**RANSOM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Special Meeting – March 31, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Norm Hansen. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members present: Connie Gilbert, Joe Mathern, Greg Schwab, Neil Olerud, and Norm Hansen. Also, present Kirsten Gilbert, Brian Zimprich, and Lynn Kaspari.

The agenda was reviewed. Gilbert moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Olerud. All aye. Motion carried.

Brian Zimprich appeared before the board to let him know that through NDSU the extension officers through the state his office is having weekly drought calls. The North Dakota drought indicator states we are falling in the D1 status as of now. Zimprich can continue to update the board.

Neil Olerud gave an update on the grassland fire he assisted with through the Lisbon Fire department. They were called in to assist the Milnor Fire department and seven other fire departments with a grass fire west of McLeod. The fire started on Monday March 29, 2021 around 8:00 p.m. It was estimated to have burn around 6500 acres.

The board discussed if they should put a burn ban on in Ransom County. Currently the only counties who do not have on in the state are Towner, Griggs, Slope, Ransom, and Bowman. Olerud isn’t all for a burn ban, his main reason is he is against it is he would like for entities who burn have prescribed burns to still be allowed to burn. Kirsten Gilbert stated most burn bans she has read, have only been for short periods of time. So, they can be readdressed often as conditions change. Joe Mathern would like to see a burn ban put on with the dry conditions. Mathern said if certain entities need to burn for a specific reason they can appear before the board to have it rectified. Schwab asked what the burn ban does? Kirsten Gilbert explained a burn ban will ban campfires, garbage/pit burning, burning of farmland, cropland and/or ditches to remain in effect when the North Dakota fire Danger Rating is High, Very High or Extreme and/ or a Red Flag Warning has been issued for Ransom County, North Dakota. Connie Gilbert would like to see a burn ban put in place, and readdressed at each commission meeting as needed. Schwab is alright with it as long as it is discussed on a weekly basis. Kirsten Gilbert spoke to Lisbon Rural Fire Chief and Lisbon Fire Chief; they understand the controversy of a burn ban and have mixed feelings. However, they also understand the conditions aren’t great, and they would rather not go through another grassland fire like they just experienced. Mathern motioned to put a fire emergency and burn ban in place starting 3/31/2021, and will be addressed weekly. Hansen called for a second three times. Motion died due to lack of a second.

Olerud motioned to put the fire emergency and burn ban presented by Kirsten Gilbert, on immediately 3/31/2021 through July 1, 2021. The fire and emergency burn ban will be readdressed at each commission meeting. Schwab seconded the motion. All aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Nicole Gentzkow Norm Hansen

Ransom County Auditor Ransom County Commission