

The Barnes County Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, August 18, 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 moved to approve the agenda as presented; Mike Schwehr seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with all members voting "aye".

Public Comments

No requests received.

Planning and Zoning

A setback variance was submitted by Jonathan Hannig to have several tile lines and one surface inlet cage within 75' of 123rd Avenue Southeast and out of road right of way located in Cuba Township in SW¼ 3-139-57. Vicky Lovell moved to approve the application; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members voting yes upon roll call vote. A tree variance application was submitted by Mitchell Finn to add Dogwood shrubs 25' from the center of the gravel road in Sibley Trail Township located in Sections 13 and part of Section 24-143-58. The commissioners felt it is better to keep the distance uniform for all applicants. Shawn Olauson moved to deny the application; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. The motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. A setback variance was presented for Gwen Crawford to add an addition and remodel on to the current house located in Ashtabula Township, Jewett's Beach Sections 21 and 22-142-58, Lot 12. Pete Paulson moved to approve the application; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. The motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Building permits were reviewed.

Corrections

Jeremy Wolff presented a quote of \$23,597.52 from Accurate Controls, Inc. to replace two personal computers that are used for security door controls. He would like to include this in his 2027 budget. He is hoping to split the cost with dispatch.

Auditor's Office

Pete Paulson moved to approve August 4, 2026, minutes as presented. Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting "aye". An application from J and L Bar for a Special Permit to sell alcoholic beverages at a special event for the Dakota Riders Hillclimb was presented. Vicky Lovell moved to approve the application; Mike Schwehr seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously with all members voting yes upon roll call vote. An application from J and L Bar for a Special Permit to sell alcoholic beverages at a special event was presented for a wedding for the Brent Christ family at their family farm was presented. Vicky Lovell moved to approve the application; Shawn Olauson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members voting yes upon roll call vote. An Application for a Local Permit was presented for the Sodbuster Club for raffles and calendar raffle for January 10 – December 12, 2027. Mike Schwehr made a motion to approve the local permit application; Pete Paulson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members voting yes upon roll call vote.

Commission Discussion

Pete Paulson and Mike were questioning the sick time balance for a part-time employee. Shawn Olauson mentioned the Water Resource District is short on funds. They need to come up with \$20,000 for a project otherwise they will lose state funding. Spraying has been done in the waterways. He reported on drain levels. Legal Drain snagging & clearing has been done. Bill checked with Tracy at South Central Dakota Regional Council for any dollars available for our Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning project. There is not much available. Barnes County was awarded some dollars, but the money has not been received yet. The Bank of North Dakota has an Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund program that will open in October or November. This program has a two percent or less interest rate. We will apply for this for the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning project in the courthouse when the program opens.

Budget Discussion

The preliminary budget was discussed. Pete Paulson made a motion to increase the preliminary mills for Soil Conservation from 1.43 mills to 1.5 mills; Mike Schwehr seconded the motion. Motion carried upon roll call vote with all members voting yes. Mike Schwehr made a motion to publish the preliminary budget as previously discussed with the above change for Soil Conservation with the corrected total mills at 123.92; Vicky Lovell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously with all members voting yes. Budgets cuts will now be made. Julie will notify department heads to go over their budgeted line items and make suggestions as to what line items can be cut and by what dollar amount. This information will need to be reported to Julie by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21st. Consolidating some services may be an option that would affect budgets resulting in decreased expenses. Another budget hearing will be set for Tuesday, August 25th at 5:30 p.m.

Additional Discussion

Randy McClafin asked permission to hire a full-time deputy to fill a vacant deputy position at starting wage. This individual currently works part time as a correction officer and is currently in the criminology program at college. The commission gave Randy permission to go ahead with the new hire.

With no further business, Pete Paulson made a motion, seconded by Shawn Olauson, to adjourn the meeting. Net Motion carried unanimously, with all members voting "aye" and the meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

Bill Carblom, Chairman
Barnes County Commission

Julie Mindt
Barnes County Auditor