

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
NIOBRARA COUNTY, WYOMING  
November 1, 2016

---

The Niobrara County Commissioners' meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on November 1, 2016. Those in attendance were Chairman Richard A. Ladwig, Commissioners Greg B. Starck and Patrick H. Wade and County Clerk Becky L. Freeman. Also in attendance were County Commissioner candidates Dustin Cushman and John Midkiff.

Road & Bridge- Lawanna Reese met with the Commissioners and Fred Thomas, Road and Bridge Foreman, to inquire about weed control on the sides of S. Van Tassell Road. She asked if there was any possible way to use a brush hog on the sides to knock out the weeds because they cause problems when it snows.

She asked if there was any possibility to subcontract that out to someone to help lighten the load for road & bridge.

Pat mentioned that some landowners mow the weeds themselves. Lawanna asked if it was okay for them to mow the weeds on the shoulders and the Commissioners and Fred said it was okay. She also asked if they would plow as often as possible in the wintertime. Fred said that if there was a problem, to call the shop and the crew would get to it as soon as they could.

Lawanna thanked them for their time and said she would visit with the Town of Van Tassell about mowing the shoulders.

Fred then talked about the Lance Creek Bridge replacement and said that WYDOT is going to let the bid on November 8th. Fred suggested that he and the commissioners should attend the pre-bid meeting. He also said that he had been told that the concrete from the existing bridge will be stockpiled for us and the State will keep all the rebar.

The group then discussed other road and bridge business. Richard gave Fred a list of tractors that Corky Fosher had given him which might be options for replacing the one at the fairgrounds.

Pat said it doesn't make sense to purchase a new tractor when it will only see few hours use and Richard suggested looking into the military surplus for equipment, tires, and other items.

Ben Lamp, Stan Swanson, Jim Jordan, Lee Brown, Bill Krejci, Bill Proctor, Brian Peterson, Tom and T. J. Marshak, Gregg Matney and Gene Lenz met with the Commissioners to discuss county roads, dust control and road contracts.

There were several that voiced concerns about the dust on roads and asked why water trucks aren't being used. Fred said that he has one water truck and that wouldn't be enough, and only five employees that work throughout the county.

Stan then asked why the county doesn't designate more resources to roads and why not put pressure on the legislature for more funding. Richard explained the budgeting process and how the county gets a small piece of the whole pie, which then must be divided between the general fund, library and fair boards.

The group continued discussing road conditions and Pat mentioned the 6<sup>th</sup> penny tax.

The question was posed if the county could "train" someone to run a blade and have them certified and work as a volunteer to blade roads. Stan said he would volunteer and get certified on running a blade. There were questions about liability and it was suggested that the County's liability insurance provider be contacted about this.

They also discussed weeds on shoulders and the Commissioners said that landowners could mow the sides of roads to alleviate the weed problem.

There were also inquires as to why road and bridge only worked four ten-hour shifts. Members of the audience felt that rotating days or having flex time would be a better use of