

Wells County Commissioner's Meeting Minutes

August 4, 2026

The August meeting was called to order by Chairman Dockter at 8:00 AM. Present at the meeting were Stan Buxa, Dennis Dockter, Bryan Lutt, Danny Maxwell, Brian Miller, Jordan Beckley, Lydia Gessele, Neil Nelson of the H-P, and Daniel Stutlien.

SB (M), BL (S) to approve the minutes from the July Meeting. Unanimously carried.

SB (M), DM (S) to approve the bills as presented. Unanimously carried.

The current WC Balance Sheet was reviewed and discussed. Also, the Auditor shared current county investments as well as Commission controlled WC funds. DM (M), BL (S) to approve the Balance Sheet. Unanimously carried.

SB (M), DM (S) to approve Laura Muscha, Treasurer, and Daniel Stutlien, Auditor, to purchase or cash out CD's and investments on behalf of WC. Unanimously carried.

Correspondence received this month included notification of final completion of bridge project BRJ-0052(051) three miles south and one mile west of Harvey, the Q2 WC NDSU Extension newsletter, as well as proclamations for both pronghorn and small game, waterfowl, and furbearer for this fall and winter.

Commission Portfolios were discussed.

Under the Public Comments portion of the meeting, no one was signed up to address the Commission.

As per request from July, Kim Hart, Kyle Hart, and Lynda Roller representing Chaseley Township sat with the Commission to discuss issues that arose over the last couple of months regarding WC's maintenance of the township's roads. Kim Hart spoke favorably on recent performance of the Road Dept. and stated, without official Board action, the statement(s) or opinion(s) of any officers is meritless, to which the Commission agreed. Kyle Hart provided some photographs to represent the township's point of view of how this matter started. Brent Keller stated all parties need to work together. Commissioner Lutt spoke about the importance of mutual respect, cooperation, and compromise amongst all parties in these matters.

Don & Kathy Muscha of West Norway Township had requested meeting with the Commission to discuss the bridge projects and road re-route north of Fessenden in West Norway Township. Muscha conveyed some misunderstanding about land acquisition and right-a-way for this project. This is a problem that needs to be addressed and solved as soon as possible. The Commission thanked the Muscha's for bringing this to their attention and directed the Road Foreman and Commission Maxwell to meet with the landowner to rectify this matter.

WC Road Foreman, Brent Keller, addressed the Commission. Keller discussed weeds at the Fairgrounds as a Weed Board responsibility. Spraying is now completed. The department is currently doing some graveling and will be getting gravel crushed in the near future. A chip seal is scheduled for late August on the Golf Course Road near Harvey. A milling project will be completed at the Fairgrounds in September. Keller discussed personnel and some cross training of the newest department employee.

Caitlyn Roemmich from WC District Health met with the Commission to discuss their current budget circumstances as well as their '27 Budget. Roemmich shared the five current staff members at District Health as well as both historical staffing and taxpayer funding for District Health going back ten years. Programs administered by District Health were also reviewed. Some Q & A with the Commission took place.

On behalf of WC Planning & Zoning, Jana Mogren addressed the Commission regarding multiple recommendations. First, regarding changes to the building permit fee schedule for permits issued by WC, SB (M), DM (S) to approve the recommendation from P&Z for the new fee schedule. Unanimously carried. Next, a recommendation to Article 12.1.3.31 to eliminate reverse set backs from the Wind Energy Ordinance. DM (M), BM (S) to approve the recommendation to remove the article. Unanimously carried. Then, a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from Erfle Farms to install an anhydrous tank was considered. DM (M), BM (S) to approve the CUP. Unanimously carried. Lastly, dialogue continued on the creation of a new Comprehensive Plan for WC.

Mogren had also requested the Commission address the meeting stipend for the recently re-organized WC Soil Committee to bring them up to the equivalent of other similar boards in WC. DM (M), BM (S) to approve \$50/meeting and mileage for meeting attendees.

Janelle Pepple then spoke with the Commission regarding an updated MOU for 911 dispatch. SB (M), DM (S) to approve the MOU. Unanimously carried.

The Commission then discussed a failing transmission in a Sheriff's Dept. vehicle, a '20 Tahoe. SB (M), BL (S) to repair the vehicle at a GM Certified location. Unanimously carried.

WC Auditor Daniel Stutlien then begin discussion of the '27 budget with the Commission. Stutlien addressed countywide valuations which show a slight overall decline of 1.17% from 2025. Overall, the total valuation for WC in 2026 will be \$47,947,597 with valuation shifting from Ag (-3.9%) and Centrally Assessed (-4.12%) properties to Residential (9.96%) and Commercial (4.55%) properties. Stutlien reminded the Commission to keep the Long-Term Planning completed earlier this year in mind as they undergo this process. The Commission then reviewed the budget requests of the Coroner and Health Officer, Health District, County Fair, Historical Society, JDA, Soil Conservation, Water Board, Weed Board, and Wells-Sheridan Aging Council. Finally, the Commission discussed the opening of the Recorder's position that will be vacated at the end of the calendar year. Chairman Dockter recommended Commissioners Buxa & Maxwell meet with the Auditor to craft a recommendation for the employee salary schedule and the remainder of the budget Tuesday, August 18th, at 8:00 AM. Finally, there will be a special meeting of the Commission to continue work on the budget Tuesday, August 25th, at 8:00 AM.

The next regular meeting of the WC Commission will be held Tuesday, September 8th, at 8:00 AM in the KTL Building.

The next Six-County Meeting will be held in McIntosh County Thursday, September 10th, at 10:00 AM.

The next WC Departments meeting will be held Thursday, August 20th, at 9:00 AM at the KTL Building.

The NDACo State Convention will be held Oct. 11-13 in Bismarck. Commissioner Lauth will serve as Voting Delegate for WC this fall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:41 AM.

The following Fees and Receipts were approved and ordered filed:

Clerk of Court	\$	479.00
Recorder	\$	0.00
Sheriff	\$	1,299.50
Misc.	\$	39,299.30

On motion, the following bills were ordered paid: (*Gross wages, when listed*)

#Direct Deposit	Payroll, General (1000)	\$	97,224.03
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, Road (2001)	\$	56,062.53
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, 911 (2003)	\$	1,351.39
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, County Agent (2005)	\$	3,334.21
#Direct Deposit	Payroll, Social Welfare (2007)	\$	76,643.20
#ACH BC/BS	Insurance	\$	71,942.46
#ACH NDPERS	Retirement	\$	35,234.81

Aug-26 General

Pitney Bowes	\$114.75	Postage
NDTC	\$2,306.36	Telephone
Fessenden City	\$470.46	Countywide Utilities
Otter Tail	\$2,871.48	Countywide Utilities
Rath & Mehrer, P.C.	\$22,000.00	Auditing Fees
Dakota Dust-Tex	\$710.89	Courthouse & KTL Maintenance
Benson County Farmers Press	\$56.00	Legal Publications
Foster County Independent	\$42.00	Legal Publications
Herald Press	\$118.07	Legal Publications
Transcript Publishing	\$35.00	Legal Publications
Frey Insurance	\$29.00	ND Insurance Reserve Fund
ITD	\$1,480.60	Technology
NDACo Resources Group	\$195.27	Technology
NDTC	\$100.65	Technology
Convergent Technologies	\$647.14	Vault Inspection/Maint. Contracts
ND State Treasurer	\$140.00	Marriage Licenses
ND State Radio	\$120.00	Maintenance - State Radio
SMP Health St. Aloisius	\$54.00	Screening Tests
Brandjord Chevrolet	\$292.14	Travel/Mileage/Veh.Maint.
Bubble Barn Car Wash	\$50.00	Travel/Mileage/Veh.Maint.
Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden	\$2,062.62	Travel/Mileage/Veh.Maint.
Kreiter Autoworks, Inc.	\$260.58	Travel/Mileage/Veh.Maint.
Little Mart	\$318.97	Travel/Mileage/Veh.Maint.
Tammy Roehrich	\$203.00	Travel/Mileage
Otter Tail	\$131.08	Utilities
Fessenden City	\$377.15	Festival Hall/Fair Utilities
Otter Tail	\$2,110.90	Festival Hall/Fair Utilities
KLJ Engineering, LLC	\$349.12	HB 1066
Wells County Treasurer	\$3,578.12	Supplies
Wold Engineering	<u>\$15,000.00</u>	HB 1066

\$56,225.35

911

ND State Radio

\$22,913.49 Data Base/Circuiting/Updates

Co. Agent

Leaf	\$235.91	Copier Lease & Maint.
Ciera Kotaska	\$279.85	Travel/Mileage
Connie Loen	\$107.30	Travel/Mileage
Otter Tail	\$124.83	Utilities
NDSU-Ag Budget Office	\$8,458.35	Share of County Agent
	\$9,206.24	

HSZ

Alicia Lamm	\$51.43	Client Support
Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden	\$138.03	Fuel/Foster Care
Wells County Treasurer	\$333.46	Fuel/Foster Care
Wells County Treasurer	\$22.00	Vehicles
Wells County Treasurer	\$110.00	Foster Care/Lodging/Hotel
Wells County Treasurer	\$399.00	Foster Care/Safety Perm.
Wells County Treasurer	\$56.79	Fuel/Child Protect. Serv.
Wells County Treasurer	\$13.00	Vehicles
Elayna Kenschak	\$18.88	Client Support
Patriot Fuels	\$201.98	Family Social Worker/Fuel
Wells County Treasurer	\$30.00	Family Social Worker/Fuel
Bessette Motors, Inc.	\$79.30	Vehicles
CenDak Cooperative-New Rockford	\$76.98	In Home Care/Fuel
Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden	\$479.84	In Home Care/Fuel
Patriot Fuels	\$267.45	In Home Care/Fuel
B & B Service and Repair LLC	\$122.45	Vehicles
Bessette Motors, Inc.	\$99.55	Vehicles
4th Corporation	\$105.00	Contracted Services
Advanced Business Methods	\$252.95	Contracted Services
Leaf	\$312.00	Contracted Services
Wells County Treasurer	\$181.30	Contracted Services
Dakota Central	\$175.08	Telephone
NDTC	\$547.54	Telephone
Wells County Treasurer	\$395.30	Telephone
Central City H20+	\$132.00	Zone Admin Support/Misc
ITD	\$130.76	Zone Admin Support/IT Other
NDACo Resources Group	\$960.00	Zone Admin Support/IT Other
Wells County Treasurer	\$78.95	Zone Admin Supp./Office Materials
Wells County Treasurer	\$140.67	Fees
	\$5,911.69	

Weed Control

Donna Rau	\$220.87	Salary - Employee
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Fram Township

\$500.00

Noxious Weed/Leafy Spurge/Cost Sharing

\$720.87

HWY Tax

Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden

\$17,193.85

Fuel

Kotaco Fuel & Propane

\$3,302.28

Fuel

Butler Machinery

\$2,655.40

Machinery Repairs & Supplies

Gooseneck Implement

\$73.95

Machinery Repairs & Supplies

High Plains Equipment

\$127.73

Machinery Repairs & Supplies

Lemer's ACE & Rental

\$445.96

Machinery Repairs & Supplies

NAPA-Harvey

\$228.34

Machinery Repairs & Supplies

Patzer Truck Repair

\$363.16

Machinery Repairs & Supplies

Power Plan

\$2,556.32

Machinery Repairs & Supplies

Linde Gas & Equipment

\$190.68

Supplies

NDTC

\$66.63

Telephone

Cathay City

\$95.00

Utilities

Central Plains Water

\$175.45

Utilities

Fessenden City

\$287.42

Utilities

Harvey City

\$68.20

Utilities

Northern Plains Electric

\$572.58

Utilities

Otter Tail

\$426.76

Utilities

Sykeston City

\$49.00

Utilities

Verendrye Electric

\$265.41

Utilities

Mayo Construction

\$3,736.80

Road Materials

Wells County Treasurer

\$1,028.61

Supplies

SMP Health St. Aloisius

\$371.00

Drug testing-employee

\$34,280.53

Preservation

Underground Vaults & Storage

\$318.00

Scanning Documents

24-7

Office Of Attorney General

\$310.00

Scram Fees

Redwood Toxicology Laboratory

\$35.82

Sweat Patch Analysis

\$345.82

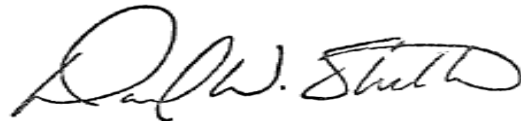
\$129,921.99

Approved:



**Dennis T. Dockter,
Wells County Commission Chairman**

Attest:



**Daniel W. Stutlien,
Wells County Auditor**