

The Barnes County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 with Bill Carlblom, Mike Schwehr, Pete Paulson, and Shawn Olauson present. Vicky Lovell was present via telephone. Chairman Bill Carlblom called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m., roll call was taken, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the agenda was reviewed.

Economic Development

Jennifer Fiest requested the approval of the agreement between VC-BC Development Corporation and Barnes County and release funds of \$32,000.00 to Economic Development utilizing funds to provide technical support for projects and on-going operations of the Development Corporation. Pete Paulson moved to approve the release of funds and approve the agreement between VC-BC Development Corporation and Barnes County. Mike Schwehr seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Release of funds of \$70,000.00 to support the I-94 Regional Development Corridor. This request is year 12 of 15 years. Pete Paulson moved to approve the release of funds for this project. Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. The motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Release of \$22,040 for membership in the South Central Dakota Regional Council for April 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027. Shawn Olauson moved to approve the release of funds and approve the joint powers agreement; Vicky Lovell seconded the motion. The motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Release of funds of \$15,000.00 for Valley Recycling, year three of three. Mike Schwehr made a motion to approve release of funds for Valley Recycling; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote. Release of funds of \$90,000.00 for the 2026 Single Family Home Buyer Assistance Program was requested. Discussion included making the \$90,000.00 available to more Barnes County residents. This item was tabled for the next agenda.

Planning & Zoning

An application for a setback variance was presented for Duane Burchill located in the NW¼ 1-142-57 of Grand Prairie Township to replace a building damaged in the June 2025 storm. Shawn Olauson moved to approve the application; Mike Schwehr seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. An updated Floodplain Ordinance was presented for approval. Pete Paulson made a motion to approve the ordinance; Mike Schwehr seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. The Regional Livestock Development and Planning Grant Program through the ND Department of Agriculture was discussed. Haylee Viger from the ND Agriculture Department explained the program. Applications are through SCDRC. Bill made a motion to approve joining the Regional Livestock Development and Planning Grant Program; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. The motion carried with Bill Carlblom, Shawn Olauson, Mike Schwehr, and Pete Paulson voting yes and Vicky Lovell voting no. Building permits were reviewed.

Corrections

Jeremy Wolff presented additional information on the LiveScan Finger Print Machine. The quote is \$25,490.00 plus an annual maintenance fee of \$3,593.00. This machine will replace the machine that is currently being used but no longer serviced by the company. The company will agree to a one year but not a two year warranty maintenance program. Shawn Olauson made a motion to approve purchasing the finger print machine. Mike Schwehr seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes.

Highway Department

A student from the Vo Tech Work Experience Program expressed interest in working at the Highway Department. We do not have to pay this student. Bill Carlblom made a motion to approve allowing a student from the Vo Tech Work Experience Program to work at the Highway Department. Pete Paulson seconded the motion; Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Jamie and Tim will be attending the annual NDACO Engineer Conference January 28 through January 30th. Ryan Metcalf earned his Road Scholar II Award and Jamie would like permission to bring him to the conference to accept his award. The commissioners felt it would be good for him to accept the award in person. Staff continue to cut and clean up damaged tree branches and trees. They are also continuing to manufacture rakes for the front of the blades. Every motor grader will have a rake.

Auditor's Office

Shawn Olauson moved to approve January 6, 2026 meeting minutes. Pete Paulson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members voting "aye". Kerry Johnson submitted an application to be on the Barnes County Park Board. Mike Schwehr moved to approve appointing Kerry Johnson to the park board. Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously upon roll call vote with all members voting yes.

Commission Discussion

Pete Paulson attended the Economic Development meeting and reported Freedom Machine has closed. The Single Family Home Buyer Program was discussed. He attended an Added Value Livestock meeting through Economic Development. There is a Bean and Corn plant on each side of the county so would like to utilize those products more in this county through livestock enterprises. A NDSU AI professor brought a robot that they are developing. The bid opening for the Airport sale of land is scheduled for February 2nd. They are looking for a new loader. Does the county own the airport land that the hangers sit on was questioned. Shawn Olauson attended the Water Board meeting. Legal consultation increased \$10.00 per hour. Engineering has a 3% increase on most of the work. The trash rack at Clausen Springs has not been installed yet. Dam inventory is done and inspection on five was done. Snagging and clearing started. He attended the Pancake Feed for the Historical Society. There were 265 attendees and there was

\$4,500.00 in donations. There will be a popcorn and movie night. Mike Schwehr reported that the CCHD director is still on medical leave. One position will be open. Update on funding for HVAC was questioned. We are still waiting on grants and using the general fund. We will need the balance from a bank loan. Bill Carlbom attended the Winter Show Board meeting. They are getting things lined up for the Winter Show. There is a car show and a dog show being held there. He will be meeting with NDSU Extension staff to do annual reviews.

With no further business, Shawn Olauson made a motion, seconded by Mike Schwehr, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously, with all members voting “aye” and the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Bill Carlbom, Chairman
Barnes County Commission

Julie Mindt
Barnes County Auditor