

MINUTES
YEAR-END MEETING
MORTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DECEMBER 29, 2006

Bob called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with open doors.

Present: Bob Boaldin, Chairman; Allen Tucker, Vice-Chairman; Ron DeGarmo, Commissioner; Mary Gilmore, County Clerk. Eric Witcher, County Attorney, was out of town this day.

The Agenda was reviewed and approved with additions.

Minutes of the December 18, 2006 meeting were read and approved on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.

Bills were reviewed and approved for payment.

Tom Fuhrman met with the Commissioners and discussed the inevitable IRS audit. The IRS has plans to audit every city and county in the State. This started approximately two years ago. Stevens County's audit was just completed. Tom said that one rule the IRS has made is that the Appraiser is a county employee. A lengthy discussion took place. Motion was made by Ron, seconded by Allen, to hire Tom as a part-time employee at \$400/month (gross.) Morton County has been paying Landmark Appraisal this amount since Tom has been designated the Morton County Appraiser. This change will be effective January 1, 2007.

Charley McKinley requested approval to transfer \$25,000 from the Road Department Capital Outlay budget to Contractual. Motion to approve this transfer was given on a motion by Bob, seconded by Ron.

Leon Ellis met with the Commissioners. Leon said the Arvada, Colorado, firm gave a higher bid to crush cement. The Commissioners asked Leon to contact the Nebraska firm again; they were in Liberal recently to crush cement and were going to get Leon a bid.

Bids were opened for a new road grader as follows:

Caterpillar (with trade)	2007 140H-00 Grader	\$167,972.00
Van Keppel Co. (with trade)	2007 Volvo G-940 Grader	\$137,240.00
Murphy Tractor (with trade)	2007 John Deere 770D Grader	\$127,259.00

Dennis Hagerman, Van Keppel, and Gene Schwarz, Caterpillar, were the only representatives present. Each was given the opportunity to "sell" his product. Dennis and Gene then left the meeting because of inclement weather.

Following a lengthy discussion motion was made by Bob, seconded by Allen, to buy the Caterpillar because of its fuel efficiency, trade-in value, availability of parts, and resell value. The Caterpillar is also \$4.00/hr. cheaper to run than the other graders. The consensus of the Commissioners and Charley was that the Caterpillar is the best investment for the County.

The Commissioners asked Charley if he has contracted yet with a company to get an asphalt plant here. Charley said Heft can be here in April but he is still going to get other bids.

Charley asked if he got bids for fuel for next year, did the Commissioners think he could save the county any money. The Commissioners said this might be useful information in negotiating with local businesses. In the end, we need to use local vendors.

The Commissioners signed the employer-owned vehicle forms and the voucher for Motor Vehicle Registrations.

Karena Meek, District Court Clerk, entered the meeting and reported she had just received a copy of the Executive Order from the Governor's Office declaring Tuesday, January 2, 2007, a National Day of Mourning and designating this day as a legal holiday. A short discussion took place. Karensa said the Courts will probably do whatever the County does. After Karensa left the meeting a short discussion took place. Consensus of the Commissioners was to keep the Morton County offices open January 2nd.

The Clerk reported that we now have a signed copy of the Contract between Morton County and Orr Construction Management, Inc. for the Assisted Living Facility.

The Commissioners reviewed the letter regarding the Governor's Grants Program for E911. Due to the volume of the information on the grants submitted it will take more time to review and process the documents. It is hoped a decision on the final grant award will be known by January 30th.

The Commissioners reviewed the list of employees who are delinquent in paying the first half of their taxes. Four of those on the list are EMTs and will have to be taken off the schedule until they pay their taxes. The remaining three employees will not receive a raise in their pay in January. The County's policy reads that if an employee is delinquent in paying the first half of their taxes the employee will not receive a pay increase in January. If the employee is also delinquent in paying the last half of their taxes they could lose their job with the County.

The Clerk mentioned that one item she has learned the IRS will be asking to review is the County's policy on Cellular Telephones and Pagers. At this time Morton County does not have such a policy. The Clerk has received a copy of another county's policy and has agreed to review it and possibly use it as a guideline for Morton County.

The Commissioners reviewed a “revised” employee evaluation; an employee did not know she did not have to sign her evaluation and asked to write comments and have the evaluation resubmitted to the Commissioners.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned on a motion by Allen, seconded by Ron.