

Unapproved Minutes of October 6, 2026

The Miner County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on October 6, 2026, in the Miner County Courthouse Commission room. Members present: Joe Bechen, Tim Neises, Kari Jo Carlson, and Mike Clary. Absent: Kathy Faber.

Chairman Bechen called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. It was moved by Carlson, seconded by Neises, and carried to approve the agenda. The minutes of the September 22nd meeting were approved, with the correction to the operating transfer to Emergency Management from \$11,000 to \$1,500 due to a typo.

Bechen reported on his attendance at the Xcel meeting. The upcoming 911 Agency meeting will take place at the Howard Fire Hall, not the Courthouse. Treasurer Brittany Yanish appeared for public comment to inform the Commissioners about the SDFit program, which has higher interest rates than the County currently get through the banks we work with, but the funds may not all stay in South Dakota, let alone locally. Yanish is checking with local banks on negotiating interest rates, as the County prefers to keep the funds local.

The following correspondence was received: September month-end balances; VSO August report; and a letter from the DOR regarding SB 96.

Highway Superintendent Krempges gave an update on the highway department. Gravel crushers are done. Krempges talked to Colby Tolk at the HFCA yesterday; they may start spraying today and will stay in contact with Krempges to coordinate schedules. The bridge project on west side of Carthage should be complete; payment was received from the DOT. LTAP training happened this month. Highway workers are training on blading. Traffic counters have been installed on 425th Ave. (Carthage Oil); they will be on for a week to see the results. Krempges plans to order another load of salt before the winter and plans to put a sanding notice in the paper and Facebook soon. Krempges will be gone at the next meeting due to the Local Road Conference in Sioux Falls. The new sander has been built and is on the way; the old sander will need to be declared surplus.

Building & Grounds Manager Kiehl met with the board about the contract with Harris for adding a 3-way 3" butterfly valve at the end of the fluid cooler piping before it leaves the building to lessen the chances of the heating system failing. The system will be down for a bit while the repair is being done, but it shouldn't be noticeable unless the outdoor temperature is extreme. The quote for this repair is capped at \$19,300. Motion by Carlson, second by Clary, and passed to authorize Bechen to sign the contract with Harris.

Motion to move into executive session for employee negotiations pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2 (4) by Clary, second by Neises, and carried at 10:17am. Returned to regular session at 10:26am.

Deputy Director of Equalization April Lund took her oath of office

Carlson moved to enter executive session pursuant SDCL 1-25-2 (1) for personnel matters, seconded by Neises and carried at 10:30am. Returned to regular session at 10:46am.

Motion by Carlson to increase Barb Esser's wage by 10% following the completion of her 6-month probation. Motion failed for a lack of second. Carlson amended her motion to increase Barb Esser's salary by \$5,862 annually, to \$58,629 annually, seconded by Clary. Motion carried.

Cora Schwader appeared before the board on ambulance matters. The City of Howard will not be able to build a new building in the foreseeable future, so the ambulance board will need to investigate alternative options. Some possible locations for the building site were discussed. The County already has good drawings and specifications for an ambulance garage, but the building would have to be bid out. Bechen suggested talking to those who have available properties and getting prices from them to determine the direction to go.

Schwader gave a 911 departmental update to the board. November 4th is still the planned switchover date at this time. The new highway frequency should be programmed in all the Miner County radios, so the County is currently waiting for the FCC to send information to Two Way Radio to complete this. The Internet was installed in Fedora. The agreement was for a set \$95 per month; there are no taxes due to it being for a government agency. Commissioners asked for an invoice for the total amount from Santel before paying the full amount and instructed Mommaerts to pay just the billed amount for now. At the 911 Agency meeting on Thursday, the County will hand out and test beepers. Schwader is going to put a table next to her door during tax season with pamphlets about the switchover, inviting them to come in and talk to her.

Clary made a motion to table the executive session scheduled at 10:40, seconded by Carlson, and carried.

Dan Johnson from Risty Benefits met with the board to present dental, vision and health insurance rates for 2027. The board will decide at a later date on plans to go forward with for 2027.

Motion by Carlson to take the tabled executive session off the table, seconded by Clary and carried.

Motion by Carlson, second by Clary, and carried to move to executive session for personnel matters, pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2 (4) at 11:31am. Board returned to regular session at 12:02pm.

It was moved by Carlson, seconded by Neises and carried to authorize the auditor to pay the following claims: Alliance \$150.00, Santel \$30.00, Triotel \$173.53 **911 CHARGES**; ICAP \$857.75 **COMMUNITY ACTION PAYMENT**; Ulteig Engineers \$19,307.75 **CONTRACTED MAINTENANCE**; SD DOH \$1,674.00 **CO NURSE PMT TO STATE**; Avera \$113.10 **DRUG TESTING**; Jack's Uniforms \$1,025.00, Schomp's Mechanical Services \$4,361.84 **EQUIPMENT**; Detco \$2,822.63, HFCA \$25,553.88, Auto Value \$66.46 **FUEL**; Northwestern Energy \$36.62 **GAS**; Rural Office of Community Services \$4,500.00 **GRANTS**; Brian Baldwin \$155.00 **IN SERVICE EDUCATION**; SDACC \$1,829.00 **LEGAL EXPENSE RELIEF FUND**; Neises Mowing \$610.00 **MOWING**; Elan Financial \$82.00 **POSTAGE**;

Lewis \$2,954.77 **PRISONER MEDICAL**; Miner County Pioneer \$193.16 **PUBLISHING**; Diesel Machinery \$7,126.00, Dust-Tex \$278.76, Microfilm Imaging \$470.00 **RENT**; James Valley Landscape \$775.00, Office Peeps \$86.51, Santel \$231.33, Schomp's Mechanical Services \$2,418.50, Auto Value \$9.99, Top Notch Exterior Cleaning \$714.00, TwoTrees Tech \$2,115.00, Two Way Solutions \$207.99 **REPAIRS**; Kristian Ellendorf \$900.00 **STATE'S ATTY OFFICE EXPENSE**; Amazon \$83.10, Dakota Data Shred \$26.25, Dust-Tex \$387.42, Elan Financial \$157.66, K&M Tire \$848.00, Office Peeps \$359.43, Rusty's \$5.98, Shane's Hardware \$95.92, Auto Value \$1,806.18, TwoTrees Tech \$260.00 **SUPPLIES**; Alliance \$923.53, AT&T \$424.76, Barb Esser \$30.00, Erin Feldhaus \$30.00, Lori Kiehl \$30.00, Becki Mommaerts \$30.00, Tim Reisch \$433.33, Molly Steeneck \$30.00, Verizon \$115.13, Danielle Werkmeister \$30.00, Brittany Yanish \$30.00 **TELEPHONE**; Daniel Feldhaus Reporting \$42.50 **TRANSCRIPTS**; Bestwestern Ramkota \$110.00, Mike Connor \$12.60, Denise Gassman \$19.60, HFCA \$101.02, Gibi Page \$23.10, Tim Reisch \$368.38 **TRAVEL**; City of Howard \$2,872.58 **UTILITIES**.

Motion by Neises, second by Carlson, and carried to set a supplemental budget hearing date for Thursday, November 5th at 10:30am. Motion carried.

Motion by Carlson, second by Clary and passed to authorize Bechen to sign the law enforcement agreement with the City of Howard.

Josh Hahn met with the board regarding the Emergency Management Region 6 Mutual Aid Agreement. He's meeting with State's Attorney Ellendorf regarding the agreement and will bring her comments back to the board on October 20th. Hahn gave an update on other Emergency Management matters.

Neises made a motion to amend his motion from September 22nd regarding Yanish's salary increase to instead state that she will receive an additional \$2,931 per year, as originally intended, seconded by Carlson. Motion passed.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned until Tuesday, October 20, 2026. Dated this 6th day of October, 2026.

Joe Bechen, Chairman
Miner County Board of Commissioners

Attest: Rebecca Mommaerts, Miner County Auditor