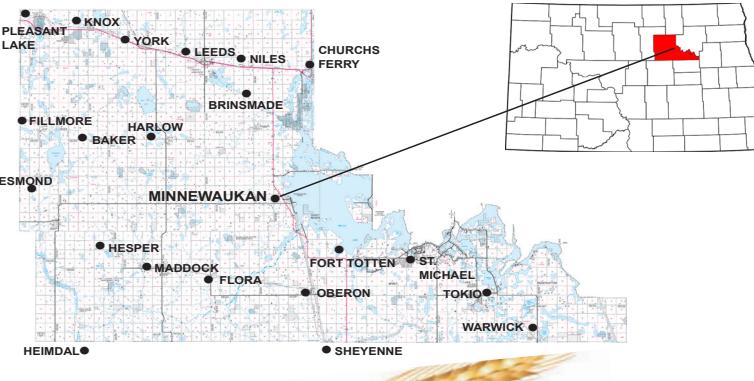


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## Solberg speaks at Maddock Library

About 30 interested people gathered at the Maddock Community Library January 14 to hear Barb Solberg, a North Dakota author, share about her book and writing experience. Attendees shared a Norwegian table of goodies provided by members of the book club and others. Harriman's Coffee House provided coffee, and the group spent a couple hours listening and asking questions. It was a delightful time and broadened everyone's minds. Her book, "What We Left Behind," is available for purchase or loan from the library.

## Benson County Commission weighs future plans for county transportation

BY K. L. GLOVER

At the January 20 regular meeting of the Benson County commissioners, the board addressed future plans for Benson County Transportation following the departure of longtime BCT Director Susan Fossen earlier this month. Possibilities outlined on the board agenda were appointing a new director; having another transit agency take over the director position and have drivers stationed within Benson County; combining the BCT director position with that of Benson County Housing Authority director; or contracting services with a company.

Chair David Davidson attended via Microsoft Teams. The other members, Dick Horner, Doris Griffin, Ron Stadium and Tammy Kuk, attended in person. Others present were County Auditor Bonnie Erickson, Sheriff Laura Wanzeck, State's Attorney James Wang, Scott Todahl and Joy Orvedal of the Benson County Highway Department, and K. L. Glover of the *Benson County Farmers Press*.

The commissioners approved a motion to acknowledge Susan Fossen's resignation letter, and the motion carried. Davidson asked Erickson for her input on which BCT option would be best. Erickson stated her view that it was nice to keep jobs open in Benson County. The board discussed the option of combining the BCT director and Benson County Housing director positions. Erickson said that Becky Hanson of the NDDOT thought that might be a good idea. Horner, who serves on the housing board, stated that Laura Winson, housing director, was willing to do the BCT director job as well, and stated that to him, county transportation and housing fit together, as the availability of public transit is sometimes a factor with residents who live in public housing. Griffin indicated that combining the two positions might be a cost-savings opportunity.

Griffin made a motion to move forward with combining the two director positions,



seconded by Kuk. Stadium discussed the BCT building in Maddock and wondered whether Winson needed to be in Minnewaukan. Horner suggested getting a plan after seeing how the program works. Kuk asked if Winson could come to the next meeting for her input. The motion on moving forward with the combined position carried. Discussion was held on whether a special meeting was needed to address the proposed combined position; Davidson said that a special meeting could take place if Winson wanted one. Erickson stated that Tony Delorme had called to ask about the status of his job application. Griffin indicated that since there was no BCT director, no decision could be made at present.

Wang said he didn't think the commissioners knew exactly which assets BCT had. He suggested that an audit be performed on BCT resources, including financial records, plans and equipment, and inquiring who does vehicle maintenance. Davidson asked who would do the audit. Erickson stated that BCT had participated in Brady Martz and Associates' audits of the county and would probably have to audit BCT separately. Griffin said she felt it was essential that an audit be done. Wang stated that Becky Hanson with the NDDOT might have records of BCT's assets. Stadium asked if Winson could do an audit. Wang recommended that a commissioner participate in the audit.

### Road department update

Jessica Tagestad of Wold Engineering joined via Microsoft Teams. She indicated that word was still being awaited on the results of several flex fund applications, but good news had been received on a grant application for removal of a bridge

(Continued on Page 14)



## Bessette Motors has Hot Deals in January.



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