitalization of most of their homes.

South Central Regional Council is working on grant administration from USDA grants for small agricultural based businesses. Bill Carlblom updated the commission on interviews completed in the Highway Department and the Auditor’s Office. The Auditor’s Office will be fully staffed.

Paul Lacina spoke on his concerns that the county is taking the four-year refund position on the VCSD school building fund refund and not the eight-year refund and asked for a retraction of motion for four years of refund. No action was taken.

With no further business, Vicky Lovell made a motion, seconded by Shawn Olauson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

Bill Carlblom, Chairman
Barnes County Commission

Julie Mindt
Barnes County Interim Auditor