

Minutes of the Custer County Commission Meeting, Tuesday, January 20, 2026.

Members present:

Commissioners Jim Lintz, Mark Hartman, Mike Linde, Michael Busskohl, Craig Hindle and Commission Legal Counsel Aaron Davis and Dawn McLaughlin, Finance Officer.

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 Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye motion carried.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes from the 12-30-25 and 1-7-2026 Commission meetings.
2. Approve travel requests as follows: Michael Baldwin and Nathan Benjamin to attend 2026 SD Weed & Pest Conference February 18-20, 2026 in Deadwood, SD at a total cost of \$910.
3. Approve vouchers as follows:

PAYROLL: 1-8-26 Payroll—Safety \$134.17; Commissioners \$5,739.76; Auditor \$13,220.26; Treasurer \$11,843.11; Info Systems & Technology \$3,537.00; State’s Attorney \$15,037.89; Courthouse Building \$10,138.83; Director of Equalization \$12,299.47; Register of Deeds \$5,965.21; Veteran’s Service \$2,171.12; Human Resources \$4,300.30; Sheriff \$69,216.28; Coroner \$1,068.84; Nurse \$352.66; Library \$12,499.77; Conservation \$825.87; Weed & Pest Control \$3,484.88; Planning \$8,031.15; County Road & Bridge \$42,174.38; Emergency Management \$3,081.77; 24/7 Sobriety \$1,168.51; Emergency Line F \$22,281.37. **1-22-2026 Payroll**—Safety \$134.32; Commissioners \$5,718.48; Auditor \$14,779.77; Treasurer \$11,663.48; Info Systems & Technology \$3,536.99; State’s Attorney \$15,292.71; Courthouse Building \$10,352.84; Director of Equalization \$12,873.20; Register of Deeds \$5,965.20; Veteran’s Service \$2,384.36; Human Resources \$3,460.30; Sheriff \$76,371.09; Coroner \$1,068.82; Nurse \$783.70; Library \$11,939.99; Conservation \$825.88; Weed & Pest \$3,720.70; Planning \$8,548.22; County Road & Bridge \$42,383.21; Emergency Management \$3,081.76; 24/7 Sobriety \$913.96; Emergency Line F \$21,492.02

COMMISSIONERS: Credit Card: A&B Water \$75.39

COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEY: Custer Lawyer, PLLC \$3,962.40; Husted Law Office, PC \$6,598.97

FINANCE OFFICE/AUDITOR: Credit Card: Shirts \$234.37; CC Verizon \$40.01; Quill 39.99; Tyler Technologies \$435;

TREASURER: Credit Card: Supplies \$183.44; CC Shirts \$237.18; CC Amazon supplies \$182.57; License supplies \$137.39;

ELECTIONS: Credit Card: \$26.34

STATE'S ATTORNEY: Credit Card: Verizon \$39.73; CC Amazon-supplies \$175.70; CC Koeze Company \$304.69; CC Davis Court \$6.70;

MAINTENANCE: Credit Card: Verizon \$39.73; CC Amazon credit \$-172.51; CC Sam's \$107.08; CC Discount Tire \$139.66; CC Menards \$99.54; CC Amazon \$307.22; CC Home Depot \$458.00; A&B Shredding \$100; French Creek Supply \$170.89; Kieffer Sanitation \$398.58;

NURSE: Lorrie Martinez \$66

MENTAL HEALTH: West River Mental Health \$693.16

HUMAN RESOURCES: Credit Card: Advertising \$677.56; CC Verizon \$39.73; CC Amazon supplies \$64.99;

INFO TECHNOLOGY: Golden West Technologies \$8,820.55; Schneider Geospatial, LLC \$22,972.05

SHERIFF: Credit Card: Verizon \$526.51; CC Amazon \$502.29; CC Vanway Trophy \$88.75; CC Travel \$27.09; A&B Pure Water \$54.98; French Creek Supply \$369.62; Lamonte's Auto \$150.72; Murray Auto \$113.45; Rushmore Communications \$142.40; Steele Collision \$1,220.14;

PRISONER CARE: Pennington County Jail \$13,335; D Stephen \$79.94; SCRAM Systems \$10.95; SD Public Health Lab \$200;

AIRPORT: Credit Card: Repairs \$248.66; CC Supplies \$24.87; BHEC \$249.61; Brenden Hendrickson \$4,592.08;

LIBRARY: Credit Card: Amazon \$1,830.71; CC Utilities \$431.29; CC Amazon Supplies \$48.99; Southern Hills Publishing \$160;

EXTENSION: Credit Card: Verizon \$40.01; National Membership \$160;

WEED & PEST: Credit Card: Quill \$47.87; CC Brown's Repair \$47.99; Culligan Water \$6.95; Weed & Pest Conference \$500;

SD DEPT REVENUE: Sales tax \$227.78

COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE: Credit Card: (maint) supplies \$13.96; CC Amazon lights \$111.99; CC Rapid City Solid Waste \$4,032.60; CC Redwing \$150; CC Amazon \$758.44; CC Amazon office supplies \$37.53; CC Harbor Freight \$869.95

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: Credit Card: Verizon \$39.73; BH Council Local Govt \$4,615; BHEC \$51.21; McGas \$184.82;

COUNTY BUILDINGS: BHEC \$484.40; BHEC Storage Bld \$240.55; BHEC W&P Bld \$140.71; Custer Ace Hdwe \$116.12; Dark Canyon LLC \$13,000; Floors & More \$3,157.50; Freeman's Electric \$1,780.91; RP Lumber \$105.47; Tri-State Carports \$23,165.65

EMERGENCY LINE: A&B Pure Water \$54.97; Bintel \$3,243.30; Golden West Telecom \$210; Range \$26.53; Rushmore Communications \$585; Southern Hills Family Medicine \$206;

1881 COURTHOUSE: Museum \$41,000;

RISE: Budget request \$5,000.

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

D. Conflict of Interest Declarations – None.

E. Finance Office

1. Finance Officer, Dawn McLaughlin, presented Delinquent Tax List for Mobile Homes. There are currently 55 on the list as advertised in the 1-14-26 edition of the Custer County Chronicle. Distress Warrants will be delivered to the Sheriff's Office on 3-16-26 for tax collection.

2. McLaughlin discussed the Budget Policy. She noted that Rod Fortin, Legislative Audit, suggested that all counties have a Budget Policy in place that contains a timeline and calendar for the budget process. The Policy should also contain forms for department heads to enter their proposed budgets and expenses. Legal Counsel Davis, Finance Officer McLaughlin and Commissioner Busskohl met to discuss formation of the policy. The Board is in favor and noted this will show transparency in the process, as well.

3. McLaughlin requested Commission approval for cash transfer: \$107,840.59 from

General Fund 101 to Opioid Fund 294. Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

F. Planning

1. Planning Director, Terri Kester, presented the 2025 Planning statistics. There were 257 building permits, 84 approach permits and 110 wastewater permits. Also included were 18 Plats, 3 section line vacations, 2 section line improvements, 6 variance requests, 11 wireless tower applications and 35 installer certification forms. Fees collected in 2025 total \$177,030.10 Kester noted no complaints in the 2026 increased permit fees. Kester provided the Commission with edited copies of Ordinance 2 for discussion at the 2-10-26 Commission meeting.

G. Sheriff

1. Sheriff Marty Mechaley requested surplus of Glock; S#YRV993 to Lt. Jeffery McGraw. Mechaley noted that today is McGraw's last day working for the Custer County Sheriff's Department, and he would like to present the Glock to him at today's retirement celebration. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Mechaley requested Commission approval to promote Sgt. Derrick Reifenrath to rank of Lieutenant and increase his wage to \$36.63/hour, which is the rate McGraw currently earned in that position. This would take effect 1-21-2026. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye, motion carried.

3. Mechaley presented the 2026 Animal Control Contract with Battle Mountain Humane Society for approval. The 2025 monthly rate of \$1,183 will remain the same for 2026. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Mechaley will facilitate getting the contract to Battle Mountain.

H. Human Resources

1. Approve CHRI Policy. HR Director, Amber Maidens, was not present at today's meeting to review the policy. Legal Counsel Davis and State's Attorney Kelley have reviewed and have no issue with the policy. It was agreed to postpone the topic until the HR Director could be present.

2. Dawn McLaughlin requested approval of cancellation of Guardian Dental benefit. Both participants have agreed to the discontinuation. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

I. County Nurse

1. Present 2025 DOH services summary. Motion to postpone until the 2-10-26 meeting made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

J. Weed & Pest

1. Weed & Pest Supervisor, Michael Baldwin, requested approval and Chairman's

signature on complaint re: prairie dog encroachment into the county right of way on Pleasant Valley Road. Motion to approve made by Linde; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

K. Search & Rescue

1. 2026 S&R roster was presented for Commission approval. Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

L. Raffle Requests

1. Approval of Raffle Request from Custer County Senior Citizen's Club, to run 1-15-2026 through 4-30-2026. Prizes include jelly, gift cards, aprons, books, etc. Proceeds to be used for general operating expenses was presented. Motion to approve made by Linde; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Raffle Request from Custer Youth & Alumni Foundation to run 2-14-26 through 7-19-26 was presented for approval. Proceeds to be used for scholarship and teacher grant prizes. Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Buszkohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. Approval of the following Raffle Request for VFW Post 3442 was made:

- a) Scholarship fund raiser Super Bowl Sunday.
- b) Quarter of beef drawing Super Bowl Sunday.
- c) Queen of Hearts, every Friday @ 6:00 PM throughout 2026.
- d) Annual gun raffle first Friday in November, 2026.

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

M. Emergency Management

1. EMS Director, Steve Esser, presented an update on the 2025 Windstorm Disaster Declaration. He stated the Custer County has met the threshold requirements to apply for a FEMA grant. Esser thanked the County Highway department, the City of Custer and BHEC for information provided. He noted that both Pennington and Fall River Counties have met the necessary thresholds as well. Lawrence County did not sustain enough damage to qualify. Esser reiterated that even though thresholds are met, there are no guarantees of receipt of FEMA monies.

N. Public Comment –

1. Jerry Styles, Hermosa, shared his concerns regarding illegal medical waste transfers taking place on a property owned by Dan Holsworth. Styles stated the waste transfer company's permit only covers its location in Sioux Falls, not Hermosa and is not valid. He stated this has been taking place over the past 1-2 years. Styles has contacted the DANR in Rapid City and they are aware of the problem. He appealed to the Commission to take action on this violation by issuing a cease-and-desist letter to the landowner. He noted this property falls within the 1-mile extra-territorial boundary.

He stated the rules need to be followed by all. He also thanked the sheriff's office for all they do and said he has been impressed by recent meetings.

2. Lea Anne McWhorter shared that the legislative session is underway and noted SB100 and HB93 are a couple of bills to watch. She also noted SB96 concerns a possible ½ cent sales tax to be used by counties to offset property taxes. McWhorter said the City of Custer estimates a possible \$1 million revenue from the ½ cent additional tax. Chairman Lintz stated the additional tax could be implemented for 6 months during the summer and removed during the off-season. Also discussed were owner-occupied property taxes.

3. Scott Storms noted that at a recent department head meeting, the matter of grant writing was discussed. BH Council of Local Governments assists in grant writing if the client already knows of the grant. A dedicated grant writer will seek out potential grants for clients. Hiring a grant writer was previously discussed and Storms asked the Commission if they were in favor of moving forward with this.

O. Commission Legal Counsel.

1. Aaron Davis stated he has reached out to the South Dakota Board of Geographical Names in response to a complaint regarding "Squaw Creek Road" located in Custer County. He was told by the board that Squaw Creek Road is not a geographical area and therefore, does not violate the state law. Any name change would be up to the Commission. A prior complaint and survey of current landowners on the road has already been addressed and due diligence has been performed regarding the matter. At this time, the prior decision to leave the Squaw Creek Road name as is will stand.

2. Davis went on to discuss an updated gravel bid packet. He noted some language has been revised to determine accepted bid location, as well as travel/transport costs in an effort to balance potential savings vs. transport costs. Highway Superintendent Doyle has reviewed and requested a change to spec lines. Chairman Lintz asked if there could be "west Custer County" and "east Custer County" bids depending upon job sites. It was stated this was attempted in the past and was unsuccessful. Commissioner Hartman is in favor of keeping bids open rather than piggybacking or extending current bids.

3. Davis presented an updated MAG Chloride bid packet with minor changes to the existing packet regarding timing.

4. East Custer Ambulance District was discussed. Chairman Lintz attended a recent meeting regarding the matter. Commissioner Hindle stated he spoke with the Pennington County Vice-Chairman and requesting guidance. District boundaries and overlapping areas also need to be clarified. Derrick Reifenrath stated a new map for the potential district was created to include properties not covered by other districts. It was discovered the Custer Ambulance covers a larger area than previously thought. CSP and Wind Cave NP are included in the new boundary at this point. Davis included a template for a resolution for Commission consideration. He met with staff in the Auditor's office to discuss election timelines. The Town of Hermosa and Town of

Fairburn will need to pass resolutions before Custer County does and Davis will provide a template for guidance. Commissioner Busskohl has checked into Buffalo Gap ambulance. Reifenrath inquired as to who creates and writes the actual legal boundary description for the district.

P. Commission

1. Mail call – none.
2. Meeting Schedule – Lintz met with Travis Hartshorn re: loss of law enforcement presence in the Custer school. Commissioner Hartman noted a meeting taking place today to discuss adding the law enforcement officer back into the school.
3. Meeting Reports –Linde attended Pringle City Council, Conservation Board, Sr. Center, Historical Society and Waste Board. Lintz attended Weed Board, Fire Advisory Board; noting no forward movement with creation of fire districts. Busskohl attended Fire Advisory Board and stated there will be a special FAB meeting 1-29-26 to discuss possible opt-out option; Fairburn banquet. Hartman attended a housing meeting.

Q. Executive Session

1. Motion to enter and exit Executive Session as per SDCL 1-25-2(3) Contract made by Linde; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Executive Session entered at 9:00 AM and concluded at 9:50 AM.

R. Actions Taken by Commission Outside of Executive Session

1. None

S. Adjourn

Motion by Linde and seconded by Busskohl to adjourn the meeting at 9:51 AM. The next meeting will be at 8:00 AM, Tuesday, February 10, 2026 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 _____.