

# Griggs County Commission meeting, June 8, 2026

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A meeting of the Griggs County Commission was called to order by Chairwoman Stephanie Edland at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, June 8. Commissioners Edland, Rodd Zorn, Scott Tranby, Josh Averill and Loren Alfson were present.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the commissioners approved the agenda with the addition of discussion with Maintenance person Chad Johnson regarding a water cooler and sand for the rodeo arena at the Griggs County Fairgrounds. Alfson made the motion to approve the amended agenda, Zorn seconded the motion and all commissioners voted 'aye'.

The floor was opened for public comment before commissioners approved the May 18 and May 29 meeting minutes, along with County bills.

Chief Deputy Danielle Bjorlie provided the Griggs County Sheriff's Office report and distributed monthly statistics to the commissioners. Bjorlie highlighted a recent bicycle safety event attended by approximately 50 children. During the event, about 30 bicycle helmets were distributed, and Town & Country Co-Op provided ice cream coupons for children who wore helmets. Bjorlie mentioned a missing person case involving Darin Dahl.

The commission welcomed new NDSU Extension Agent Haley McClue. McClue recently graduated from North Dakota State University with a degree in agricultural communications and a minor in crop and weed science. She recently moved to Cooperstown and reported that preparations are underway for the Griggs County Fair. McClue also reported that she has two candidates interviewing for a deputy position in her office.

Road Superintendent Wayne Oien reported that he accompanied pipeline workers on an inspection on June 3. The County

plans to blade roads used by the pipeline project at a rate of \$400 per hour and apply calcium chloride near farmsteads. Work is expected to begin on County Road 9, also known as 104th Avenue. Gravel measuring one inch and smaller is being hauled from the McHenry area, and pipe stockpiling is underway. Oien said the contractors may have excess clay available and are seeking locations where it can be used. Pipeline crews are currently working on stream crossings and boring operations.

Oien also reported progress on the bridge project. Abutments have been removed on both sides, the river bottom has been dredged and approaches on both the east and west sides are being widened and raised. Oien said the project is estimated to be completed by Oct. 15. He also reported there was no update regarding pending road project grant applications.

Maintenance person, Chad Johnson asked whether the County would be willing to haul donated sand to the rodeo arena at the Griggs County Fairgrounds. Johnson explained that some barrel racing participants declined to compete during last year's rodeo because arena conditions were not suitable for their horses. Approximately 25 loads of sand are needed to improve the arena surface. After discussion, Alfson made a motion for the County to assist with hauling donated sand to the rodeo arena. Averill seconded the motion. All commissioners voted 'aye' and the motion carried.

Tranby made a motion to recess the regular meeting and move into tax equalization proceedings. Zorn seconded the motion and the commission approved the change.

Tax Director Linda Morris presented the 2026 County assessment totals. Morris reported that total County valuations decreased approximately 5 percent from 2025. Agricultural land values decreased 6 percent in order to comply with state re-



quirements based on North Dakota State University agricultural land value calculations. Morris explained that Griggs County's agricultural land value had been \$727 in 2025 and needed to be reduced to \$704. She reported that 52 of North Dakota's 53 counties were needing to decrease agricultural land values this year.

Residential property values generally increased approximately 3 percent. She said township assessors identified residential properties that had not previously been listed and assessed. She also reviewed the state's primary residence tax credit program. Griggs County had 527 apply for the credit, and notices were sent to applicants regarding approval or denial of the credit. Six applications were denied due to eligibility issues.

Morris also reviewed commercial property valuations, including adjustments at the property owned by Central Plains in Hannaford. She explained that some property had been moved or removed and that assessments were completed using the Vanguard appraisal system and prior appraisal information. Morris reported that the County remains in compliance with state sales ratio requirements for agricultural, residential and commercial property.

Zorn made a motion to approve the 2026 Griggs County sales ratios. Averill seconded the motion. All commissioners voted 'aye'. Tranby then made a motion to approve the 2026 Board of Equalization totals. Averill seconded the motion, and all commissioners voted 'aye'.

During discussion, Alfson questioned why agricultural land values had declined. Morris explained that NDSU utilizes a formula based on a rolling 10-year period, removing the highest and lowest years and averaging the remaining eight years while also factoring in production and costs. Commissioners discussed concerns about how lower valuations could affect future County budgets.

Zorn made a motion to adjourn the Tax Equalization meeting. Averill seconded the motion and all commissioners voted 'aye'. The Tax Equalization meeting adjourned, and Edland reconvened the regular commission meeting.

Commissioners reviewed information from Youthworks, and tabled the request for funding until additional information could be obtained from Sheriff Michaelis.

Next on the agenda was the tax director position. It was reported that two applications have been received for the position. Edland suggested conducting both interviews on the same day, and Morris indicated she would be willing to assist with the interview process.

The commissioners then discussed the County's Weed Board structure. Edland re-

viewed the board's history. Auditor Samantha Larson has served as weed officer while the road department has overseen spraying operations. Edland proposed creating a more active board with additional community representation. The proposed board would consist of Scott Tranby as president - noting his commercial applicators license, Brett Salvesen as vice president, the NDSU Extension Agent Haley McClue as secretary, David Heinz and Rodd Zorn as members, and applicant for the position, Kenny Sandvik as weed officer. The Commission also discussed hiring a seasonal weed spraying employee at a rate of \$25 per hour. Edland noted that approximately \$3,120 remained in the salary budget, which would allow for roughly 124.8 hours of work. Alfson expressed concern that the proposed hourly wage might exceed that of some County employees. Other commissioners noted the position would be temporary and would not include benefits. Zorn made a motion to approve the proposed Weed Board structure, including the appointments of Heinz and Zorn. Averill seconded the motion. During the roll-call vote, Zorn, Averill, Tranby and Edland voted 'aye', while Alfson voted 'nay'. The motion carried on a 4-1 vote.

The commissioners also reviewed the County's Targeted Assistance Grant, a three-year reimbursement grant program used by the Weed Board to fund projects. The County currently has approximately \$10,000 available through June 30, 2027, which requires a County match of \$3,333. While equipment purchases are the preferred use of grant funds, the money may also be used for contracted labor.

The commission discussed preservation of items from the old courthouse and potential uses for materials that may be removed from the building. Commissioners considered retaining certain items for display, while transferring historical items to the Griggs County Museum and contacting other historical organizations regarding artifacts of interest.

Johnson reported that he is gathering quotes for a new mower with snow-removal attachments and is getting quotes for replacement of the courthouse sidewalk, as part of future grant-writing efforts.

Zorn made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tranby seconded the motion. All commissioners voted 'aye'. The meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m.

The next Griggs County Commission meeting is scheduled for June 22 at 9:30 a.m.

(This article is a summary of the June 8, 2026 Griggs County Commission meeting. To hear the entirety of the meeting, go online to [griggscountynd.gov/meetings/Commission](http://griggscountynd.gov/meetings/Commission).)

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