

Minutes of the Custer County Commission Meeting, Wednesday, September 9, 2026. Today's meeting was held at the 1881 Courthouse Museum.

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

C. Consent Agenda

1. Approve Minutes of the 8-19-2026 Commission meeting.
2. Travel requests approved as follows: Michael Baldwin, Weed & Pest, to attend 2026 SD Association of Conservation Districts State Convention 9-20—22 in Oacoma, SD. All travel costs to be covered by the Conservation District and a cost-share grant
3. Vouchers approved as follows:

PAYROLL: 09/09/26: Safety wages \$134.23; Commissioners \$5,720.24; Election \$109.18; Auditor \$10,688.29; Treasurer \$14,141.81; Info Systems & Tech \$3,537.; States Attorney \$15,292.70; Courthouse Building \$10,205.20; Director of Equalization \$13,074.04; Register of Deeds \$5,965.21; Veterans Services \$1,860.96; Human Resources \$2,770.97; Sheriff \$58,626.55; Coroner \$1,068.84; Nurse \$626.96; Library \$12,694.53; Conservation \$825.87; Weed & Pest Control \$3,411.17; Planning \$5,963.84; County Road & Bridge \$34,048.59; Emergency Management \$3,084.76; Emergency Line F \$18,170.67

COMMISSIONERS: Southern Hills Publishing \$500.91; Valhalla Legal, PLLC \$6,040; Verizon \$63.75

ELECTIONS: Knowink, LLC. \$1,375; Southern Hills Publishing \$14.11

COURT: Cindy Tate \$99; Deborah Van Sambeek \$89.20; Diantha Boge \$78; Jamilyn Teske \$66.80; Nancy Schmitz \$59.80; Owen Pollard \$52.80; Randy Guggisberg \$25.25; Susan Culberson \$51.40; RELX INC. \$516

AUDITOR: A&B Business \$283.46; Ramkota \$224;

TREASURER: A&B Business \$342.86;

SD DEPT OF REVENUE: \$222.65

STATE'S ATTORNEY: A&B Business \$183.17;

MAINTENANCE: A&B Business \$170.42; A-Z Shredding \$53.88; City of Custer \$2,114.80

DIRECTOR OF EQUALIZATION: A&B Business \$211.85;

REGISTER OF DEEDS: A&B Business \$218.16; ROD Rentals \$40.25

VETERANS SERVICES: A&B Business \$68.62;

HUMAN RESOURCES: A&B Business \$156.09; Southern Hills Publishing \$415.30

INFO TECHNOLOGY: Golden West Technologies \$8,871.55;

SHERIFF: A&B Business \$200.66; FedEx \$84.35; Golden West Technologies \$2,249.42; Great Western Tire \$92.95; Motorola Solutions \$33; Narteck Inc. \$519.15; Pheasantland Industries \$95; Southern Hills Publishing \$43.83; U.S. Armor Corp. \$3,358.

PRISONER CARE: Amber Odegard \$200; Correct RX \$173.67; Mike Bielmaier \$75; Monument Health \$3,473.89; Rapid City Police Dept. \$150.; Ruth Airheart \$75.

MENTAL HEALTH: New Trails Ministry \$325; MH Institution Care \$3,324.64

AIRPORT: Brenden Hendrickson \$4,592.08;

LIBRARY: RP Lumber \$14.29;

WEED & PEST: A&B Business \$176.45; Benita Trump \$119.99; Carl Hansen \$92.57; Denise Swartz \$37.50; French Creek Supply \$27.57; Jesse Irwin \$59.75; Richard Nehls \$72.53; Rick Wheeler \$75.48; Tim Tennyson \$419.57; Verizon \$63.75

PLANNING: A&B Business \$181.51; Southern Hills Publishing \$25.98; Verizon \$31.85

COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE: A&B Business \$188.68; A&B Welding Supply LLC \$266.71; Butler Machinery CO INC \$13,877.35; Culligan Water \$6.95; Custer Ace Hardware \$42.47; Dakota Battery & Electric INC \$509.78; Dakota Fluid Power INC \$1,682.72; Fall River Water Users District \$1,589.23; Floyd's Truck Center-Rapid City \$123.38; Forward Distributing \$13.80; French Creek Supply INC \$963.61; Great Western Tire INC \$4,221.45; Grimms Pump Service INC \$11,280.30; RDO Equipment

CO \$3,854.14; Rushmore Communications \$2,389.54; Servall Towel & Linen \$112.72; Town of Buffalo Gap \$90.92; Trail King Industries INC \$1,149.01

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: A&B Business \$88.50;

COUNTY BUILDINGS: Custer Ace Hdwe \$16.58;

EMERGENCY LINE: A&B Business \$206.57; Range \$26.11

24/7: DASH Medical Gloves \$160.68

SEARCH & RESCUE: AdTech Rapid Fire Protection \$615.96; City of Custer \$96.11

CUSTER COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION: \$11,500;

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

D. Conflict of Interest Declarations – None.

E. 8:05 AM Public Hearing

1. Approve new Liquor License application re: Butte View, LLC dba Butte Bar, 14193

E. French Creek Rd, Fairburn, SD for Retail On-Sale Liquor (\$15K). There were no comments from the public. Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

F. Public Comment

1. Sam Smolnisky, CCSAR, reminded those in attendance about the Defender contest watch party to be held in the Taproom at Mt. Rushmore Brewing Company. The contest results will be announced at 8:00 PM. This will be a 2-way livestream.

2. Mike Cole, Sunny Turkey Road District, expressed concerns regarding an approach that was reconstructed and now washes out when it rains, causing undue financial hardship on the road district when recovering gravel and repairing the roadway. He stated the County provided the 911 address but failed to go back and reinspect the approach when the building permit was issued. He feels the approach is not in compliance and he urged the County to come and inspect and require the homeowner to comply with the ordinance. Planning Director Kester stated that the 911 address was already in place and it is not within the confines of the ordinance to go back and inspect after issuance. She invited Cole to stop by her office, and she would pull the records for that property. Highway Superintendent Doyle recommended the road district contact their attorney and noted the road district has the authority to tax for repairs. Cole stated this was ridiculous and wants the County to fix the problem.

3. Steve Saint, Fort Welikit Campground owner, implored the Commission to

reconsider the burn ban, stating this affects his income. He said he has lost \$8K in firewood sales and camping cancellations. He stated guests are choosing to camp in Pennington County, where campfires are allowed. He stated he has access to water and fire prevention. He went on to stated that USFS campfires differ from private campgrounds campfires and said the Commission's decision has financially affected his business.

4. Bill Patterson addressed the Commission and stated his campground is empty and agrees with Saint, in that Pennington County's campfire exemption to the burn ban is taking business away. He requested the burn ban be amended or rescinded as it seems too open-ended. He asked what the criteria is to rescind the ban.

G. Highway

1. Highway Superintendent, Jesse Doyle, presented ROW Occupancy request from Black Hills Energy to install residential electric service to 11885 Hickok Drive, Hot Springs, SD; S18 T6 R4 Custer County, SD for approval. He noted this service drop request notes the power line to be installed in an open trench across Hickok Drive. Doyle recommended the Commission deny the request, as the application form standard verbiage states "shall be bored" and does not refer to an open trench. Commissioner Hindle asked if this road is located in a road district (yes). Doyle stated that although located in a road district, the County is responsible for utilities and said BH Energy should comply with the requirement to bore. Both Doyle and Aaron Davis recommend the request be denied. Motion to table until Legal Counsel further reviews later in today's meeting made by Hartman; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

H. Planning

1. Planning Director, Terri Kester, requested approval to waive building permit fee for garage rebuild due to fire loss. Kester stated that Tom Wilson pulled a permit for a carport to replace the garage. Motion to approve waiving permit fee made by Hindle; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

I. Auditor

1. Finance Officer, Dawn McLaughlin, requested acknowledgement of resignation/retirement of Barbara Cox, effective 9/30/2026. The Commission so acknowledged.

2. McLaughlin requested approval of new hire, Stacy Armbruster as full-time deputy auditor at a rate of \$19.04/hour beginning 9-2-2026. This is a fully benefitted position. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. McLaughlin requested approval of new hire, Jerrica Henrichs as full-time deputy auditor at a rate of \$19.04/hour beginning 9-14-2026. This is a fully benefitted position. Motion to approve made by Linde; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

J. Sheriff

1. Sheriff Derrick Reifenrath requested approval of 2026-2027 SD GFP General Services Contract re: CC Search & Rescue in the amount of \$9,562.63. He noted this is the same contract amount as both the 911 Dispatch and Sheriff's contracts. Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

2. Reifenrath requested authorization to purchase 6 2027 Ford F-150 Police Responders with upfitting for City of Custer contract positions at a total cost of \$417,996.60. Initially, the vehicles were unavailable as production halted, but Reifenrath located a dealership in Utah that could provide them, although they will still need to be built. Commissioner Hartman asked if the vehicles would need to be paid ahead of time. Commissioner Hindle requested the topic be tabled until after Executive Session. Reifenrath stated the price may go up in 2027 as the bid prices increase but estimated the increase to be approximately \$2K. Motion to table until after Executive Session made by Hindle; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

3. Reifenrath requested authorization to purchase 6 portable radios for City of Custer contract positions at a cost of \$76,958.76. He noted these are on-person radios equipped with sat-comm long-range capabilities. He is currently researching grant possibilities to fund the purchase. Motion to postpone until the 9-23-26 Commission meeting made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

4. Reifenrath also requested authorization to purchase 6 mobile radios for City of Custer contract positions at a cost of \$38,344.80. These are in-vehicle radios. Motion to postpone until the 9-23-26 Commission meeting made by Busskohl; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

K. Raffle Request

1. Raffle Request from Custer County Republicans was presented. The raffle will be held 10-3-2026 at Mt. Rushmore Brewing Co Barrel Room. Prizes include 1873 single-action revolver and .357 mag/38 special. Proceeds to be used for political info/candidate support. Motion to approve made by Hartman; seconded by Hindle; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

L. Emergency Management

1. EMS Director, Steve Esser, discussed the Countywide Burn Ban that is currently in effect. He stated that when gives the Commission his recommendations, this is based on 20-years of experience, input from the USFS, the State of SD and from area fire departments. He stated the Commission can then make decisions based upon his recommendations. Esser stated he realizes the ban creates hardships for campgrounds but noted he has received campfire calls in the past 2 weeks even though the ban is in effect. Esser said he is looking at the bigger picture and asked the campground owners in attendance if they follow the red flag warning rules, even when the burn ban is not in effect. He also invited them to sit down and go over suggestions for future burn bans; Matt McLeod (Cloud 9 Camping) asked what would be different next time and stated his

campground may have to shut down if the ban is not rescinded; he said there may not be a next time for him. He asked Esser if there are things campgrounds can do to make campfires safer by imposing their own restrictions. Discussion was held regarding Pennington County's allowance of campfires; Esser said he would research their restrictions. Additional discussion included fires jumping county lines and responsibilities. Questions arose regarding recent exemptions granted, and it was stated those exemptions were given based on fire trucks and other advanced fire suppression on site for those events. Esser urged use of portable propane fires until the ban is rescinded. Director Esser recommended the Commission leave the Countywide Burn Ban in place at this time.

2. Esser requested approval of the 2027 LEMPG Agreement and Chairman's signature. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Esser noted there were no changes this year, other than formatting. Motion to approve made by Hindle; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

M. Pringle Poacher Association

1. Terri Kester requested Commission approval of burn ban exemption for the Pringle Poacher Party to be held 9-18 and 9-19 in Pringle. Kester stated a fire tender will be on site during the event. Motion to approve made by Busskohl; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

N. Commission

1. HVAC-Joseph Panza met with JAM and a Mitsubishi representative. Panza provided line measurements and information has been sent to local HVAC companies for bids.
2. Commissioner Busskohl made a request for Legal Counsel to research Resolution 2023-12 Payment in Lieu of Tax (PILT) Custer County Housing and Redevelopment Commission Subsidized and Low-Income Housing; research Housing Commission as to duties and responsibilities to Custer County and City of Custer. Busskohl requested clarification of responsibilities of the Housing Commission. Motion to approve Legal Counsel to review made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.
3. Mail call- letter from DANR re: general permit to treat petroleum-contaminated soil; general permit for yard waste compost facilities; general permit for solid waste transfer stations.
4. Meeting schedule—Fall Convention SDACC 9-15 & 9-16 in Sioux Falls, SD; Commission meeting 9-12-2026
5. Meeting reports—Hindle attended HVAC; Busskohl attended HVAC, Planning Commission; Linde attended Waste Management Board; Lintz attended Weed Board meeting; Hartman attended Planning Commission and HVAC.

O. Highway

1. Motion to untable ROW Occupancy Permit request made by Linde; seconded by Busskohl; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Discussion continued regarding Road District responsibility in this case boring under the road vs. open trenching. The standard has been to bore under the roadway as is stated on the application form. Doyle stated there was an exception to allow a 6" saw cut on the roadway for the Argyle VFD, but this is not the standard. Hartman asked if the application could include an option for either 6" saw cut or boring on the application-Doyle stated he has received hundreds of applications with boring and doesn't see any reason to change the form for 1 request. Motion to deny made by Hindle; seconded by Linde; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Doyle stated he will notify the applicant and return the form to them.

****AFTER A SHORT BREAK, THE MEETING CONTINUED IN THE COMMISSION ROOM AT 420 MT RUSHMORE ROAD ****

P. Executive Session

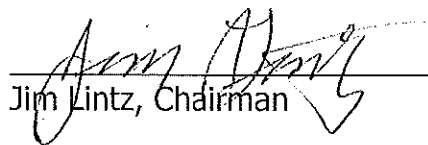
1. Motion to enter and exit Executive Session as per SDCL 28-13.42 Indigent request; Executive Session as per SDCL 1-25-2(3) Legal and Executive Session as per SDCL 1-25-21(1) Personnel made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried. Executive Sessions entered at 9:26 AM and concluded 11:10 AM.

Q. Actions Taken by Commission Outside of Executive Session

1. Motion to approve Indigent request for cremation made by Busskohl; seconded by Hartman; vote taken, all aye; motion carried.

R. Adjourn

Motion by Linde and seconded by Busskohl to adjourn the meeting at 11:11 AM. The next meeting will be at 8:00 AM, in the Commissioner's Room in the Custer County Courthouse.


Jim Lintz, Chairman



Attest: 

Barbara Cox, Custer County Deputy Auditor

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