

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
NIOBRARA COUNTY, WYOMING
OCTOBER 17, 2023

The County Commissioners' meeting was called to order on October 17, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Patrick H. Wade. Vice-Chairman John Midkiff, Commissioner Elaine Griffith, and County Clerk Becky L. Freeman were present. Members of the audience included Heather Goddard with the *Lusk Herald*, Sheriff Randy Starkey & Kurt Gaukel.

A correction to the October 3, 2023, minutes was noted. Two 24-Hour Catering Permits, both to 3 Sister's Truck Stop for the Bruegger Wedding Reception held October 21, 2023, and for the Western Firearms Committee's Son of a Gun Banquet held October 28, 2023, were inadvertently omitted from the minutes. Vice-Chairman Midkiff made the original motion with Commissioner Griffith seconding, and the motion carried.

Road & Bridge- Foreman Fred Thomas met with the Commissioners and updated them on road and bridge business.

Mr. Thomas stated they have begun work on N. Mahnke Road. He discussed road damage that occurred when frac trucks traveled on wet roads. He said the company contacted him about the damage, and he informed them that they needed to fix the road. The company bladed the road on Friday and Saturday, but it needs more gravel. Chairman Wade suggested that the County provide the trucks and the company pay for all the gravel, or that the company use as many trucks as the county does and they still provide the gravel. Mr. Thomas will report on his findings.

Mr. Thomas said he has a dozen road signs made stating "No Winter Maintenance," and will place some on S Bar, Stage, and Old 85 Roads as well as others.

Josh Harkins, with BenchMark of Torrington joined the meeting.

He said that BenchMark is interested in updating the county's current land use plan, and that they are still working on the planning and zoning manual.

Mr. Harkins said that it did not appear that there were many changes needed on the land use plan, but Chairman Wade said it needed to include provisions for wind and solar.

County Attorney- County Attorney Anne Wasserburger met with the Commissioners and discussed county business. She said Rapid Fire made many of the changes to the agreement for the fire alarm panel at the fairgrounds that she requested.

Fairgrounds Fire Alarm Panel Contract- Vice-Chairman Midkiff moved to approve the contract between Niobrara County and Rapid Fire, as accepted with most of Attorney Wasserburger's requested changes, to replace and upgrade the existing fire alarm panel for \$50,591.00. Commissioner Griffith seconded, and the motion carried.

Sheriff Office Vehicle Bid Openings- The Commissioners opened the sealed bids for the following advertised sheriff's vehicles: vehicle #1- 2009 Dodge Ram 1500, vehicle #2- 2009 Dodge Ram 1500, vehicle #3- 2013 Chevy 1500, 2009 Dodge Durango- vehicle #4- 2004 Dodge Ram 1500 (\$5,000.00 reserve), vehicle #5- 2009 Dodge Ram 1500, vehicle #6- 2009 Dodge Ram 1500, and vehicle #7- 2009 Dodge Ram 1500. The following bids were awarded: Vehicles #1-#3 & #6 were awarded to Mike Mayville and Chantry Filener for \$1,100.00 per vehicle, vehicle #4 for \$500.00 to Mike Mayville and Chantry Filener, and vehicle #7 to Shane Kraft for \$2,600.00. Vehicle #5 bids did not meet the reserve.

Elected Officials & Dept. Heads- Sheriff Randy Starkey said they are busy working on painting the interior of the jail.

Public Health Nurse Supervisor Darcey Cowardin said the new Public Health Response Coordinator, Monica Wilcox, is working out well. Ms. Cowardin said public health is in the process of hiring a public health nurse administrative assistant.

She inquired about the status of the public health nurse building and Commissioner Griffith said the project coordinator Neil Holmes is hopeful that a walk through could be conducted by the end of the month.

She said the prevention specialist is leaving at the end of the month.

Ms. Cowardin said over twenty flu shots were administered at the latest clinic and they plan to hold another clinic on October 26th at the shooting sports building. They will have the COVID vaccine available.

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Public Health Response Coordinator Monica Wilcox discussed her position and the training she has attended.

Treasurer Keri Thompson said she is getting ready for the upcoming audit.

Clerk of Court Chrisanna Lund said her office completed the case management data migration to the state system.

Assessor Teri Stephens said deputy Lori Himes passed her tests and will be permanently certified in 2024. She said they are working on entering information on new construction. She noted there are some issues with the assessor's vehicle, but they have been repaired.

Commissioner Griffith said the flagpole has been repainted, and Oftedahl will install it soon.

She said the landscaping and drainage plans around the public health nurse building are working well.

Vice-Chairman Midkiff reported on a meeting he attended where WYDOT reported there are approximately 300 vacancies statewide.

Chairman Wade discussed issues and concerns with the Rock Springs BLM RMP. He said Niobrara County is trying to offer support to the southwestern counties.

Old Business- There was nothing new to report on the old jail or the juvenile services program.

The Commissioners discussed the annual fire alarm inspection proposal from Rapid Fire and will discuss it later with the fair board.

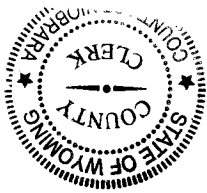
Linda Frye, with the Town of Lusk, met with the Commissioners and presented information about the Town's recent application to the State Lands and Investment Board (SLIB) for emergency Mineral Royalty Grant (MRG) funds. She said the Town requested \$300,000.00 from SLIB for a new ambulance and equipment. The Town has saved approximately \$147,00.00 that will be used for these purchases.

She said that SLIB denied the application as it did not meet their "emergency" qualifications.

She said the Town will reapply in February for a regular MRG grant, but it will be more competitive. They will seek alternative funding opportunities as well.

Consent Agenda- Commissioner Giffith moved to approve the consent agenda. Vice-Chairman Midkiff seconded, and the motion carried. Items on the consent agenda were the minutes from the October 3, 2023, meeting, and receipts for September from the Sheriff for \$265.00, from the Public Health Nurse for \$266.61, and from the Clerk of Court for \$747.00.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.



Attest:

Becky L. Freeman

Becky L. Freeman, County Clerk

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Patrick Wade

Patrick Wade, Chairman