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**Minutes of the 2027 Budget Prep  
City Commission Meeting  
held on July 27, 2026 at  
City Hall at 10:00 AM.**

Present: President Lyn James, Vice-Chair Gene Anne Kulseth, Myron Vail, Cole Benz, Tad Lewton, Chief Headley, Todd Hofland, Steven Ness, Aaron Allen, Peggy Allen, and Stacy McGee. Absent: Gene Anne Kulseth from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

President James called the meeting order at 10:00 am. Motion by Vail, second by Lewton to approve the agenda. RCV= all aye, MC.

Employees are set up on a longevity schedule. McGee put \$200 onto base salary for a cost-of-living increase.

Health Insurance: There will be an estimated increase of 7% in cost in July of 2027. Usually the increase is between 5-10%.

Salary Adjustment: Everyone receives a \$500.00 salary adjustment at the end of the year and that has been included in the budget.

**HOFLAND – STREET/VECTOR/LANDFILL DEPTS.:**

Signs: Lewton said he would check into the NDDOT supplying some posts to the city and check on how that interacts with our maintenance agreement. Regulatory signs expire in 10 years, as a good practice we should have stickers on ours when we replace them. Hofland said they have always dated them with permanent marker.

Curb and Gutter: There was discussion on needing to get curb and gutter fixed. It has been hard to get a contractor to do it. Hofland will request a quote from Winn Construction to get some curb repaired.

Asphalt Repairs: We budgeted for the estimated \$90,000 in asphalt repairs to be split \$50,000 from cold mix and asphalt fund and \$40,000 out of flex fund. Fund #3005: Hofland would like to start saving for a 10' bobcat bucket. If he gets a new one he needs a high flow

for more power to move snow through the snow blower.

Landfill Pit: We will need to dig pits again and may have to go ask the County to share in this project in the future.

Landfill: We could look at rates again; our revenue isn't matching our expenses. We will review the rates and look at them at another meeting; the rates would be approved for 2027.

Clean-up Week: We will

have to send a notice for cleanup week to businesses that are abusing the cleanup. This topic will be brought back at another meeting for discussion.

Commissioner Landfill Use: Commission shall get personal use of the landfill, not contractor use and tires still have to be paid for.

**NESS -WATER AND SEWER DEPT.:**

Water Samples: Discussion was held regarding Ness having to deliver the samples to Bismarck for testing. Lewton will look into a courier to deliver them, he thinks there is one in Hettinger.

Water Meter Reading System: They need to buy Ipads for the GIS and water meter reading.

E-Mailing Bills: McGee will make a campaign a couple times a year trying to get people to email their bills to ease up the cost of postage.

Well #6: Needs a new starter panel.

Chlorinator: The chlorinator needs inspected annually as does the other water equipment as preventative maintenance.

Bulk Water Station: Due to ongoing issues at the bulk water station regarding users, there was discussion on placing cameras there: two cameras, one inside and one on a pole outside, it will have software to read license plates. It is \$2,500 for the whole system and two men to install a booster. The booster water fee monthly fee cost is unknown. This cost should come out of this year's budget.

Boulevard Sprinklers: It was discussed it would be nice to have an internet connection to hook up the boulevard

sprinkler system. Allen stated that the wells have internet service to them. No decision was made on getting a system hooked up.

5th Ave Water Main Project: Hewson is looking at getting grants for this project. Lift Stations: Inspections cost \$2,000.00 annually through Dakota Pump. This will be a yearly inspection to look at wear and tear of equipment and to do any necessary repairs and give a list of what needs to be replaced that year or next. We would be less likely to have a lift station go down.

Sewer Equipment: Ness will find out the life span and cost of a new sewer cleaning machine so we know if we need to start budgeting for replacement Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm and reconvened at 1:05 pm.

**CHIEF HEADLEY – POLICE DEPT.:**

There are two staff members that get a longevity increase in salaries in 2027. James asked to show the new commissioners the longevity scale.

Police Cars: Headley's car is a 2014 Ford Taurus, we also have two 2023 SUV's, and 2020 car (30-40,000 miles). The 2023 cruiser needs new graphics as they are peeling off.

SW Crime Dues: They provide training to their members.

Guns and Vests: Headley supplied quotes for City Issued guns and bullet proof vests. Currently the officers supply their own weapons, and their vests are expiring sometime in the future.

It was proposed to put money towards a car and guns in their budget this year and do the vests next budget. A transfer of \$10,000.00 was discussed from the general fund to police capitol to go towards guns and car.

They have some guns they could sell that they got from the state that the state doesn't want back that could help offset the costs of the vests and guns.

Ammunition: Already sitting well for 9 mm for his officers, Headley has a 45mm. A case of ammunition lasts a couple years. It costs \$700.00 a case approximately for about 500 rounds. The state mandates you will qualify with the same ammo you use in the field.

Axon Equipment – if a new model comes out while under contract, they give us the newer one at no extra costs. Transport Hours: We have an ongoing debate with SO and PD on transport. Until we can get this sorted out we need to add time to salaries in the budget for transport. If it's a federal case, it is required by law for SO to transport. If it's a felony or domestic assault case, they have to appear before a judge. If it's a warrant out of Bismarck, they can bond out if they can within the conditions of the warrant. It's a 3 hour round trip. Lewton, McGee, Headley and James need to meet and get a proposal together so we can share costs of transport. After the November election we will meet with the County. Headley stated that Bergerson already has a proposal drawn up that they can look at. ALLEN – GARBAGE DEPT: Tipping Fees: Fallon County notified us that the tipping fees will go up to \$45 a ton in June of 2027.

Garbage Trucks: The 2017 Freightliner truck has 196,556 miles and 12,209 hours – the air conditioning just quit, Allen thinks it's the condenser. The 2019 Freightliner truck has 114,834 miles with 7,904 hours and the 2024 Peterbilt has 40,000 miles on it. A new garbage truck is \$280,000 – \$360,000.00, depending on style. If we get one, we need a can tipper. Last year a truck with a can tipper was around \$289,000.00 at Olympic Sales. Discussion was held on raising the garbage fee by \$3.00 for residential cans and McGee has raised some of the dumpster fees. This will help cover costs and help generate funds to go to the garbage truck savings fund.

ALLEN – FINANCIAL AUDITOR: Park and Rec: Their request for a mower was denied, that should be taken out

of the city sales tax as that is what it is for.

SUR Fund: In 2027 we will start seeing pay back revenue from the Park View TIF District, estimated at \$5,600 from the tax director.

James recessed the meeting at 4:20 pm.

July 29, 2026 Second day of 2027 Budget Preparation Meeting Minutes at 8:00 am.

The meeting was reconvened at 8:00 am by President James. Attendees: Lyn James, Myron Vail, Gene Anne Kulseth, Cole Benz, Tad Lewton, Stacy McGee and Peggy Allen.

POLICE DEPT:

Guns/Vests/Decals: Lewton stated the police department vests are good through 2027, and they do not need new decals on the vehicles. Lewton does think it would be in the City's best interest to carry City issued guns. Lewton would like \$5,500 budgeted for guns, holsters, and mags, to total \$5,500.00.

E-Bike Ordinance: This ordinance will be done before spring. You have to have a driver's license for some of these scooters. James said it would be nice to have it done before Christmas since some kids get them as gifts.

TAP Project (Shared Use Path) and Chip Seal: This project is slated for 2028, Allen inquired if the Commission would like to put some funds away for this project now as the city's portion of this project is \$400,000. If 2026 year end is good, meaning we have unused funds, we could put \$50,000 away for reach project depending on unused funds.

GENERAL:

Attorney: The Commission would like a monthly detailed statement and what is involved in status quo. Allen was re-

quested to draft a letter with their signatures. Define status quo.

General Notes: It was decided to not lower any of the external entity's requests, except Park and Rec's request for a mower, that must come out of city sales tax funds.

FEES:

Garbage: Garbage will go up \$3.00 for residential service; there will be a dumpster tipping fee increase.

Water: There is an estimated \$5.00 project fee for the water tank project that will be on the utility bill and the revenue will go into the #6060 Water Building Fund.

Sewer: An estimated \$5.00 project fee for the sewer rehabilitation project will be added to each utility bill and deposited into the #6220 Sewer Building Fund. A separate \$0.50 monthly sewer fee increase will be deposited into Fund #6020 Sewer Fund.

McGee will send out a notice in the fall stating what the project fees will be and explain it along with the lead and copper and fluoride letters. In the letter we need to list the benefit we receive from the state and county and what the residents' \$5.00 per project is paying for and let them know the entire sewer system will be rehabbed.

Landfill: We will look at the landfill rates this fall and the changes in fees will be made January 1, 2027.

Raffle Permits: It was decided to raise the fee for gaming permits to \$10.00 per permit in 2027.

President James adjourned the meeting at 9:26 am.

eggy Allen, Financial Auditor  
Lyn James, President of City Commission