

Minutes of the Custer County Commission Meeting, Wednesday, June 24, 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. Amend to add Weed & Pest item after "K"; acknowledge completion of 1-year probation for Nathan Benjamin.
2. Amend to add item 3 to "G" Finance Office; renew SD Wine and Malt Liquor license for American Legion/Battle Creek Post.
3. Amend to add item 4 to "G" Finance Office; May 2026 Financial Report.
4. Amend to add item 4 to "C" Consent Agenda; travel requests Equalization.
5. Amend to move item "N" Old Business until after Executive Session.

Motion to approve Agenda as amended made by Hartman; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

C. Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes of the May 27, 2026 Commission meeting.
2. Travel requests approved as follows: Equalization Dept. Scott Storms; Melissa Bradford and Steven Fair-Pingree to attend 2026 SDAAO Annual Assessor School Sept 14-18, 2026 in Pierre, SD at an estimated cost of \$4,032.
3. Correct 5-27-26 Minutes, Item "F" 1 to read: "4/10 of a mile toward Hot Springs".
4. Monthly Reposts as follows:

Conservation \$825.87; Weed & Pest \$5,101.79; Planning \$5,861.50; County Road & Bridge \$36,355.14; Emergency Management \$3,081.76; Emergency Line F \$16,382.60.

COMMISSIONERS: CC: A&B Water \$75.39;

AUDITOR: CC: Microsoft \$120;

TREASURER: CC: Amazon \$1,549.16;

STATE'S ATTORNEY: CC: FirstNet \$31.89; USPS \$47.35; Lynn's \$13.99

MAINTENANCE: CC: FirstNet \$31.89;

HUMAN RESOURCES: CC: FirstNet \$31.89; Quill \$44.98;

SHERIFF: CC: FirstNet \$500.21; Vanway Trophy \$152.50; Amazon \$163.92; Pizza Hut \$111.84; Adobe \$254.75; Hampton Inn \$694.95; Holiday Inn \$116;

LIBRARY: CC: Library RFDS \$2,417.30; Amazon \$1,546.72; Library Open AI \$21.24

EXTENSION: CC: Family Dollar \$3.19; Lynn's \$13.57

WEED & PEST: CC: Quill \$91.95

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: CC: FirstNet \$31.89; Holiday \$72.32;

COUNTY BUILDINGS: CC: MTC Select Shades \$754.21; Amazon \$1,401.96; Walmart \$34.15; Buckhorn \$156.30; Home Depot \$111.90; US Lock Supply \$2,067.88

SEARCH & RESCUE: CC: Pizza Hut \$38.20; Microsoft \$135.45; TrueNorth Gear \$647.61; Dakota Broasted \$96.53; Amazon \$108.79; Starlink \$100; Frontier Grill \$135.32

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

D. Conflict of Interest Declarations – None.

E. Public Comment

1. LeaAnne McWhorter noted the SD GOP Convention will be held this Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

F. Elections

1. Finance Officer McLaughlin shared that the hand-count post-election audit held 6-16-26 for Precinct 7, US District 30 race yielded the exact results as the tabulator.

G. Finance Office

1. Finance Officer, Dawn McLaughlin, requested approval of the following Grant Supplements:

a) \$30,000.00 – SD Wildland Fire Grant 234-101.99 to Search & Rescue Budget 101-4-227-422.00. Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

b) \$200,000.00- SD Big Grant - 201-334.10 to Highway Big Grant 201-4-201-422.01. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. McLaughlin requested approval for Insurance Supplements as follows:

a) \$26,000.00- Claims Associates- 101-373.00 to Building Fund Line-Item Highway Repairs 250-4-250-425.30 Wind damage. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

b) \$117,000.00- Claims Associates – 101-373.00 to Building Fund – Fairgrounds Repair 201-4-250-425.97. Motion to change account from 201-4-250-425.97 to 250-4-250-425.97 made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Motion to approve supplement made by Linde; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

c) \$2950.00- Claims Associates- 101-373.00 to Building Fund Courthouse Repair 250-4-250-425.00. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. McLaughlin requested approval of 2026-2027 Alcoholic Beverage License Application for American Legion-Battle Creek Post #303, retail on-off sale Malt Beverage and SD Farm Wine. (\$300). Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

4. McLaughlin presented the May, 2026 Financial Report. She stated Custer County received \$1,695 from Walgreens/National Opioid Settlement and the Highway Fund/Motor V receipts from January – April were \$169,415.32. Expenses were \$1,247,252.09; revenues were \$780,666.47 leaving an ending cash balance of \$7,762,900.09. The Commission so acknowledged.

H. Maintenance

1. Joseph Panza, Maintenance Supervisor, presented a recap of recent contractor meetings regarding the courthouse building's HVAC system. Panza met with WITT and JAM companies and several options were discussed, including outside units, cove heat, LP as a supplemental heat with automatic louvers. Heating and cooling zones can be replaced as afforded. Discussion was held regarding invitations to bid, but further research is needed before that can take place. Funding options were discussed and Panza stated he has spoken with BHCLG and was told there are no grants available for

this specific situation; an alternative option could be a community loan. Panza also stated the basement zone is not working and shared concerns regarding the evidence room, storage rooms, State's Attorney offices and Clerk of Courts office, where air flow and low humidity rates are necessary. Panza said the cost for the compressor unit for the basement is \$10K +. Commissioner Hindle inquired if Custer Heating had been contacted; it was noted they looked at the situation last year but have not reached out with any bid. Commissioner Busskohl will reach out to them again. Panza will provide further information and system replacement costs as they become available.

2. Panza presented an update on the Search & Rescue roof and noted that the steel roof has been replaced with 40-year shingles.

I. Emergency Management

1. EMS Director, Steve Esser, stated he has spoken with the USFS regarding the Countywide Burn Ban, which may be reinstated at some point, although some rain has been received. Esser noted that he is still working on verbiage for Ordinance 20; CVFD, Wildland Fire, Custer County and USFS pages contain several links for fire regulations. Esser would like this to be posted on the Custer City website, as well.

2. Esser presented a FEMA update pertaining to the December, 2025 windstorm. He noted the application is nearing completion and submission; there is a \$20K equipment-time shortage to meet the required threshold. Esser is still checking totals for personnel and volunteer time to meet requirements.

J. Equalization

1. DOE Director, Scott Storms, made a request to require all future positions to be certified appraisers. Storms has a plan in place to move an uncertified staff member, who also holds the safety position to another location and work solely as a safety officer. Storms stated the Office Manager position will also be certified in the future. DOE staff will be more efficient if all members are certified appraisers. It was decided to implement this requirement by the end of July or August, 2026. Motion to require all DOE staff to be certified appraisers by the end of August, 2026 made by Busskohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Storms discussed future hiring of the Office Manager position, noting that the current manager will likely retire next year. Training time will be needed for the position, and Storms would like the Commission to consider moving the current position to a training position when a suitable candidate is hired. Storms also stated he has budgeted for one additional certified appraiser position.

K. Airport

1. Aaron Davis discussed road construction and the proposed reroute of NFSR 653.1C, which was obliterated during the runway expansion. The Agreement of Intent states that Custer County would construct the new road, but the Schedule A does not include the road construction project. Highway Superintendent Doyle noted the current

road is a two-track and can be re-routed. Aaron Davis will reach out to Meaghan Buehler at the USFS to confirm maintenance details, as well.

L. 8:30 AM Bid Opening

1. 8:30 AM Bid Opening re: Invasive Plant Treatments, Custer County/USFS; Herbicide Treatment of Invasive Plant Species and Providing Treatment Data, Including Geospatial Files. Michael Baldwin, W&P Supervisor, noted that only one bid was submitted; Mid-Dakota Vegetation Management, LLC submitted a bid at a rate of \$125/acre, for a total of \$126,125. Baldwin requested the matter be tabled until the end of today's meeting for further review. Motion to table until later in today's meeting made by Hartman; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Weed & Pest: Baldwin requested Commission acknowledgement of completion of one-year probation for Nathan Benjamin. Baldwin and Panza stated Benjamin does a wonderful job for Custer County. The Commission so acknowledged.

M. Cody Hofer

1. Cody Hofer appeared before the Commission to share concerns regarding subdivision road improvements and county specifications in the Fairburn area. Planning Director, Terri Kester, stated that in 2021, Brandi Hunsaker wanted to subdivide property and was to improve and name the road. The road was not improved or named; the section line was improved but not named. Discussion was held regarding addresses, and Planning requires road names in order to set addresses. Hofer also shared concerns about his address and the road remaining too narrow for two vehicles to pass. Commissioners Busskohl and Hindle requested the State's Attorney draft a letter to Hunsaker reminding her of her obligation to bring the road to county specifications. It was noted this is why road bonds are now required in subdivision developments.

N. Commission Legal Counsel

1. Commission Legal Counsel, Aaron Davis, presented an update regarding the Dewey/Edgemont Fire annexation. Davis stated petitions can be bypassed if the Commission passes a resolution to annex Dewey into Edgemont fire. Davis stated he would draft a resolution, including an updated map and legal description to encompass the district. He will provide the resolution at the July 8, 2026 Commission meeting; once approved in Custer County, it will be provided to Edgemont and Fall River County for approval.

O. Commission

1. Mail call – letter from Town of Buffalo Gap re: Special Review conducted by Legislative Audit. \$131K was determined to be missing and the former finance officer has been arrested.
2. Meeting Schedule – none.

3. Meeting Reports – Hindle attended HVAC meetings, Law Enforcement meeting with City of Custer, E Custer Amb District; Linde attended HVAC meetings; Lintz attended Mechaley's retirement; Busskohl attended HVFD fundraiser, S&R, Planning, HVAC, Custer City Council and Custer City Law Enforcement meeting; Hartman attended HVAC, Mechaley retirement, Housing, Planning and Highway meetings.

P. Untable Weed & Pest 8:30 AM Bid Opening

1. Motion to untable 8:30 AM Bid Opening made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. After bid review, Baldwin recommended accepting the bid received by Mid-Dakota Vegetation Management, LLC. Motion to accept bid made by Linde; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Baldwin will inspect and perform clerical work for the project.

Q. Executive Sessions

1. Motion to enter and exit Executive Sessions as per SDCL 1-25-21(1) Personnel, SDCL 28-13.42 Indigent, SDCL 1-25-2(3) Contract and SDCL 1-25-2(4) Legal made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.
 2. Executive Session as per SDCL 1-25-21(1) Personnel.
 3. Executive Session as per SDCL 28-13.42 Indigent.
 4. Executive Session as per SDCL 1-25-2(3) Contract
 5. Executive Session as per SDCL 1-25-2(4) Legal
- Executive Sessions entered at 9:06 AM and concluded at 10:45 AM.

R. Actions Taken by Commission Outside of Executive Session

1. Motion to approve Indigent request re: McColley's made by Hartman; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.
2. Motion to approve Indigent request re: qualifying purposes (as discussed) made by Busskohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

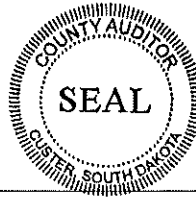
S. Old Business

1. It was decided to work with HR on an updated job description for the Planning Technician position for approval at the 7-8-26 Commission meeting. No action taken.

T. Adjourn

Motion by Linde and seconded by Busskohl to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 AM. The next meeting will be at 8:00 AM, July 8, 2026 in the Commissioner's Room in the Custer County Courthouse.


Jim Lintz, Chairman



Attest: Barbara Cox

Barbara Cox, Custer County Deputy Auditor

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