

The Barnes County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, June 16, 2026 with Bill Carlblom, Mike Schwehr, Vicky Lovell, Pete Paulson, and Shawn Olauson. 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.

Vicky Lovell made a motion to approve the agenda; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all members voting "aye".

Planning & Zoning

A variance setback application was presented for Keith Kirsch. He would like to rebuild an existing garage on 1.18 acres of NE ¼ of 26-140-59 in Hobart Township. This will be 72' from the center of township road, 34th St SE. This is the same location as the current garage. Shawn Olauson made a motion to approve the application; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Building permits were reviewed.

Veterans Service Office

Tammy Jacobson presented information on the VetraSpec program used by the VSO. Currently, Becky is limited to what she can access in this program. To be allowed permission where she needs to be, the cost is \$500.00 annually. The budget was adjusted between line items so that total expenditure dollars won't increase. The part-time van driver's position has not been filled. The van will be in for repairs June 22 through June 24th. There is \$30,000.00 set aside in a separate account for purchasing a new van in the future.

Treasurer's Office

Our current online payment processor, ACI Payments, will be charging a monthly service fee of \$1,495.00 to use their services to process credit card payments. The county has a deadline of July 1, 2026, to inform them of the intent to discontinue services. This system is used by taxpayers who choose to pay by credit or with a debit card. Municipay (Autoagent) was researched and is being recommended as Barnes County new online payment processor. There would be a one-time purchase of a card reader for \$199.00. This would eliminate the monthly fee charged by ACI, reduce transaction costs to taxpayers and maintain an online payment option with minimal implementation costs to the county. Mike Schwehr made a motion to cancel services with ACI Payments and implement Municipay; Vicky Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried with all members voting yes upon roll call vote.

Auditor's Office

Shawn Olauson moved to approve June 2nd, 2026, minutes as presented. Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting "aye". Board appointments were discussed. Mike Schwehr's term is up on the School Annexation, Reorganization, and Dissolution Committee. Mike would like to continue to be a member on the board. Vicky Lovell made a motion to approve Mike Schwehr to the School Annexation, Reorganization, and Dissolution Committee; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously with all members voting yes upon roll call vote.

Corrections

Options were discussed regarding the flag poles located at the Correctional Center. The poles are too close together creating flags hitting the pole and flags wearing out faster. They are getting a quote to remove the middle flagpole and use those parts to repair the left flagpole. Another option is to fly two flags on the center pole and remove the two outer poles. Commissioners requested to be notified of new hires. Power backup batteries that need to be replaced will be in next year's budget. The cost is approximately \$13,000.00.

Highway Department

Jamie recommended selecting KLJ Engineering for the Viking Drive Bridge Construction Engineering project. The KLJ proposal was the only proposal received. The county share is approximately 20%. The majority of cost is incurred by the federal grant program and the state. Vicky Lovell made a motion to approve KLJ for the Viking Drive Bridge Construction Engineering project; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Soil borings are being done by the Peterson Bridge. Traffic will be reduced to one lane. A semi-permanent option on Hieb Bridge will be used in the place of cones better safety. There is an opening for an Operator II position. Four applications were received. A safety issue with trees in the right of way on a township road located in Green Township was discussed. Jamie will follow up with the township board. The culvert issue east of Kathryn remains an issue. We are looking for a company that will submit a bid. It is approximately 25' deep making which is more than we can handle. Boring would be expensive. Depending on hydraulics, a possibility could be installing an 18" through the 24" culvert and using flow overfill to fill around it. Highway staff would be able to do this work.

Commission Discussion

Pete Paulson attended the Economic Development Corporation meeting. They will be increasing the mill request to 2.1 mills. Sanford will move some administration offices into the Tech Center next year. Water availability to the hog farm is more than estimated. Shawn Olauson attended the water board meeting and reported on drain levels. They are spraying weeds in the bottom of the drains. Vicky Lovell stated the library is gearing up for their Pie and Ice Cream Social during Rally in the Valley. The cake and ice cream for the courthouse 100th birthday will be at the same time. The banks are donating bottled water. Shane will pick up the tent on the 18th. Coolers and ice are needed. Bill Carlblom stated Shane was taking care of the damaged tree from last week's storm.

With no further business, Mike Schwehr made a motion, seconded by Shawn Olauson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously, with all members voting “aye” and the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

Bill Carblom, Chairman
Barnes County Commission

Julie Mindt
Barnes County Auditor