

BILLINGS COUNTY COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

BILLINGS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL JOINT MEETING MINUTES Date: February 17, 2026 Location: Billings County Commission Room
Buffalo Gap Road Discussion – Billings County & Golden Valley County

CALL TO ORDER
The special joint meeting of the Billings County Board of County Commissioners and the Golden Valley County Board of County Commissioners was called to order at 9:02 AM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Chairman Rodne noted that the meeting was recorded and that public comment would be taken at the podium.

Commissioners in attendance: Dean Rodne, James Haag, Steven Klym from Billings County. Adam Smith, Robert Schmeling, Rory Farstveit from Golden Valley County.

Others in attendance: Marcia Kessel, Gayle Cox, Billy Doerr, Olie Golberg, Andrew Krebs, Mark Lund, Lori Elliott, Rachel Daniels, Bret Morton, Tamra Sperry, Dave Jensen, Juliana Hamnerstrom, Misty Hays, Pat Redmond, Stacey Swanson, Dean Wyckoff, Pete Wirtzfeld.

SPECIAL AGENDA ITEM
Buffalo Gap Road – Joint County Discussion

Commissioners reviewed the need for a public land route connecting Buffalo Gap to Knutson Creek Road and extending north into Billings County. Maps were distributed. The purpose of the meeting was to determine feasibility, discuss potential routes, and identify next steps.

Commissioners and Golden Valley County Road Superintendent Pete Wirtzfeld summarized their joint site visit, noting that the proposed alignment appears feasible. Engineering review is required to confirm crossings, drainage, and topography.

Misty Hayes from the US

Forest Service reported that they would be willing to work with the counties on this project and that there are no known conflicts, pending the survey being completed and reviewed. Knutson Creek Road is currently under a Schedule B agreement; counties may seek Schedule A or easement transfer to allow improvements.

Commissioners discussed federal funding versus county funded. Federal funding can be very slow. Budget amendments will be required and engineering cost estimates must be obtained before further decisions.

Golden Valley County State's Attorney Christina Wenko advised that the first formal step is a joint agreement on selecting an engineering firm. An RFP or coordinated selection process will be required. Compliance with Forest Service easement and environmental requirements must be built into the engineering scope.

MOTIONS
Billings County - Haag moved to move forward with the Buffalo Gap Road project and place a joint Request for Proposal for engineering services. Klym seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Golden Valley County - Robert Schmeling moved to move forward with the Buffalo Gap Road project and place a joint Request for Proposal for engineering services. Rory Farstveit seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Klym moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 AM. Haag seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Rory Farstveit moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 AM. Robert Schmeling seconded. All voted aye. Motion carried.

/s/ Dean Rodne
Dean Rodne, Chairman
/s/ Marcia Kessel
Marcia Kessel, Auditor
Published March 12, 2026

Lighting the way

Cowboys & Candlelight shines light on new recruits, 'Little Soldier arena'

By Gaylon Wm. Parker

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The Saturday, March 7, 2026 "Cowboys & Candlelight" event at Dickinson State University served as the grand-opening of the new Dale Little Soldier Rodeo Arena and gave more than 400 guests an opportunity to enjoy socialization, steak and see some new recruits bound for the school's rodeo team in the coming year. The Blue Hawks will be heading to the Big Sky Region during the 2026-27 season, which is a move from the previous association in the Great Plains Region.

The school has 15 committed new signings, including Dickinson bull-riding Teytum Bullinger – who couldn't attend because he is a member of the Dickinson High School basketball team that was playing against Minot in the WDA Tournament that night – and his prep rodeo teammate Trae Fisher. Fisher took to the signing table to commemorate the event with his family and DSU head coach Joe Schmidt, then got a chance to drink in the atmosphere of his new



photo | Gaylon Wm. Parker

Dickinson high School prep rodeo standout Trae Fisher is joined by his family, Heidi and Joe Schmidt for his signing ceremony at the Cowboys and Candlelight event on Saturday, March 7, 2026.

riding and roping rodeo home.

"It feels pretty good; I've always wanted to college rodeo so it's exciting to take a step closer to that," said Fisher, who will be studying business management at Dickinson State. "It's also going to be nice to stay home and close to my job, so it's going to be good."

Numerous North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, Canadian and regional signings also were in attendance, and they could soon be joined by Belfield resident and rodeo standout Shane Stroth, who has yet to

commit one way or the other to prolong his career at the next level.

"To get a sold-out event the first year [in the new facility] is unheard of," Schmidt said. "The community showed up and showed out, and we're just so excited."

New DSU president Scott Molander was on hand to commemorate all the festivities, adding the \$24M arena provides a big boost to the university's prospects and surroundings, while potentially enhancing Southwest North Dakota in a variety of ways. "What a fantastic event, and who could

imagine that you could have a dinner like this in an arena like this; this is fantastic."

He added, "It's a great turnout and was oversold, so when people started showing up we brought more tables in ... this arena is just perfect for the student-athletes, they come in here and they're just 'Wowed', and they're like, 'I want to come and rodeo here,'" Molander said. "When you've got a facility like this, that'll help sell it for sure and they can get a great education ... we're headed for championships."

YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR NEWSPAPER.

NOTICE OF ZONING MEETING

The Billings County Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a regular meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2026 at 1:00 PM in the Commissioner's Room at the county courthouse, to consider recommending to the Board of County Commissioners the approval or denial of the following items:

Applications:

2026-3 Cole Faller: Application for minor subdivision in the E1/2NE1/4 12-143-99 (1305 126th Ave SW). Tract will be approximately 1.01 acres. Request to rezone the proposed tract from agricultural to residential for an existing mobile home site. A Variance has also been requested for the size of the lot because it's less than 5 acres. Property is currently owned by Rodney Krogh.

2026-5 Bill Palanuk: Application for a conditional use permit for a RV campground in the NW1/4NW1/4 of section 8-142-99 (1910 131st Ave SW). Request to rezone the property from Agriculture to Recreational. Campground will contain 2 RV camp sites with electrical hookups and campground amenities. An underground storm shelter/cellar is also planned.

2026-7 Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation: Application for a conditional use permit for a glamping campground on approximately 10 acres in section 22-140-102 north of the Medora Campground (3370 Pool Dr) and south of the Little Missouri River. Campground infrastructure and tents will be temporary and site will be used for approximately one month (June 18-July 13 +/-) for the lodging needs associated with the grand opening of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library. Campground will contain up to 50 canvas sleeping tents on wooden platforms, portable restrooms, handwashing stations, lobby & lounge tents, dining hall tents, and accessory campground amenities. The campground also plans to reserve a location on the property for food trucks. Property is within the ETZ of the City of Medora and owned by the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation.

The board will also review any zoning applications submitted to the zoning department for projects within the Medora Area Plan boundary prior to the final review and administrative approval by the zoning director at the meeting. Application received at the time of publication includes:

2026-4 Kent & Kristin Preszler: Application for a new house on Lot 3, Block 1 of Sully Creek Subdivision in section 3-139-102 (14638 36th St SW). Property is zoned Residential.

Other business:

Review regulations and zoning ordinances related to Mobile Food Units, Transient Merchants, and Temporary Use Permits and make a recommendation for amending Article VI: Special Provisions 6.17 for Temporarily Permitted Uses and add a new section under Special Provisions for Transient Merchants and Mobile Food Units.

Review regulations and zoning ordinances related to water depots that are used for supplying fresh water during the drilling stages of oil and gas wells and make a recommendation for amending the ordinance.

Standing agenda items:

- TRMF and TRPL Project Updates
- The board will also address potential & pending zoning violations and recommend any action needed by the Zoning Director, State's Attorney, or Board of County Commissioners.

General meeting information:

- Applications and ordinances are available for review during regular office hours at the Billings County Courthouse. If special accommodations are needed, please notify the auditor so that appropriate aids may be made available.
- To attend the meeting remotely via TEAMS, please see the meeting notice posted in the calendar on the Billings County website at <https://www.billingscountynynd.gov/> for instructions.

Dated at Medora this 27th day of February, 2026.
Stacey Swanson, Zoning Director

Published March 12, 2026

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Billings County Commission will hold a Public Hearing during the special meeting on Monday, March 30, 2026. The special meeting will begin at 1:00 PM and the Public Hearing will take place following the special meeting agenda items. The hearing will take place in the Commissioner's Room at the county courthouse, Medora, ND. The purpose of the hearing is to consider the approval or denial of the following amendments to the Billings County Zoning Resolution No. 1:

Floodplain Management Ordinance

The Billings County Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed the final draft and recommended approval of the Floodplain Management Ordinance for Billings County on Thursday, February 19, 2026. The Ordinance was amended to meet the requirements for floodplain management in North Dakota based on changes to state law adopted in SB 2027 during the 2025 legislative session. The amendments are based on the Model A Ordinance for communities NOT currently mapped by FEMA provided by the ND DWR. See ND Department of Water Resources website for details: https://www.dwr.nd.gov/reg_approp/floodplain_management/nfp_fm_senate_bill_2027.html

Other Amendments

2.3 Definitions:
(24.1) Campground (NEW)
a) Primitive Campground (NEW)
b) Glamping Campground (NEW)
c) Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park (UPDATE)
(89) Recreational Vehicle Park – (UPDATE)
5.3 Recreational District
5.3.2 Conditionally Permitted Uses
5.3.2(a) Recreational vehicle parks, and campgrounds (UPDATE)

The proposed amendments were recommended for approval by the Planning & Zoning Commission hearing held on Thursday, February 19, 2026.

Copies of the proposed amendments are available for review on the Billings County website at www.billingscountynynd.gov or during regular office hours at the Billings County Courthouse.

Dated at Medora this 6th day of March, 2026.
Stacey Swanson
Zoning Director

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Public Notice

NOTICE OF LEASING STATE SCHOOL LANDS

The Board of University and School Lands will Conduct Surface Lease Auctions in the following Counties:

Benson	Divide
Dunn	Eddy
Griggs	Logan
McHenry	McIntosh
McKenzie	McLean
Mountrail	Oliver
Pierce	Rolette
Slope	Williams

Auctions will be held in person at location in the County Seat. Refer to the advertisement in the official county newspaper or the public lease auctions schedule posted on the Department of Trust Lands' website for auction dates, times, locations, & list of tracts offered.

Auctioneer will read specific requirements at the auction. The information contained in this advertisement may be revised prior to the auction upon further review by the North Dakota Department of Trust Lands. The Board reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

For more information, visit <https://land.nd.gov> or call 701-328-2800.

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