

Wells County Commissioner's Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2025

The December meeting was called to order by Chairman Dockter at 8:01 AM. Present at the meeting were Stan Buxa, Dennis Dockter, Danny Maxwell, Brian Miller, Tim Buchwitz, Lydia Gessele, Brittany Long, Caitlyn Roemmich, Randy Suckut, Daniel Stutlien, and Neil Nelson of the Herald-Press. Commissioner Bryan Lautt was not present.

BM (M), DM (S) to approve the minutes from the November Meeting. Unanimously carried.

Employee timesheets were reviewed by the commissioners.

SB (M), BM (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, also noting \$400,000 was transferred out of the MM November 28th to cover payroll, bills, and payments to political subs. DM (M), SB (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.

The only correspondence received this month involved the Bank of ND's Revolving Loan Fund for infrastructure, and notification of the 62nd Annual Joint ND Water Convention scheduled for December 9-11 in Bismarck.

Commission Portfolios were discussed.

The Commission discussed officers and portfolio assignment for 2026. BM (M), SB (S) to nominate Dennis Dockter as Chairman and to cast a unanimous ballot for Dockter. Unanimously carried. SB (M), BM (S) to appoint Danny Maxwell Vice-Chairman. Unanimously carried. WC needs a representative for both the South Central Dakota Regional Council and the WC Housing Authority, as well portfolio holders for Clerk of Court & Sheriff's Dept., Treasurer's Office & States Attorney, Custodial, Road & DES, Extension, Recorder & HR, and Auditor & Tax Director. Chairman Dockter will review portfolio assignments at the January meeting.

Wells County received beer and liquor licenses applications from all existing licensees, including Fessenden Country Club, Fessenden Country Club (*Festival Hall*), Flatland Trail Blazers, Inc. (*Wells County Fairgrounds*), KALR Inc. (*Bremen Bar*), Kotoco Fuels Inc., and Peaceful Valley Golf Course. BM (M), DM (S) to approve each of the license requests for 2026. Unanimously carried.

SB (M), DM (S) to approve DHB, FIBT, and FSB as designated depositories for Wells County Funds for 2026. Unanimously carried.

Commission meeting dates for 2026 were provided the Commission.

Yearend authorizations were discussed. DM (M), BM (S) to authorize the Auditor to approve all payments for postage, and to election workers, schools, townships, cities, fire districts, ambulance districts, and any other agencies including County Agency, Preservation, ND 24/7, Sheriff, and 911 Wireless funds, as the Auditor may deem appropriate without first presenting the payments to the Commissioners for approval throughout 2026. Unanimously carried.

Under the new Public Comments portion of the meeting, Randy Suckut requested to address the Commission regarding county roads and highways. Suckut began by thanking the Commission for their service. He then went on to thank the Road Dept. for filling the holes in County #71. Suckut's question to the Commission was regarding how WC prioritized the roads for which flex fund applications were submitted. The Commission shared some of the criteria utilized and will share traffic counts with Suckut when available.

Caitlyn Roemmich, Director of WC District Health, and Brittany Long, member of the WC District Health Board, revisited the Commission regarding the District's impending financial hardships. SB (M), BM (S) to authorize up to \$150,000 to be provided, along with documentation, as necessary during 2026 from General Fund resources to keep District Health operational. Unanimously carried.

WC Road Foreman, Brent Keller, met with the Commission to discuss matters of his Dept. Keller discussed the completion of the horse barn removal at the Fairgrounds, as well as razing a property in Fessenden which came back to WC due to unpaid taxes. Keller has met with the Fair Board to discuss placement of more asphalt millings at the Fairgrounds late next summer or early fall. WC has had gravel crushed to prepare for the '26 season. Shop inspections have been completed for the quarter, and various compliances issues will need to be addressed. Keller discussed personnel and equipment needs, specifically a trailer for the Dept.

Jason Mayfield of Wold Engineering sat with the Commission to discuss the status of flex fund applications, completed projects, and potential upcoming projects in WC.

An abatement request was considered from Gibby Carlascio for parcel #80389000. SB (M), DM (S) to deny the request. Unanimously carried.

A proposal for precinct and polling locations for Election '26 was distributed. BM (M), SB (S) to accept the proposal of WC being a single precinct with splits for rural WC, as well as the cities of Bowdon, Cathay, Fessenden, Hamberg, Harvey, Hurdfield, and Sykeston. Unanimously carried. In addition, WC Auditor Daniel Stutlien distributed information regarding candidacy and office holder requirements as well as petition requirements.

The resignation submitted by Amy Dale, WC VSO, effective 11/30/25, was considered. SB (M), DM (S) to accept the resignation and thank her for her time of service. Unanimously carried.

Following interviews, Dakota Steedsman was recommended by the interview committee for the VSO position. DM (M), BM (S) to approve the hiring of Steedsman. Unanimously carried.

An offer to remain a member of the South Central Dakota Region Council was presented to the Commission. SB (M), BM (S) to maintain WC's membership in the organization. Unanimously carried.

The WC Property Foreclosure was held November 18th. Five (5) parcels did not sell and, thus, were either transferred to the Cities of Bowdon (#55021000) and Harvey (#80461000) respectively for \$1.00 ea., or were retained by Wells County (#24518000, #50508000 & #50509000). As such, WC Auditor, Daniel Stutlien recommended the Commission abate the '22, '23 & '24 taxes on each of these parcels. BM (M), DM (S) to abate the taxes on the aforementioned parcels. Unanimously carried.

The Commission began discussions regarding long-term planning in an effort to develop clarity of fiscal direction and challenges of WC. The Commission were asked for their input to the

document before the process begins. It remains the plan to have this process completed by Spring '26.

The ND County Commission Summit will be held Tuesday, December 9th, in Bismarck.

The WCEG Christmas Social will be held Wednesday, December 10th, at 2:00 PM at FH.

The next Six-County Meeting will be held in Emmons Co. Thursday, December 11th, at 10:00 AM.

The next regular meeting of the WC Commission will be held Tuesday, January 6th, at 8:00 AM in the KTL Building.

The next WC Departments meeting will be held Thursday, January 15th, at 2:00 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:31 AM.

The following Fees and Receipts were approved and ordered filed:

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|----------------|--------------|
| Clerk of Court | \$ 265.00 |
| Recorder | \$ 5,622.56 |
| Sheriff | \$ 917.50 |
| Misc. | \$ 27,647.79 |

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

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| #Direct Deposit | Payroll, General (1000) | \$ 94,142.59 |
| #Direct Deposit | Payroll, Road (2001) | \$ 40,755.60 |
| #Direct Deposit | Payroll, 911 (2003) | \$ 1,308.55 |
| #Direct Deposit | Payroll, County Agent (2005) | \$ 3,194.47 |
| #Direct Deposit | Payroll, Social Welfare (2007) | \$ 71,933.62 |
| #ACH BC/BS | Insurance | \$ 60,126.87 |
| #ACH NDPERS | Retirement | \$ 32,727.57 |

Dec.

25

GENERAL

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| ND Envelope Company | \$623.91 | Central Supplies |
| Farm and Home Publishers | \$270.00 | Misc. Supplies |
| ODP Business Solutions, LLC | \$71.77 | Central Supplies |
| Herald Press | \$395.50 | Central Supplies |
| Pitney Bowes | \$39.00 | Postage |
| Dakota Mailing | \$242.39 | Postage meter supplies |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$358.21 | Telephone |
| NDTC | \$647.60 | Telephone |
| Fessenden City | \$397.58 | Countywide Utilities |
| Otter Tail | \$1,434.18 | Countywide Utilities |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$61.70 | Bank Charges |
| ND Assn. of Counties | \$1,815.00 | Continuing Education |
| TK Elevator | \$18,145.71 | Courthouse Maintenance |
| MARC | \$451.83 | Courthouse & KTL Maintenance |
| Dakota Dust-Tex | \$461.76 | Courthouse & KTL Maintenance |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$24.97 | Courthouse & KTL Maintenance |

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Herald Press | \$535.50 | Legal Publications |
| South Central Dakota Regional Council | \$9,685.00 | Dues |
| ND Assn. of Counties | \$8,046.00 | Co. Dues |
| ND Assn. of Counties | \$1,725.00 | NDCCA Dues |
| ND Assn. of Counties | \$18,476.19 | WComp. |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$286.21 | Safety Supplies |
| Janelle Pepple | \$140.00 | Safety Supplies |
| Dakota Fire Extinguishers | \$1,425.94 | Safety Supplies |
| Advanced Business Methods | \$6,130.48 | Technology |
| NDACo Resources Group | \$65.45 | Technology |
| ITD | \$1,480.60 | Technology |
| NDTC | \$100.74 | Technology |
| Karissa Dockter | \$240.00 | Treasurer Health Ins. |
| Carla Johnson | \$250.00 | Clerk of Court Health Ins |
| Carla Johnson | \$112.00 | Travel |
| Sidwell Company | \$8,049.57 | Sidwell/Vanguard |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$95.96 | Training |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$922.43 | Travel/Mileage/Veh.Maint. |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$446.23 | Travel/Mileage/Veh.Maint. |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$40.47 | Uniforms |
| Uniform Center | \$802.87 | Uniforms |
| Opdahl Body Shop | \$6,408.00 | Vehicles-Decals |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$33.47 | Misc. |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$114.21 | Telephone |
| NDTC | \$64.96 | Telephone |
| Otter Tail | \$54.09 | Utilities |
| Fessenden City | \$320.18 | Festival Hall/Fair Utilities |
| Otter Tail | \$690.18 | Festival Hall/Fair Utilities |
| | <u>\$92,182.84</u> | |

HB 1066

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|-----------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Knife River Materials | \$16,865.67 | HB 1066 |
| Wold Engineering | \$1,011.94 | HB 1066 |
| KLJ Engineering, LLC | <u>\$41,653.44</u> | HB 1066 |
| | <u>\$59,531.05</u> | |

911

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| ND 911 Association | \$100.00 | Dues/Registration Fees |
|--------------------|----------|------------------------|

JAIL & TRANSPORTATION

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| HACTC | \$152.88 | Jail & Transport Medication |
| HACTC | <u>\$9,690.00</u> | Jail & Transport Prison Board |
| | <u>\$9,842.88</u> | |

CO. AGENT

| | | |
|-------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Connie Loen | \$250.00 | County Agent Health Ins |
|-------------|----------|-------------------------|

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| NDTC | \$121.75 | Telephone |
| Ciera Kotaska | \$324.58 | Travel/Mileage |
| Otter Tail | \$51.52 | Utilities |
| | \$747.85 | |

SOCIAL SERVICES

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Wells County Treasurer | \$75.00 | Dues/Reg Fees/Foster Care |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$116.95 | Client Support |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$75.45 | Fuel/Foster Care |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$101.15 | Fuel/Foster Care |
| Patriot Fuels | \$41.56 | Fuel/Foster Care |
| Alicia Lamm | \$64.28 | Meals/Foster Care |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$49.23 | Fuel/Child Protect. Serv. |
| Otter Tail-Jamestown | \$431.76 | Child Protect./Safety Perm. |
| Paula Duren | \$250.00 | Parent Aid Health Ins. |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$76.98 | Income Maintenance / Fuel |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$75.00 | Dues/Registration Fees |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$116.87 | Family Social Worker/Fuel |
| CenDak Cooperative-New Rockford | \$56.12 | Family Social Worker/Fuel |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$26.46 | Family Social Worker/Fuel |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$13.00 | Vehicles |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$14.50 | Meals/Foster Care |
| Lori Henne | \$75.00 | Dues/Registration Fees |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$215.80 | In Home Care/Fuel |
| Patriot Fuels | \$290.17 | In Home Care/Fuel |
| Dales Radiator & Repair | \$54.50 | Vehicles |
| B & B Service and Repair LLC | \$67.25 | Vehicles |
| Opps Auto Body | \$75.00 | Vehicles |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$193.80 | Contracted Services |
| 4th Corporation | \$140.00 | Contracted Services |
| Advanced Business Methods | \$251.85 | Contracted Services |
| Leaf | \$312.00 | Contracted Services |
| Patriot Fuels | \$211.73 | Fuel |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$434.94 | Telephone |
| Dakota Central | \$171.64 | Telephone |
| NDTC | \$585.39 | Telephone |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$99.95 | Vehicles |
| Central City H2O+ | \$90.00 | Zone Admin Support/Misc |
| NDACo Resources Group | \$1,080.00 | Zone Admin Support/IT Other |
| ITD | \$126.66 | Zone Admin Support/IT Other |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$263.24 | Zone Admin Supp./Office Materials |
| | \$6,323.23 | |

WEED CONTROL

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Cost Share Participants | \$79,495.00 |
| Donna Rau | \$220.87 |
| Herald Press | \$294.00 |

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|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| Benson County Farmers Press | \$224.00 | Advertising |
| Sunshine Spray Service | \$8,850.00 | Chemical Spraying |
| ND Weed Control Association | \$285.00 | Dues/Registration Fees |
| | | Noxious Weed/Leafy Spurge/Cost |
| Woodward Township | \$500.00 | Sharing |
| | | |
| | \$89,868.87 | |

HWY TAX

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|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Mid-Dakota Lumber | \$135.73 | Building Upkeep |
| K & S Builders, LLC | \$1,500.00 | Building Upkeep |
| Farmers Union Oil-Fessenden | \$7,208.03 | Fuel |
| Power Plan | \$4,920.98 | Machinery Repairs & Supplies |
| Butler Machinery | \$2,644.69 | Machinery Repairs & Supplies |
| NAPA-Harvey | \$166.24 | Machinery Repairs & Supplies |
| Gooseneck Implement | \$99.89 | Machinery Repairs & Supplies |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$218.67 | Supplies |
| Linde Gas & Equipment | \$145.90 | Supplies |
| Dales Radiator & Repair | \$40.00 | Supplies |
| Lemer's ACE & Rental | \$33.96 | Supplies |
| NDTC | \$145.72 | Telephone |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$95.98 | Travel/Mileage |
| Doug Mertz | \$126.00 | Travel/Mileage |
| Timothy Schmiess | \$67.20 | Travel/Mileage |
| Gary Kaul | \$44.80 | Travel/Mileage |
| Harvey City | \$64.20 | Utilities |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$202.14 | Utilities |
| Fessenden City | \$155.49 | Utilities |
| Sykeston City | \$49.00 | Utilities |
| Otter Tail | \$395.57 | Utilities |
| Central Plains Water | \$174.54 | Utilities |
| Northern Plains Electric | \$217.86 | Utilities |
| Cathay City | \$95.00 | Utilities |
| Susag Sand & Gravel | \$38,720.00 | Road Materials |
| Susag Sand & Gravel | \$390.00 | Hauling |
| | | |
| | \$58,057.59 | |

PRESERVATION

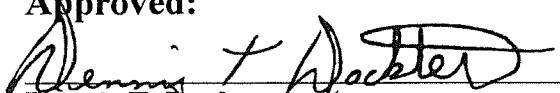
| | | |
|--------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Tyler Technologies | \$4,748.41 | Technology-Doc Pro |
|--------------------|------------|--------------------|

24-7

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Office Of Attorney General | \$320.00 | Scram Fees |
| Wells County Treasurer | \$63.90 | 24-7 Pharm Chem |
| | \$383.90 | |

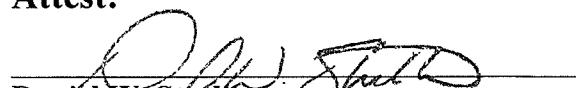
\$321,786.62

Approved:



Dennis T. Dockter,
Wells County Commission Chairman

Attest:



Daniel W. Stutlien,
Wells County Auditor