

Minutes of the Custer County Commission Meeting, Wednesday, December 10, 2025

Members present:

Commissioners Jim Lintz, Mike Linde, Michael Buszkohl, Craig Hindle and Finance Officer, Dawn McLaughlin; Commission Legal Counsel Aaron Davis. Commissioner Hartman was not present.

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

B. Adopting of the agenda

1. Amend Agenda to add the following: a) under "G" Auditor item 3—approve 2026 on-sale liquor license renewal for Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation dba Heritage Village; item 4—approve 2026 on-sale liquor license renewal for Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation dba Laughing Water Restaurant; item 5—approve and Chairman to sign 2026 SDPAA Insurance renewal. b) Amend Item "E" Highway—FS297 and FS 297-1A to read FS397 and FS 397-1A. Motion to approve as amended made by Linde; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes of 11-19-25 Commission meeting.
2. Vouchers approved as follows:

PAYROLL: Safety \$438.90, Commissioners \$5,697.75, Auditor \$11,883.07, Treasurer \$13,154.59, Info Systems & Tech \$3,426.89, States Attorney \$14,837.39, Courthouse Building \$9,245.02, Director of Equalization \$11,224.68, Register of Deeds \$5,589.40, Veterans \$2,126.72, Human Resources \$2,882.71, Sheriff \$59,449.19, Coroner \$879.62, Nurse \$732.02, Library \$11,643.68, Conservation \$817.97, Weed & Pest \$3,402.31, Planning \$7,537.54, County road & Bridge \$43,138.74, Emergency Management \$2,880.26, 24/7 Sobriety \$1,241.01, Emergency Line \$21,162.73,

COMMISSIONERS: Golden West Telecommunications \$269.18, Pitney Bowes Global \$271.58, Pitney Bowes Purchase \$253.75, Thomson Reuters \$237.96, Valhalla Legal \$2,520.00,

AUDITOR: BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC COOP \$420.21, Black Hills Energy \$61.12, FedEx \$13.55, Golden West Telecommunications \$160.58, Tyler Tech \$290.00,

TREASURER: Golden West Telecommunications \$143.96,

STATE'S ATTORNEY: Golden West Telecommunications \$133.13, Relex INC \$491.00, South Dakota state's Attorney Association \$951.12, Thomson Reuters \$237.96,

MAINTENANCE: Black Hills chemical \$520.02, Black Hills Electric \$115.71, Black Hills Energy \$5,715.29, City of Custer \$115.53, Custer Ace Hardware \$891.37, French Creek Supply \$250.47, Golden West Telecommunications \$18.43, Kieffer Sanitation \$68.40, Mcgas Propane \$461.30, S&B Motor Parts \$123.00,

DIRECTOR OF EQUALIZATION: Golden West Telecommunications \$201.95, SDAAO Treasurer \$225.00, Splish Splash car wash \$23.00, Vanguard Appraisals \$3,720.00, Verizon Connect \$63.80,

REGISTER OF DEEDS: Golden West Telecommunications \$87.25,

VETERANS SERVICES: Golden West Telecommunications \$18.43,

HUMAN RESOURCES: Golden West Telecommunications \$18.43,

INFO TECHNOLOGY: Golden West Tech \$16,953.10, Golden West Telecommunications \$10.00, Golden West Telecommunications \$670.00, Quill \$292.93,

SHERIFF: A&B Pure Water \$54.98, Aimpoint \$2,508.00, FedEx \$90.08, French Creek Supply \$166.90, Golden West Telecommunications \$202.14, Lexisnexis Risk Solutions \$210.00, Motorola Solutions \$33.00, Murray Auto \$693.41, Sherry Weber \$10.00, Stop Stick \$210.00, Summit fire Protection \$204.20,

PRISONER CARE: City of Rapid City \$280.00, Correct RX Pharmacy Service \$1,026.90, Hapsie Nutley \$75.00, Mary Seifert \$225.00, Ruth Airheart \$150.00,

AIRPORT: Brenden Hendrickson \$4,558.37, Golden West Telecommunications \$115.17, Insurance Benefits \$3,693.00, QT Pod \$2,069.47, Titan Machinery \$2,973.30,

LIBRARY: Golden West Telecommunications \$22.94,

EXTENSION: Golden West Telecommunications \$91.84, Keri Cochran \$106.92,

WEED & PEST: Anna Evans \$920.91, French Creek Supply \$43.26, Golden West Telecommunications \$22.94, Lesa Mcdermott \$208.93, Verizon Connect \$63.80,

PLANNING: Golden West Telecommunications \$114.70, Smyth Auto \$109.17, Verizon Connect \$31.90,

COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE: CUSTER ACE HARDWARE \$26.97, A&I Distributors \$462.70, A&B WELDING SUPPLY \$17.85, ADVANCED DRUG TESTING \$45.00, BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC COOP \$838.36, BLACK HILLS ENERGY \$109.83, CBH COOPERATIVE \$23,903.23, FASTENAL COMPANY \$52.82, FLOYD'S TRUCK CENTER \$1,012.25, FRENCH CREEK SUPPLY \$74.41, GREAT WESTERN TIRE \$6,036.35, HOT SPRINGS ACE HARDWARE \$52.99, INLAND TRUCK PARTS \$18,551.84, NELSON'S OIL & GAS \$212.84, PACIFIC STEEL & RECYCLING \$325.66, PARTSONE NAPA \$80.89, RDO EQUIPMENT \$2,095.27, SIMONS TEAM CONCRETE \$37,128.83, A&B Welding \$697.57, Black Hills Gravel \$118,750.00, Brosz Engineering \$3,525.00, Butler Machinery \$56,364.69, Croell \$24,000.00, Culligan Water \$6.95, Custer Ace Hardware \$208.93, Dakota Riggers \$309.97, Diesel Machinery \$2,300.00, Floyd's Truck \$158.48, Forward Distributing \$21.90, French Creek Supply \$815.12, Golden West Telecommunications \$210.12, Golden West Telecommunications \$39.58, Grimms Pump \$21.66, Kieffer Sanitation \$346.92, Menards \$264.65, Mt Rushmore Telephone \$179.97, Nelson's oil & gas \$543.83, Newman Traffic \$734.00, North Central \$528.00, Partson Napa \$80.89, Runnings \$599.99, SD DOT Div of Finance \$726.79, SD Public Assurance Alliance \$131.00, Serval Towel & linen \$97.95, Summit Signs & Supply \$365.00, Trav's Outfitter \$1,865.00,

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Golden West Telecommunications \$46.22, Ramkota Hotel \$122.00, RESPEC \$23,015.40,

COUNTY BUILDINGS: ADTECH-RAPID FIRE PROTECTION \$1,115.10, Dark Canyon LLC \$15,000.00, G&R Controls \$550.00, Hagen Glass, window & siding \$398.92, R.P. Lumber \$9,752.29,

EMERGENCY LINE: A&B Pure water \$54.97, Bintel inc \$3,243.30, Custer Ace Hardware \$37.98, Golden West Tech \$9,125.63, Golden West Telecommunications \$207.51, Golden West Telecommunications \$10.00, Golden West Telecommunications \$200.00, Quill \$544.24, Range \$24.75,

SAFETY: BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC COOP \$52.47,

ELECTION: Americinn- \$224.00, Election Systems & Soft \$5,536.99,

FIRE PROTECTION: Argyle fire Department \$13,000.00, Buffalo Gap fire \$7,000.00, Custer Fire department \$42,500.00, Dewey Fire \$3,000.00 Folsom Fire \$7,750.00, Highlands Fire \$9,500.00, Pringle Fire \$10,000.00,

COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEY: Colbath and Sperlich \$4,786.75, Culligan Water \$32.85, Grey & Eisenbraun law \$1,392.00, Husted Law \$3,685.42,

IST: Golden West Telecommunications \$45.88,

S&R: Golden West Telecommunications \$99.95,

NURSE: Golden West Telecommunications \$61.67,

MENTAL HEALTH: New Trails Ministry \$600.00,

SD CODIFIED LAW LIBRARY: Thomson Reuters \$475.92.

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

D. Conflict of Interest Declarations – None.

E. Highway

1. Highway Superintendent, Jesse Doyle requested Commission approval of ROW Occupancy request from Golden West Telecom for utility permit to extend mainline service to residence on FS 397 & FS 397-1A; S 2 & 11 T5S R4E, Custer County, SD. Doyle noted this is not located on Schedule A agreement and not on a section line. Doyle stated he was ok with this request, contingent upon USFS approval. Motion to approve contingent upon USFS approval made by Hindle; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Doyle also requested approval of ROW Occupancy request from Golden West Telecom for utility permit on Lower French Creek Rd, S34 & 3 T3S & T4S R5E, Custer County SD. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. Approval of ROW Occupancy request from Golden West Telecom for utility permit for service to 25743 Sidney Park Rd, Custer, SD was made. Motion to approve made by Linde; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

4. Approve Resolution 2025-27 and Authorize Chairman's signature. **Resolution 2025-27 2026 Bridge Improvement Grant Program Resolution Authorizing Submission of Applications.** Doyle noted this Resolution is for work on the Cheyenne River Bridge located east of Buffalo Gap. Due to a design flaw in the headwall, there is some cracking in the concrete; Doyle stated the bridge is not failing but concrete repair is a corrective measure. Engineer's estimate of the bridge project is \$434,665.88, with 20% (86,933.18) the County's responsibility and 80% to be covered by BIG monies. This Resolution approves submission of application for grant funding. This project is possibly 2-years down the road. Motion to approve signature made by Linde; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

5. Doyle requested scrap metal to be declared as surplus and authorization to haul to Rapid City for recycling. Doyle said this scrap mainly consists of cutting edges and old culverts. Motion to authorize made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

6. Doyle discussed the Black Hills Gravel contract extension. He stated that BHG would like to extend the current contract (expires 12-31-25) and piggyback off the current bid rate of \$9.50/ton and asked what paperwork would be needed. Rod Fortin, Legislative Audit, through correspondence, stated that Custer County "might" be able to do this. State's Attorney and Commission Legal Counsel will investigate the matter. It was decided to further discuss at the 12-30-25 Commission meeting.

F. Planning

1. Planning Director, Terri Kester, requested Commission approval of Cell Tower Modification re: Parcel 015526 AT&T and Earl & Stacy Sallee. The towers will be upgraded to replace antennas and radios. This upgrade was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Kester presented Final Plat of: KIRKWOOD TRACT OF ELK MOUNTAIN RANCHES SUBDIVISION, LOCATED IN THE W ½ OF SECTION 28, T4S, R1E, BHM, CUSTER COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA. Parcels 007699 & 007700 Kellynn Kirkwood for approval. This lot consolidation proposal was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on 11-4-25. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. Kester requested approval of Final Plat of: TRACT A & TRACT B OF HOMESTEAD ENTRY SURVEY NO. 228, LOCATED IN THE SE ¼ OF SECTION 12 & THE NE ¼ OF SECTION 13, T5S, R4E, AND THE SW ¼ OF SECTION 7 AND NW ¼ OF SECTION 18, ALL OF T5S, R5E, BHM, CUSTER COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA. Parcel 001932 Lisa Anderson was presented. This is a split of an aliquot parcel, and the Planning Commission recommended approval on 11-4-25. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

4. Kester presented 2026 Fee and Permit Rate Schedule for approval. She noted there were no changes added. Motion to table until the 12-30-25 Commission meeting made by Hindle; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

5. Kester presented the 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule for acknowledgement. She noted the June and November meetings were moved due to conflict with the 2026 primary and general elections. The Commission so acknowledged.

6. Kester presented applications for selection of Planning Commission Members, noting that 2 positions were up for appointment. A total of 5 applications were received and reviewed. Motion to reappoint Phil Abernathy and Eric Lewis made by Buszkohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Both Abernathy and Lewis were commended on their current performance on the Planning Commission.

7. Bruce Flaig was to contest late fees via phone. Motion to table until the 12-30-25 Commission meeting made by Hindle; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

G. Auditor

1. Finance Officer, Dawn McLaughlin, presented the 2025 Delinquent Tax Real Estate List and noted there are 392 in 2025. In 2024, there were 172. Certificates will be issued Monday, December 15, 2025 and no certificates will be sold to bidders.

2. The 2025 Custer County Calendar was presented for approval. Motion to move to the 12-30-25 Commission meeting made by Hindle; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. Approval of 2026 On-Sale Liquor License renewal for Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation, dba Heritage Village was requested. (\$1200) Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

4. Approval of 2026 On-Sale Liquor License renewal for Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation, dba Laughing Water Restaurant was requested. (\$1200) Motion to approve made by Buszkohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

5. Request for approval and Chairman's signature on 2026 SDPAA Insurance Policy. Motion to approve made by Linde; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

H. Equalization

1. DOE Director, Scott Storms, first spoke about the Warren property, which was brought up at Public Comment during a prior meeting, where Storms was not present. Storms held a discussion re: ag land classification and noted that assessors will be visiting properties to verify principal land use for ag purposes. He also stated that properties over 40-acres in size, that principal use alone is acceptable; properties under 40-acres must show income of at least \$2,500 annually. He also noted that some acreages are given ag status, even if primary use is not shown, based upon the number of acres. Chairman Lintz asked Storms if Custer County is seeing ag taxes based on commodity prices; Storms replied "yes". Lintz stated this was set up on an 8-year average in anticipation of numbers going up. Lintz also said he wished that non-ag had been addressed at the same time as ag. Commissioner Hindle noted that 8-year timeframe is approaching.

I. Raffle Request

1. Raffle request from Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation 2026 was presented for approval. Prize is Uberti 1873 Rifle Model 2047. Ticket sales cease 10-20-2026, with drawing to be held that day. Proceeds used for Memorial operating costs. Motion to approve made by Buszkohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Raffle request from Custer American Legion Post 46 was presented for approval. Prize is quarter of beef, cut and wrapped. Drawing to be held 3-17-26. Proceeds to be used for community and veteran causes in the Custer area. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

J. Veteran's Services

1. Request for approval of Chairman's signature on 2026 Request for State Aid for Salary of County Veteran's Service Officer was made. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

K. Emergency Management

1. EMS Director, Steve Esser, made request for budget supplement in the amount of \$23,015.40 for Flood Mitigation Scoping done by RESPEC. Custer County to be reimbursed by South Dakota OEM from BRIC Grant funding award. Account #226-4-226-436.11 Mitigation Fund.

L. Public Comment – none.

M. 4-H/Extension

1. 4-H Director, Keri Cochran, presented 2025 update to the Commission. She provided a Power Point presentation showing the year's highlights. She said that September 2025 marked the end of the annual 4-H session. She noted that through the 4-H program, members learn responsibility, sportsmanship, social development, personal growth, as well as many life skills. She noted that community service is a foundational part of 4-H and said the program had 29 certified volunteers. She thanked the Commission for its continued support of the program. The Commission thanked Keri for her hard work.

2. Request for approval of 2026 MOU between SDSU and Custer County, as well as Chairman's signature. Motion to approve made by Linde; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

N. Commission

1. Discuss East Custer Ambulance District—Leo VanSambeek appeared before the Commission and thanked them for attending the forum held in Hermosa. He stated that approximately 100 citizens were in attendance. At the forum, a timeline for creation was given. He noted an important deadline for 2026 extension of ambulance service between Pennington County and Custer County at an approximate cost of \$60K (not in the 2026 budget). Hindle stated Hermosa should be responsible for part of that cost. The district creation can be in conjunction with the 2026 June Primary election, with 3-1-26 as a tentative deadline to present a resolution; 3-15-26 as deadline for approval of resolution for June 2, 2025 election. The tax request needs to be in by the end of September for 2027 by the initial board of directions (after creation of the district). Further discussion was held regarding ambulance district boundaries and various funding options, including mill levy, special assessment or both. It was noted the Custer Ambulance generates revenue on patient transfers and it is doubtful the East Custer Ambulance District would generate funds in that manner. Further discussion regarding resolutions, deadlines and annexations was held. Mike Bielmaier, Custer Ambulance, stated he thought this was a joint operation and not creation of a separate service in the eastern part of the county. He stated he understood the goal is to improve the service in east Custer County, not add a separate ambulance district. Commissioner Linde thank Mr. Van Sambeek; Leo stated there has been overwhelming community support in favor of the district and has received positive feedback with no negative responses.
2. Law Enforcement Contract—Sheriff Marty Mechaley stated law enforcement contract negotiations continue with the City of Custer. The current contract for coverage is \$435K and the County is now asking for \$550K. Custer City responded with an offer of

\$500K. One of the factors for the increase is the high call volume due to tourism in the city. Mechaley stated the overall law enforcement budget is \$2,910,096. Deputy Allen conducted research regarding neighboring departments' budgets for comparison. Mechaley noted Custer County is asking for approximately half of the cost for the city to form its own department. The Sheriff's office is running thin and Mechaley is trying to keep costs down, but overtime is a big expense and is directly related to events taking place within the city. He stated it is a priority to provide public safety, and without a contract, services will be affected. With diminished staffing, 24-hour coverage may be affected. Commissioner Hindle noted the city would still be responsible for paying for dispatch services. Mechaley said Custer County dedicates a great deal of services and noted people are first; politics are second. He went on to say he didn't want to wait until the final day, but the deadline is very near—when the County and City work together, it saves money for everyone. The Commission thanked Marty, Derrick and Elizabeth for their research. Commissioner Busskohl noted there will be further discussion in executive session.

3. Approve Cash Donation Agreement from Friends of Custer County Search & Rescue and approve Chairman's signature. (\$10,000) Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.
4. Open Meeting Law Review as per SDCL 1-25-13. Motion to postpone until the 12-30-25 meeting made by Busskohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.
5. Mail call- a) thank you card from Outlaw Ranch re: culvert replacement project on America Center Road. b) anonymous letter re: Coroner vehicle. Commissioner Hindle addressed this anonymous complaint and stated the coroner is overworked and underpaid. The coroner pays for his own fuel, oil changes, maintenance, tires and repairs without complaint. He has previously been cleared by the Commission to use the coroner vehicle for all uses. Hindle was not impressed that the letter was unsigned. Sheriff Mechaley said it is beneficial to have the coroner separate from the Sheriff's office and commended quick response time. The Commissioner thanked Coroner Sanders for his dedication and hard work. c) letter from SD Dept. Tribal Relations and Frank Galligo re: Squaw Creek Rd. name.
6. Meeting schedule—12-12-25 SD Association meeting in Belle Fourche at 11:30 AM; Custer County employee Christmas party 12-12-25 at 5:30 PM at Laughing Water Restaurant, Crazy Horse. The Courthouse will be closed December 24, 25 and 26th and the last Commission meeting of 2025 will be held Tuesday, December 30th.
7. Meeting reports—Hindle attended 1881 Museum; Linde attended garbage board and Custer City Council; Lintz attended weed board; Busskohl attended Custer City Council and Planning.

O. Executive Sessions

1. Motion to enter and exit Executive Sessions as per SDCL 1-25-21(1) Personnel and SDCL 1-25-3(3) and (4) Legal/Contract made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Executive Sessions entered at 9:34 AM and concluded at 10:44 AM.

P. Actions Taken by Commission Outside of Executive Session

1. Motion to authorize State's Attorney to draft response to City of Custer re: Law Enforcement Contract made by Busskohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.
2. Motion to deny extended FMLA request made by Linde; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

Q. Adjourn

Motion by Linde and seconded by Busskohl to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 AM. The next meeting will be at 8:00 AM, December 30, 2025 in the Commissioner's Room in the Custer County Courthouse.

Jim Lintz, Chairman

Attest: _____

Barbara Cox, Custer County Deputy Auditor

Published once at the total approximate cost of _____.