

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
NIOBRARA COUNTY, WYOMING
November 15, 2016

The Niobrara County Commissioners' meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on November 15, 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 was County Commissioner elect John Midkiff and Justen and Jason Miller.

Road and Bridge-Lance Creek Bridge Replacement Project (STP-BROS-CN14063) – Jim Barnes, Resident Engineer for WYDOT, met with the Commissioners and Foreman Fred Thomas and updated them on the status of the aforementioned project. He discussed the county's share of costs for the project. The current rate that the county is paying is 11% of the project cost, but Jim said that percentage would be reduced to 8.23%, making the total amount the county would owe for this project approximately \$150,000.00. Jim also said that there wouldn't be a temporary road in use, but a detour would be established and Fred said that there was a road that could be used. This will be discussed at the pre-construction meeting.

Jim said that the apparent low bidder for the bridge replacement project was Reiman Corp. There is a target date for completion of October 2017. Jim said that a letter of concurrence would be required from the County stating that the Commissioners concur with the costs and County's participation in the payment for this project.

Letter of Concurrence- Pat moved to approve the letter of concurrence for the Lance Creek Bridge Replacement Project. Greg seconded, motion carried.

Justen and Jason Miller met with the Commissioners to discuss county roads. They asked the Commissioners if they had every considered putting road blading projects out for bids. The Commissioners didn't believe they had and Fred added that the budget determines a lot of what they can do as far as contracting blade work for roads. Jim Jordan joined the meeting.

They also inquired about watering down the roads and asked if road and bridge had a water truck. Fred said they had one and Justen said that he knows of several businesses that would give water to help alleviate the dust when road projects are in progress.

Jason then asked about money for the gravel and how the Commissioners determine what roads receive gravel. Richard said that funding for gravel comes from the County Road Fund and he explained about the five year project that was started in 2005. He also said that perceived need, mail and school bus routes, as well as input from individuals, all help determine which roads should be a priority.

The Millers then asked how to change a county road to a private road. Richard explained the process of petitions, public hearings etc. Pat asked if they had an idea of what road was being considered and Jason said Coffey Road. Jason said that half of the road is in poor condition. Fred said that there are two new auto gates on both sides of Middle Creek but there is no maintenance after Coffey's.

The group went back to discussing funding and Greg said that it might not be a bad idea to get together with other blade operators and present some projects and costs for consideration. Justen inquired about the availability of grant money and the Commissioners explained that budget cuts at the state level have caused the Consensus Block Funds to go by the wayside but the current 6th penny tax collection is nearing completion and it might be an opportunity to put road projects on the ballot and pose the question to the voters.

Fred discussed equipment repairs and said that he had to send the blade to Casper. He thought that CAT might have to pull the transmission but he would know more later. The Millers inquired whether or not the County owned the blade or if it was leased and how many hours were on it.

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The Millers thanked the Commissioners for their time.

Shelly Larson, Hospital Board member, met with the Commissioners and gave an update on hospital business. She said that floors are being replaced at the hospital and an open house is scheduled for January. She said the Hospital Foundation would like to use that opportunity to thank those who attend the open house for their support, both past and present.

Porter, Muirhead, Cornia and Howard- Vikki Nunn, CPA with PMCH, met with the Commissioners to touch base on the status of the County's audit. She discussed the FEMA grants received regarding the flood and said that she was having trouble tying the funds received to the invoices and the FEMA project worksheets submitted. She said she would contact Clerk Freeman to further discuss the matter and gather more information.

She also discussed the county road funds and said that CPAs had received a heads up informing them to ensure that the funds are being used in accordance with the County Road Fund manual guidelines. Niobrara County uses a portion of this fund to help fund new equipment. She said she had never seen money being used to buy equipment and in the CRF manual, she doesn't see where it can be used for equipment. Richard, who serves as Chairman on the County Road Standards Committee, which is in charge of maintaining the manual, said that after conversations with other committee members, it was deemed common practice, both historically and currently, to transfer a portion of those county road funds to general funds to use in the road and bridge budget to purchase equipment. He said the committee didn't think that the money should be used to offset any wages however, strictly repair and maintenance.

Vikki stated that as long as it is Richard's testimony that other counties are using it for equipment as well, she would write a letter stating that traditionally and ongoing with the committee's oversight, those funds can be used for equipment and make that letter a part of the county's audit.

Lastly, she discussed governmental entities and bank reconciliations and some of them not being performed in a timely matter. She said she will have recommendations for management for reconciling checking accounts.

Public Hearing- Richard recessed the Commissioners' Meeting at 11:57 a.m. and called a public hearing to order. The public hearing was held to receive public comment on the transfer of a Retail Liquor License from Kristen Zerbst Stauffer D/B/A/ PaleoPark to Arlene Zerbst Rapp, D/B/A/ PaleoPark; the renewal of a Retail Liquor License for Kristen Zerbst Stauffer D/B/A PaleoPark, and the renewal of a Retail Liquor License for Rex Groves D/B/A The Pronghorn Bar. There was no one in attendance to speak in favor of or against the licenses.

The hearing was closed and the Commissioner meeting reconvened at 12:00 p.m.

PaleoPark Liquor License Transfer-Greg moved to approve the transfer of the retail liquor license currently held by Kristen Zerbst Stauffer, D/B/A PaleoPark to Arlene Zerbst Rapp, D/B/A PaleoPark. Pat seconded, motion carried. The renewal for a retail liquor license for Kristen Zerbst Stauffer, D/B/A/ PaleoPark was not necessary as the transfer had been approved.

Pronghorn Bar Liquor License Renewal- Greg moved to approve the retail liquor license renewal for Rex Groves, D/B/A/ The Pronghorn Bar. Pat seconded, motion carried.

Richard recessed the regular meeting at 1:30 p.m. to attend a meeting on the 2017 Eclipse. Richard reconvened the regular meeting at 2:30.

Public Health Nurse Building Access Ramp-Contract-Greg moved to sign the contract with Peterson Construction for the Public Health Nurse Building Access Ramp for \$3,140.00. Pat seconded, motion carried.

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Consent Agenda- Greg moved to approve the consent agenda. Pat seconded, motion carried. Items on the consent agenda were the minutes of the November 1, 2016 meeting. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

NIOBRARA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Richard A. Ladwig, Chairman

Attest:


Becky L. Freeman, Clerk