

The Barnes County Commission met in regular session Tuesday, February 15, 2011 with all members present.

Others present for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) discussion were Duwayne Didier, Randy McClafin, Andrew Sather, Mark McDonald, Jim Verwey, Randy Grueneich, Nancy Tougas, Richard Hanson, Milly Hanson, Dean Ross, and Jon Cameron.

Commissioner Froelich discussed his ideas and concerns with the proposed EOC. He stated his recommendation is to not accept the grant and not build.

Commissioner Berntson stated his view that the building as proposed should be downsized and that the grant should be accepted.

Commissioner Leitner said he feels the EOC should not be built and the money should be used for other, more important county needs.

Commissioner Berntson made a motion, seconded by Knutson, to proceed with the process of building the EOC. Upon a roll call vote with Berntson, Knutson, and Schwehr voting "yes," and Leitner and Froelich voting "no," motion carried.

Commissioner Knutson said the Commission should agree on size and options of the building before hiring an architect.

Options were discussed regarding the use of an existing building as an EOC.

Randy Grueneich and Ellen Bjelland, Extension agents, presented a report on their office's activities during the past year, and future plans.

Ms. Bjelland presented for signature a commitment agreement with NDPERS to obtain a 1% reduction in premiums because of wellness program participation.

Mr. Grueneich informed the Commission that Barnes County has been chosen for two sample farms for a Texas A&M program: a small acre farm of 2800 acres and a large acre farm of 7500 acres. He also talked about the effects of drain tiling, and discussed a soybean roundworm that is creating a problem for growers.

Wes Anderson, Museum curator, requested sponsorship for an EECBG grant for new lighting for the museum.

Commissioner Leitner made a motion, seconded by Froelich, to approve sponsorship of the grant as requested, and allow the County Auditor to sign the application as primary contact, with no cost to the County. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Lee Grossman, State's Attorney, discussed a hearing for a proposed annexation by Valley City, stating that if the County has no recommendation, then no attendance is needed.

Chairperson Schwehr recessed the meeting and opened an abatement hearing on a request by Louise Broten to reduce the valuation of Pcl: 63-4170072 from \$98,500 to \$51,300. The City of Valley City recommended allowing the reduction in valuation as requested, and Barnes County Tax Director Betty Koslofsky agreed.

Commissioner Berntson made a motion, seconded by Froelich, to approve the abatement as recommended by Ms. Koslofsky, with the reduction from \$98,500 to \$51,300. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Koslofsky presented a request from Eckelson Township to have the Tax Director assess their property valuations.

Commissioner Berntson made a motion, seconded by Froelich, to allow the Tax Director's Office to assess in Eckelson Township, at a cost of \$833 per year. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Commissioner Leitner asked that the Commission send a letter to the Congressional delegation in Washington, requesting their support of the Devils Lake resolution, funding for LIDAR analysis and a watershed management plan. It was the consensus of the Board that Leitner go ahead with the letter.

Commissioner Froelich made a motion, seconded by Leitner, to amend the minutes of February 1 as follows: page 1819, add the cost to the City of Sanborn for the assessing contract as \$686 per year; page 1820, add that the County cost for the window bid is approximately \$140,000, and to approve the corrected minutes of February 1 and 8. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding vacation and compensatory time.

Jason Thiel, MIS Director, met with the Commission to discuss adding a cell phone policy for County employees. He stated there will be an annual cost for the security certificate for encryption of approximately \$200, which is in the MIS budget. It was the consensus of the Commission to forward the proposed cell phone policy to the Policy Committee for review and recommendation.

Betty Koslofsky, Zoning Coordinator, presented zoning variances for Sharon Clancy and Cole Conley, for which the Planning and Zoning Board recommended a do pass.

Commissioner Froelich made a motion, seconded by Leitner, to approve Sharon Clancy's request for a 127' variance as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Board. Upon a roll call vote with Froelich, Schwehr, and Leitner voting "yes," and Knutson and Berntson voting "no," motion carried.

Commissioner Berntson made a motion, seconded by Knutson, to approve Cole Conley's request for an 80' variance, as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Board. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Commissioner Knutson made a motion, seconded by Froelich, to approve Willie Stoltman's request for a 100' variance as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Board. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Commissioner Froelich made a motion, seconded by Leitner, to approve an auditor's lot for Wayne Christ, Pierce, SE1/4, 24-141-61. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Commissioner Knutson made a motion, seconded by Froelich to approve an auditor's lot for Roxann Myhra, Hobart, NE1/4, 10-140N-69W, on 8.35 acres. Upon a roll call vote with all voting "yes," motion carried.

Discussion was held concerning a recent motion approving the use of 911 funding for matching funds for a grant to purchase a generator for emergency use at the Law Enforcement Center, housing Sheriff, City Police, and 911 Dispatch. Lee Grossman, State's Attorney, discussed an opinion from the State Auditor that the funds cannot be used for the generator unless the percentage of use is determined. Mr. Grossman will correspond with the legislative committee on the issue.

It was the consensus of the Board to leave the motion as approved.

Kerry Johnson, Highway Superintendent, updated the Commission on county snow removal. He stated he has hired 6D Construction and Bill Altringer to move snow, which along with warmer weather has helped the snow situation. He reported about 1100 hours of overtime in the highway department.

Mr. Johnson also informed the Commission of a public input meeting on the North Valley Bridge project, to be held February 17 at the AmericInn.

Ed McGough, Auditor, discussed the upcoming Commissioners Day, to be held March 3 in conjunction with the Winter Show. Speakers include John Froelich on the truck regulatory project, and an Association of Counties representative on legislative matters.

Commissioner Knutson discussed parks funding, with Ransom County to contribute \$2000, and ND Game and Fish, \$3000.

Knutson also set a sheriff's vehicle bid for March 15, and discussed other Sheriff's Office needs, including a portable traffic speed sign that does notices, and a smart phone.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Froelich made a motion, seconded by Leitner, to adjourn. Motion carried.

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Edward R. McGough  
Barnes County Auditor

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Cindy Schwehr, Chairperson  
Barnes County Commission