

The Barnes County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, February 17, 2026 with Bill Carblom, Mike Schwehr, Vicky Lovell, Pete Paulson, and Shawn Olauson present. Chairman Bill Carblom 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.

#### **Sheriff's Office**

Bids were received for a patrol vehicle. Puklich submitted a bid of \$57,325.00 for a 2026 Chevrolet Tahoe; Stoudt Miller Inc submitted a bid of \$42,330.00 for a 2026 Dodge Durango with a 3.6L V6 or \$45,148.00 with a 5.7 Hemi; A bid of \$46,864.00 with a 3.3L V6 was submitted for a 2026 Ford Explorer. No bids were received for a pickup. After discussion, Randy will solicit bids on a pickup and will come back to look at all the bids. This vehicle will replace a Durango.

#### **Planning & Zoning**

One variance application was submitted for approval for Ryan Torbenson for building a house 123' from the center of County Road 21 located in the NE¼ 16-139-58 in Marsh Township. Vicky Lovell moved to approve the application; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. There is a notification of a planned 8,000 head hog farm being built in NE Barnes County. Building permits were reviewed.

#### **Highway Department**

A project resolution was presented for the structure removals and construction of reinforced concrete box culverts located one mile southeast of Nome and one mile west and two miles north of Kathryn. This is for the Brown and Finger bridge removal and replacement. The bid in the amount of \$507,467.25 from Midwest Contracting LLC received in the bid opening of February 6, 2026, for Project BRJ-0002(053) was the low bid received. This project is 100% paid for by federal bridge funds. Mike Schwehr made a motion to approve the bid; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. The motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Dave Praska with DOT has H funds to work on the Love's Interchange project and are asking the City of Valley City and Barnes County to partner with them on this project to lay some asphalt. This is county road #21 S. The cost to the county would be approximately \$7,000.00. Bill Carblom made a motion to partner with the DOT on this project; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. County Rd #11 is in the planning phase for overlay. As an option, discussion took place on milling the last 1200' to save money. Cass County will chip seal their portion of County Rd #26 and asked if Barnes County wanted to chip seal the Barnes County portion of four miles on County Rd #6 from ND 26 East to the county line. The bid came in \$229,000 less for the BC #21 North project so there would be money left over to chip seal and strip the four miles. Bill Carblom made a motion to approve this project; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all members voting yes. Chip sealing is planned for the bike path and a short stretch on the dump ground road. Jamie has an opportunity to attend the National Association of County Engineer's Conference in Texas in April. Jamie is on the State Board of Directors for the ND chapter. Bill Carblom made a motion to approve the cost of attending the conference; Vicky Lovell seconded the motion. The motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes.

#### **Auditor's Office**

Mike Schwehr moved to approve February 3, 2026 minutes as presented. Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting "aye". The county currently published the agenda for the Barnes County Water Resource and pays for it out of the general fund. The current commission feels the Water Board should be paying the cost of agenda publication out of the Water Board funds. Shawn will talk with the Water Board on the agenda publication. The 2026 election conference will be held March 4<sup>th</sup> and March 5<sup>th</sup> in Bismarck. The Auditor's office will be closed those two days. Regional training will be the following week.

#### **Public Comments**

Barry Borg asked if the county could do anything regarding a Leafy Spurge and Canada Thistle problem on land located in the NW¼ of Section 22 in Hobart Township owned by Game and Fish. Bill will make a phone call to see what he can find out. Pete will ask the Weed Board.

#### **Commission Discussion**

Pete Paulson reported that the Veteran Service Office had to do maintenance on the van for a battery issue. He attended the Economic Development last week. They are hoping Freedom Machine will start back up. Shawn Olauson attended the water board meeting. They had a public hearing during the main meeting regarding a surface drain application for Pat Hurley. Legal Drain # 2 annual meeting was also held during the main meeting. There was no response to extend Thordenskjold Drain. Snagging and Clearing will continue if they can get to it from the shoreline. Midco Cable will be running commercial spots for World War II designation. North Dakota Horizon will have an article published in their magazine. Alex gave a talk on the Bill of Right after the museum meeting. Mike Schwehr stated City County Health is considering selling the enclosed trailer. The Highway Department is interested in the trailer. The nursing position has been filled. Vicky Lovell attended the library meeting. There will be no February meeting for SCRDC. Economic Growth and Diversification Grant deadline is March 10<sup>th</sup>. Innovate ND Grant deadlines are February 26<sup>th</sup> and May 14<sup>th</sup>. ND Department of Commerce Energy Grant deadline is March 1<sup>st</sup>. Community Development Block grant deadline is March 4<sup>th</sup>. Bill will be attending the pipeline meeting in Jamestown on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

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 9:15 a.m.

Bill Carblom, Chairman  
Barnes County Commission

Julie Mindt  
Barnes County Auditor