

Minutes of the Custer County Commission Meeting, Wednesday, September 3, 2025.

Members present:

Vice-Chairman Mark Hartman, Mike Linde, Michael Busskohl, Craig Hindle and Commission Legal Counsel Aaron Davis and Dawn McLaughlin, Finance Officer. Chairman Lintz was not in attendance.

A. Commission Meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Adopting of the agenda

1. Motion to approve Agenda made by Linde; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes of August 20, 2025 Commission meeting.
2. Vouchers approved as follows:

PAYROLL: Safety \$134.31; Commissioners \$5,697.78; Auditor \$12,116.67; Treasurer \$13,395.52 Info Systems & Tech \$3,426.87; States Attorney \$14,837.39; Courthouse Building \$9,453.01; Director of Equalization \$11,423.08; Register of Deeds \$5,589.42; Veterans Service \$2,089.07; Human Resources \$2,3552.88; Sheriff \$61,098.33; Coroner \$879.62; Nurse \$190.95; Library \$11,580.91; Conservation \$799.68; Weed & Pest Control \$5,302.01; County Road & Bridge \$41,045.92; Emergency Management \$2,880.26; 24/7 \$183.56; Emergency Line F \$18,029.99

COMMISSIONERS: Southern Hills Publishing \$398.81; Valhalla Legal \$3,120.00;

AUDITOR: Golden West Technologies \$1,069.00; Southern Hills Publishing \$ 70.00; Thomson Reuters \$337.57; Tyler Technologies \$8,627.50;

TREASURER: Thomson Reuters \$59.92;

STATE'S ATTORNEY: Anthony Stewart \$20.00; Carol Johnson \$496.90; Halle Gracey \$20.00; Thomson Reuters \$337.57; Trittech Software systems \$3,827.02;

MAINTENANCE: Black Hills Energy \$3,107.86; City of Custer \$2,068.36; Custer Ace Hardware \$42.98; French Creek Supply \$16.98;

DIRECTOR OF EQUALIZATION: French Creek Supply \$40.37; Quill LLC \$11.34; Thomson Reuters \$59.92;

REGISTER OF DEEDS: Thomson Reuters \$89.88;

HUMAN RESOURCES: Southern Hills Publishing \$97.15;

INFO TECHNOLOGY: Quill LLC \$727.35;

SHERIFF: : French Creek Supply \$159.98; Great Western Tire \$576.00; Karl Chevrolet \$104,928.40; Legal and Liability risk management Institute \$900.00; Rushmore Companies \$41.83; Southern Hills Family Medicine \$93.87;

AIRPORT: Brenden Hendrickson \$4,558.33;

LIBRARY: Golden West Technologies \$773.00;

WEED & PEST: Bradeen Wyland Ranch \$520.00; Charles Meyer \$106.25; Deanna Mikiska \$320.00; Delmar Slagle \$52.58; Derek Lisec \$49.08; Fred Hlava \$133.25; Janis Stock \$47.00; Jody Landgrebe \$127.49; Kelly & Kellie Keegan \$49.08; Peter Shattuck \$70.88; Richard Nehls \$25.00; Ron Anderson \$305.00; Susan Estes-Swindal \$38.21; Trump Steven \$60.00;

PLANNING: IworQ System \$3,934.00; Southern Hills Publishing \$79.44;

COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE: Advanced Drug Testing \$45.00; CBH Cooperative \$10,759.39; Custer Ace Hardware \$40.52; Forward Distributing \$3.95; French Creek Supply \$761.19; Godfrey Brake \$588.12; Great Western Tire \$199.90; Inland Truck Parts \$7,109.70; Nelson's oil & Gas \$272.51; Pfeifer's Machinery Sales \$3,900.00; Pheasantland Industries \$362.62; Postle Industries \$280.12; SD Department of Labor and Regulation \$1,152.00; Trail King Industries \$3,970.43;

COUNTY BUILDINGS: Buckhorn Equipment \$2,573.96; Diversified drafting \$400.00; Freeman's Electric Service \$2,100.00;

EMERGENCY LINE: Bintel INC \$3,243.30; Range \$25.45; Trittech Software systems \$25,951.40;

MENTAL HEALTH: Audra Hill Consulting \$426.81;

COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEY: Colbath and Sperlich \$3,407.60; Duffy Law Firm Prof LLC \$192.00;

ELECTION: Knowink LLC \$4,574.35;

AMT HELD FOR LAW LIBRARY: Thomson Reuters \$675.14;

MI BOARD: West River Mental Health \$693.16;

Motion to approve Consent Agenda made by Hindle; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

D. Conflict of Interest Declarations – None.

E. Highway

1. Highway Superintendent, Jesse Doyle, requested Commission authorization for ROW Occupancy permit from Mt. Rushmore Telephone Co. for fiber optic installation re: east French Creek Rd. project. This is part of large project by Mt. Rushmore Telephone Company. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Doyle also requested authorization for ROW Occupancy permit from Mt. Rushmore Telephone Co. for fiber optic installation re: south Fairburn Rd. project. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. Doyle discussed preliminary information regarding culvert replacement on America Center Road and French Creek Road. He noted existing culverts are undersized and deteriorating. Doyle said this project will be worked on during nighttime hours to avoid implementing a 25-mile detour for residents. Doyle noted there is \$33,800 remaining in the Rural Infrastructure Fund. He also referred to a DOT flyer that was provided regarding 16A—Wildlife Loop detour and noted that DOT will be providing maintenance along the detour until completion of the project.

F. Auditor

1. Finance Officer, Dawn McLaughlin, presented petition for formation of Cankuna Road District re: Champion Subdivision Tract 1, Tract 2, Lot 1 of Tract 4, HES 401, located in S27, T4S, R4E, BHM Custer County, SD for Commission approval. Motion to approve made by Linde; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. McLaughlin also stated the 2026 Budget meeting will be held in the Commission room at 1:00 PM, following the 9-17-25 Commission meeting.

G. Equalization

1. DOE Director, Scott Storms, presented the Commission with ag classification informational letter and pamphlet that will be sent out. Storms stated his department will be checking for predominant land use for ag classification and expects the ag reappraisals to be completed within 5 years. He noted that everyone currently receiving ag status will need to reapply. Motion to approve letter to be sent out made by Hindle; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

H. Airport

1. Airport Manager, Brenden Hendrickson, requested authorization of Chairman's signature on CUT-GLG-3-46-0011-021-2025-Grant Agreement. This grant is for the environmental assessment for the runway extension. Once planning and preliminary design alternatives are presented, determination will be made for the best option for Custer County. The local share for Custer County is 2.5%; \$10,250. Hendrickson will present the contract at the next meeting. Motion for Vice-Chairman to sign agreement made by Hindle; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

I. Emergency Management

1. EMS Director, Steve Esser, requested authorization for Chairman's signature for 2026 LEMPG Agreement with SD Office of Emergency Management. This agreement allows for payment to Custer County for a portion of EMS wages to be reimbursed. Motion to authorize Vice-Chairman's signature made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

J. Weed & Pest

1. Michael Baldwin presented an update on Forest Plan Revision for BHNF and discussed upcoming meetings and funding for private consultant currently working with counties. Baldwin stated there are upcoming timber meetings regarding timber located on USFS lands, and said this remains a contentious issue. The University of Montana is a 3rd-party timber auditor. Baldwin said he would represent Custer County at these meetings. Baldwin also discussed funding for forest revision, stating the cost for hiring a contractor for this project was \$80K; Custer County did not contribute to cost sharing, while Mead and Lawrence Counties participated. Final assessment released indicates a holding pattern and funds are mostly depleted. Baldwin will research in more depth on how funds were spent and will provide that information to the Commission.

K. Maintenance

1. Maintenance Supervisor, Joseph Panza, requested Commission acknowledgement of termination of Francis Caudy, Maintenance Technician, effective 8-25-25. The Commission so acknowledged. Panza stated that the job has been advertised and an offer of employment has been accepted.

L. Human Resources

1. HR Director, Amber Maidens, requested approval of full health benefits for part-time benefited employees. Dana Benjamin is requesting moving from full-time to part-time benefited; Jessica Brown is currently a part-time benefitted employee. This request is for health benefits only and all other benefits would remain at half-time accruals. Both employees are 24-hour/week positions. Brown is currently paying half of the monthly health care premium. Maidens read a portion of the current handbook and further discussion will be held. Motion to postpone until the 9-17-2025 Commission meeting made by Linde; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

M. Public Comment

1. Danielle Schade, resident of Big Valley Road District, shared safety concerns, as well as concerns about additional traffic generated by VRBOs within the road district. She also read a letter from another member of the road district. Discussion was held regarding an easement granted in 1992, when only homeowner and residents used the road. She urged the Commission to revisit the easement as it was granted before VRBOs and doesn't account for additional traffic. Schade asked if the easement could be suspended and require the owner of the VRBO to build a new access to the property using North Pole Road. Vice-Chairman Hartman stated the request must first be presenting to Planning for review. The question of whether road districts, since they are a legal entity, could place liens against properties was brought up. State's Attorney Kelly said that state law dictates what liens can be filed by government entities. Commissioner Busskohl voiced his concern about why the easement was granted originally. Schade stated she was not notified about the VRBO and additional construction taking place.

2. Thomas Veigh, resident of Big Valley Road District, shared his concerns regarding Ordinance 2 and would like the Commission to "adopt and enforce" the Ordinance. He also discussed concerns about a subdivision that was created and received Commission approval with no one receiving notification. Planning has no record of creation of the subdivision. He urged the Commission to change the classification of the Sharp property from residential to commercial as Sharp is running a VRBO. He also asked that Sharp be required to use North Pole Road to access his property. It was also stated by Veigh that Sharp is not part of the Big Valley Trail Road District. Hartman reiterated the need to go through Planning. Veigh stated that Planning had already pushed the issue off on the Commission. Planning Director Kester stated she was unaware of Veigh's issue and heard about it for the first time at today's meeting.

3. Lea Anne McWhorter shared the Legislative Property Tax Task Force will meet 9-22-25 in Pierre, with another meeting to be held in October. The Custer County Republicans met and discussed the 2026 election. The question was raised if the current Custer County Finance Officer position will remain or if it will revert to having both Treasurer and Auditor positions. McLaughlin stated the position was created by Ordinance and will continue as a Finance Officer position at this time.

N. Commission

1. Mail call – letter from Southern BH Water System re: annual meeting and election.
2. Meeting Schedule – SDACC/SDACO Convention in Pierre 9-8-25 & 9-9-25 in Pierre; Fire Advisory Board to meet 9-11-2025 in the Annex Pine Room at 6:00 PM.
3. Meeting Reports – 9-17-25 Commission meeting will be held at the 1881 Courthouse Museum; Busskohl attended Custer City Council; Linde attended

YMCA; Hindle attended maintenance position interviews; and meeting re: prospective IT company.

O. Executive Session

1. Executive Session as per SDCL 1-25-21(1) Personnel. Motion to enter Executive Session made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Executive Session entered at 8:46 AM and concluded at 10:51 AM.

P. Actions Taken by Commission Outside of Executive Session—none.

Q. Adjourn

1. Motion by Hindle and seconded by Busskohl to adjourn the meeting at 10:53 AM. The next meeting will be at 8:00 AM, September 17, 2025 at the 1881 Courthouse Museum, 411 Mt. Rushmore Rd.

Mark Hartman, Vice-Chairman

Attest: _____

Barbara Cox, Custer County Deputy Auditor

Published once at the total approximate cost of _____.