

Proceedings of the Mountrail County Commissioners

1. OPENING & ROLL CALL

The Board met in special session on Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 3:15 P.M. via over the phone and or go to meeting with Commissioners Trudy Ruland, Wayne Olson, Joan Hollekim, Daniel Uran and Garry Jacobson present. Also present was States Attorney, Wade Enget.

Chairman Ruland called the meeting to order.

3. APPOINTMENT SCHEDULED

3:15 P.M.

Discussion on COVID-19 and the county offices working remotely. Present for the discussion via phone/GoToMeeting were Laurie Johnson, Corrections Coordinator; Karen Babbitt, Building Supervisor; Corey Bristol, Sheriff/DES Coordinator; Jana Hennessy, R&B Engineer; Traci Hysjulien, Clerk of Court; Desiree Sorenson, Mountrail McKenzie Human Service Zone Director; Lisa Lapica, Veterans Service Officer; Lori Hanson, Tax Director; Nichole Degenstein, Human Resource Director; Lynette Vachal, Extension Agent; Mary Dennis, Administrative Assistant for Mountrail McKenzie Human Service Zone; Melissa Vachal, Recorder; Cassandra Gerich, Sheriff's Office; Mary Kilen, Dawn Lockrem and Lynn Heinle.

Comm. Ruland stated what the expectations are for the elected officials and appointed Officials for working remotely. Comm. Ruland would like a plan of action of going forward. Comm. Uran thinks it should be up to the Department Heads on who works remotely. Comm. Hollekim stated her concerns would be the continuity of offices and dealing with potential animosity between employees with some offices remaining on-site and some off-site. Comm. Olson stated he agrees with the rest of the board. Comm. Ruland questioned the cleaning supply with Karen Babbitt. Building Supervisor Babbitt stated that the supplies are good for now. Comm. Ruland stated that Armor Interactive can create a help line process if needed. Traci Hysjulien, Clerk of Court stated had no problem with working remotely if capable of doing that in their offices. Corey Bristol, Sheriff only issue is if the office has more than two lines make sure that second line is giving a busy signal instead of ringing without no answer. Comm. Hollekim stated she believes the Officials still need to show up to the offices periodically. Sheriff Bristol stated the front security desk is still being manned and everything still seems to be working. Comm. Olson stated a lot of businesses are social distancing.

Moved by Comm. Uran, seconded by Comm. Hollekim, to approve allowing department heads to make the decision to work remotely from home with offices maintaining services during the normal business hours through April 8th, 2020. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

3:30 P.M.

Discussion was held on the frost law. Comm. Ruland discussed the executive order made by the Governor to lift all seasonal load restrictions on all State highways to minimize disruption of the supply chain during the COVID-19 public health emergency. A motion was made on February 4th, 2020 Commissioner meeting to follow the State frost law limitations which Engineer Hennessy disagrees to lift at this time due to the softness of all gravel roads and culverts being frozen. Engineer Hennessy recommends that the board approves authority for her to lift the restrictions if and when needed to provide essential services to citizens. Myrtle Township also wrote a letter recommending the frost law stay in affect.

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Olson, to maintain frost law restrictions and allow Engineer Hennessy to make any necessary waivers to the restrictions to provide essential services or goods to the citizens. Frost law restrictions will be readdressed at the April 7, 2020 meeting. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

3:35 P.M.

Comm. Uran spoke concerning a special meeting held with the Upper Missouri District Health Unit on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 due to running low on funds with all the testing of the COVID-19. Discussion was held on helping out with the shortage of funds by expending through the Commissioner Contingency Fund.

Moved by Comm. Jacobson, seconded by Comm. Hollekim, to participate in providing funding to UMDHU from the Commissioner Contingency Fund for added costs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Upon roll call, Jacobson, Olson, Ruland, Uran, and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

3:40 P.M.

Wade Enget, States Attorney will discuss more on the Emergency Fund NDCC 57-15-28 at the next commissioner meeting.

3:50 P.M.

Stephanie A. Pappa, Auditor spoke to the board concerning the Primary Election and the State of North Dakota conducting a statewide vote by mail due to the pandemic. The following resolution was presented to the Board with two polling locations the South Complex (Stanley) and New Town Civic Center.

Mountrail County Resolution Regarding June 9th 2020 Primary Election Process

The Mountrail County Commission operating under their authority provided by NDCC § 16.1-04-02 & 16.1-11.1-01 and in consideration of the Governor’s declared emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic hereby declares by resolution that all previous County polling locations shall be consolidated into a minimum of two locations for the June 9th 2020 primary election located at Stanley South Complex Building & the Civic Center in New Town.

The County Commission hereby grants authority to the County Auditor in their discretion to additionally suspend the polling location(s) if State or Federal law otherwise suspends the polling location requirement.

(For reservation counties only) In addition to the minimum of one polling location in the County, the County Auditor shall ensure at least one additional voting location is present on tribal land unless another alternative is agreed to by the respective Tribal Chair.

The County Commission further declares under their authority provided by NDCC § 16.1-11.1-01 to the greatest extent possible for the county to conduct the June 9th 2020 primary election by way of mail in ballot. The Commission encourages all qualified citizens to take every opportunity to vote by mail ballot prior to the June 9th 2020 Election.

Moved by Comm. Uran, seconded by Comm. Jacobson, to approve the Resolution as presented above regarding June 9th, 2020 Primary Election Process. Upon roll call, Hollekim, Uran, Jacobson, Olson and Ruland voted yes. Motion carried.

4:00 P.M.

Discussion was held on the signing of the letter of support for the grant application from Pierce County for ND Region 2 and MHA Nation Meals on Wheels program.

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Uran, to approve signing and sending the letter of support to the Governor of North Dakota for the grant application from Pierce County for ND Region 2 and MHA Nation Meals on Wheels program. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

3. ADJOURN

The Board adjourned at 4:15 P.M. to meet in regular session on Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 9:00 A.M. Accepted and approved this 7th day of April, 2020.

Trudy Ruland, Chairman
Mountrail County Commissioner

Stephanie A. Pappa
Mountrail County Auditor