

Hand County Board of Commissioners
Miller, South Dakota
Commission Chambers (video via Facebook Live)
July 21, 2020

Chairman Jim Jones brought the meeting to order at 7:00 pm., with commissioners Jim Eschenbaum, Greg Palmer, Gib Rodgers and Luke Wernsmann present.

Randy Peck, Weed & Pest Supervisor presented his findings on purchasing of an enclosed incinerator so that county documents could be destroyed appropriately. He searched several vendors and found that Vern's Manufacturing offered the best value with a unit costing \$1,150 with the modifications specified. It was moved by Rodgers / Eschenbaum, passed to purchase the unit from Vern's.

Jeff Hargens, Highway Superintendent requested approval to employ Casey Gates to fill the vacancy left by Mike Mareska. Gates' entry pay would be \$15.78 and would be come \$17.78 once he obtains his class A CDL. Hargens also requested approval to employ Rodney Gortmaker, Jr. as a summer season employee to fill the vacancy left by Alan Slunecka. Gortmaker's pay would be \$16 per hour pending verification of his Class A CDL. Hargens requested approval to hire a summer seasonal worker to fill the upcoming vacancy created when Caleb DeBoer returns to school. By consent of the commission, it was moved by Palmer / Eschenbaum, passed, to grant all requests outlined above.

Hargens spoke about the Pearl Creek dike which is near the board of Gilbert and Grand Townships. Commissioner Rodgers emphasised that repairs, even if temporary, need to be performed to mitigate the issues which result from the damaged portion of the dike. All were in agreement that Hargens is to talk to the land owners and obtain the necessary access easements and facilitate repairs leading up to complete repairs as soon as possible.

Hargens informed the board that a road in Plato Township is flooded again. There is a history of flooding on this road and a history of attempting to repair or raise the road. Hargens believes it is time to consider building a bypass for the flooded area but it would require cooperation with the adjoining land owners. Hargens wants to meet with all interested parties. At the request of the commission, a public hearing will be held on August 4th at 10 A.M. for the purpose of open dialog about the possible mitigation of this problem.

Kecia Beranek, On-Hand executive director met with the commission and summarized their activities and programs. Beranek highlighted the following topics: Industrial Park, Hotel Study, Business Visits, Covid / Cares Act response, Revolving Loan fund statistics, the mural and several other topics. Beranek invited chairman Jones to attend their annual meeting.

Chairman Jones addressed the board about the ballots submitted by the members of the vision insurance (VSP). A ballot was provided to all members and an election was held. The results were as follows: 21 employees are on the plan, 16 ballots were received for a 76.2 % turnout, a clear majority of members. There was one vote for option 1 and 15 votes for option 2.

Within option 2, the group voted on enhancements. 11 votes were cast in favor of all enhancements except 1 in which there were 10 votes, again a clear majority. The commission approved moving to Option 2 with all enhancements.

Doug DeBoer, Auditor presented the commission with information on the revenues for the general fund, the road and bridge fund and the other funds not included in the general or

road and bridge funds. A “snapshot” of the 2020 revenue budget was presented and DeBoer reported that revenues appear to be stable and that there is no reason to believe that the second half of 2020 will see a decline. DeBoer said the stability of the revenue for these funds leads him to believe that budget projections for 2021 will also be stable and sufficient to create the expenditure budgets for 2021.

DeBoer reviewed specifics in the 2021 revenue budget pointing out that the road and bridge fund has revenues for specific projects and that dedicated funds also appear in the fund balances, not in addition to them. He urged caution in not over estimating the fund balances.

DeBoer said that 2019 ended with the board needing to transfer from the general fund to the road and bridge funds. As a result, the amount budgeted for the transfer remained in the general fund. Likewise, some projects were not completed because of flooding and as a result it is likely that we will see an audit comment for having too much in the general fund. DeBoer suggested that 2020 has also been a mild year so far, for large projects, and with funding injects for large projects, that 2021 would be a good year to catch up on overdue projects and capital improvements. It would bring the general fund reserve back to preferred status.

After reviewing revenues, the commission was shown the budget expenditure requests from the various offices.

The road and bridge fund expenditures were reviewed and found to be reasonable. No changes were made. The fund accounts for non-road & bridge and non-general funds were reviewed. The group spent some time on the emergency manager’s budget but again it was reasonable and made no changes. The group spent the most time on the general fund accounts looking at the department requests and proposed projects.

The commission asked for a couple of clarifications before the August 4th meeting but gave the auditor authority to compose the “provisional budget” for review on that same date.

It was moved by Palmer / Wernsmann, passed, to adjourn the meeting [9:45 P.M.].