

**BURLEIGH COUNTY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**5:22 PM**

Commissioner Bitner called the regular meeting of the Burleigh County Commission to order.

Commissioner Bitner started the reorganization of the board and assignment of portfolios. County Auditor Mark Splonskowski held the election of the Commission Chairman. Comm. Bakken nominated Comm. Bitner for Chairman and Comm. Schwab seconded it. Comm. Woodcox nominated Comm. Munson for Chairman and Comm. Munson seconded it. Splonskowski called for a vote for Commissioner Bitner for Chairman with Commissioners Bakken, Bitner, and Schwab voting 'AYE'. Commissioners Munson and Woodcox voted 'NAY'. Splonskowski called for a vote for Commissioner Munson for Chairman with Commissioners Munson and Woodcox voting 'AYE'. Commissioners Bakken, Bitner, and Schwab voted 'Nay'. ***As a result of the votes, Splonskowski called Commissioner Bitner as the Chairman for 2026.*** Splonskowski held the election of the Commission Vice Chairman. Comm. Bakken nominated Comm. Munson for Vice-Chairman and Comm. Woodcox seconded it. Chair Bitner nominated Comm. Bakken for Vice-Chairman and Comm. Schwab seconded it. Comm. Bakken nominated Comm. Woodcox for Vice-Chairman and Comm. Munson seconded it. Splonskowski called for a vote for Commissioner Munson for Vice-Chairman with Commissioners Munson and Woodcox voting 'AYE'. Commissioners Bakken, Schwab, and Chairman Bitner voted 'NAY'. Splonskowski called for a vote for Commissioner Bakken for Vice-Chairman with Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voting 'AYE'. Splonskowski called for a vote for Commissioner Woodcox as Vice-Chairman with Commissioners Munson and Bakken voting 'AYE'. Commissioners Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'NAY'. ***As a result of the votes, Splonskowski called Commissioner Bakken as the Vice-Chairman for 2026.***

Chairman Bitner started a discussion on the portfolio assignments for 2026. All portfolios will stay the same with the one adjustment of Comm. Bakken adding the Metropolitan Planning Organization from Comm. Schwab.

Roll call of the members: Commissioners Steve Bakken, Wayne Munson, Steve Schwab, Jerry Woodcox, and Chairman Brian Bitner present.

Motion by Comm. Munson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Bakken to approve the agenda with adding an item under County Highway Department on LGO Trust paving waver for discussion. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Munson to approve the December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting minutes, with a change of the start time to 5:18 and the time Chair Bitner's phone call ended regarding the Attorney General's Opinion to 2:35, and bills pending Deputy Finance Director/Interim Treasurer Taylor Schmidt's approval. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Woodcox to approve the Peter & Dennae Swenson, Paulette Jacobsen Revoc Lvg Trust, Kenneth & Cindy Connell, Hayley Gloria Heupel, Byron & Bernice Knutson, Arlon & Linda Voge, Janet Pinks & Dennis Doll, Gary & Natalie Nagel, Marleen Anderson, William Miller, Karen Baumgartner, Ella Mae Sayler, Elizabeth Weiss, Donald Gross, Sinderella Meadows, Peggy Ann Freije-Ray abatements and the consent agenda in its entirety less item D and E which were pulled for discussion. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Commissioner Bakken brought up items D and E and added allowing the County Auditor to assist in receipting taxes to help the Treasurer's Office. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Munson to approve item D and E and to allow County Auditor Mark Splonskowski to assist the Treasurer's Office in receipting taxes. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Senior Assistant County Engineer Dan Schriock presented a request for authorization to advertise for bids for painted pavement markings, crushing of gravel, Township gravel hauling, dust control, and chip seal projects. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Munson to authorize the County Auditor and the County Engineer to advertise for bids for painted pavement markings, crushing of gravel, Township gravel hauling, dust control, and chip seal projects. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Senior Assistant Engineer Schriock presented a request to accept the platted Right of Way in the Ridge Third Addition Subdivision. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Munson to accept the Right of Way shown on the Ridge Third Addition Subdivision Plat. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Senior Assistant Engineer Schriock presented a request from a developer for a waiving of the pavement policy. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Schwab to waive the Pavement Policy for Patrick and Gail Lengenfelder (Kummer Ranch Subdivision) at this time only to allow the proposed plat to be approved and does not preclude the County/Township from requiring the property owner from sharing in the future cost to construct and pave these roadways (that benefit this property) in the future. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Senior Assistant Engineer Schriock presented a request from a developer for a waiving of the pavement policy. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Woodcox to waive the Pavement Policy for LGO Trust in Burnt Creek Township at this time only to allow the proposed plat to be approved and does not preclude the County/Township from requiring the property owner from sharing in the future cost to construct and pave these roadways (that benefit this property) in the future. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

County Planning Director Mitch Flanagan presented a request by Larry Labere for a building permit for an accessory building on a lot which does not contain a principle residential structure. Flanagan stated that the builder was advised to combine the 2 lots into a one lot subdivision to build. Motion by Comm. Munson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Bakken to approve the Spring Coulee Subdivision Replat. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Planning Director Flanagan presented request by ILS Surveying to combine three lots to create a new one lot subdivision: the Huez Subdivision Final Plat. Attorney Dan Anderson representing Mariners, the developer, and spoke on the Huez Subdivision and legal complications regarding it. State's Attorney Julie Lawyer told Anderson to provide the documentation to her and recommended this topic be moved to the next meeting to allow time to review and issue an opinion. County resident Amber Huez spoke for the Huez Subdivision. Motion by Comm. Munson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Bakken to table this until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Planning Director Flanagan presented a request to obtain a service contract for legal assistance and interpretation of legal issues regarding Burleigh County. Proposals were provided from Lawrence King and Brian Schmidt. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Munson to approve both the King Law PC and the Smith Porsborg proposals. State's Attorney Lawyer stated that the representing law firms need to be appointed as Special Assistant State's Attorneys to do County work. Comm. Munson and Comm. Bakken amended their motion and second to include the State's Attorney's request that they be appointed. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

County Human Resources Director gave a presentation on the open positions with the County and data insights for 2025. In lieu of receiving no qualified candidates for the Finance Director position, Chairman Bitner recommended the County do a Request For Proposal (RFP) for CPA accounting services for the year-end financials, the audit, etc. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Munson to put out an RFP for retaining a CPA firm for a year. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. Commissioner Woodcox voted 'NAY'. ***Motion carried.*** Discussion was had regarding the Finance Director and Treasurer positions. Motion by Comm. Munson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Bakken to hire a contract employee to fill in the Finance Director position without the CPA designation. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.*** The Commission requested a discussion on the County Administrator position be added to the next regular Commission meeting agenda. Binder continued by reviewing employment statistics for 2025.

County Auditor Mark Splonskowski provided clarification on the meeting start times for the minutes from December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Motion by Comm. Bakken, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Munson to leave the start time of the December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting minutes at 5:00PM. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Auditor Splonskowski presented the leases between the City of Bismarck and the County for the space used by the County in the City/County building and the space used by the City of Bismarck in the County Courthouse. Motion by Comm. Woodcox, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Bakken to approve the lease between the County and the City of Bismarck for the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the City/County building and space at the County Courthouse. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

Auditor Splonskowski continued the discussion on auxiliary board applications. Commissioner Woodcox requested waiting on appointments for the School Redistricting Board and Water Resource District. Motion

by Comm. Schwab, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Comm. Bakken to appoint Travis Jensen to the Special Assessments Board. Commissioners Bakken, Munson, Schwab, Woodcox, and Chairman Bitner voted 'AYE'. ***Motion carried.***

In other Business:

- Chairman Bitner referenced a letter he had received from County Deputy Finance Director/Interim Treasurer Taylor Schmidt on the appointment of a Public Administrator for the County and the State Office of Management & Budget now covering that role. Chair Bitner requested the Commission invite Guardian & Protective Services Executive Director Scott Bernstein, North Dakota Association of Counties Executive Director Aaron Birst, and possibly a representative from the State of North Dakota Office of Management & Budget to discuss the topic on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- Discussion was had on the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mural and the construction progress on the Provident Building.

Meeting Adjourned.

**7:12 PM**

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Mark Splonskowski,  
County Auditor

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Brian Bitner,  
Chairman