

**AGENDA**  
**Codington County Board of County Commissioners**  
**Codington County Court House, 14 1<sup>st</sup> Ave SE, Watertown, SD**  
**Commission Chambers Room #114**  
**9:00 a.m., January 6, 2026**

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Call for public comment. Public comments may be submitted via telephone at 605-882-6297 or 605-882-6248**
3. **Conflict of interest items**
4. **Action to approve the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026, agenda**
5. **Action to approve the minutes of December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025**
6. **Old Business**
7. **Action to adjourn sine-die**
8. **Nominations and action to elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2026**
9. **Action to set Commissioner's salaries for 2026**
10. **Monthly reports**
  - a. **4-H Educator**
  - b. **Veterans Service**
11. **Discussion/possible action to appoint Commissioner Liaison/Board/Duty assignments**
12. **Action to designate legal papers for Codington County publications**
13. **Action to approve the list of employee cell phone stipends**
14. **Action to approve bank depositories for 2026 and authorize warrant signers**
15. **Action to approve abatement applications**
16. **Action to approve claims for payment**
17. **Action to approve automatic budget supplements**
18. **Action to approve personnel changes**
19. **Action to approve travel requests**
20. **Public Notices – a possible quorum of Commissioners could be in attendance at:**
21. **Old Business**

22. **New Business**
23. **Open**
24. **Action to enter into Executive session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2**
  - (1) Discussion of personnel issues (SDCL 1-25-2(1))
  - (2) Consulting with legal counsel or reviewing communications from legal counsel about proposed or pending litigation or contractual matters (SDCL 1-25-2(3))
  - (3) Preparing for contract negotiations or negotiating with employees or employee representatives (SDCL 1-25-2(4))
  - (4) Discussion of pricing or marketing strategies when public disclosure may harm the competitive position of the county owned business (SDCL 1-25-2(5))
  - (5) Discussion of information pertaining to the protection of public or private property (SDCL 1-25-2(6))
25. **Action to adjourn upon completion of agenda items**

**Codington County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of service.**

**Official Proceedings  
County of Codington  
Codington County Court House  
14 1<sup>st</sup> Ave SE  
Watertown, SD 57201**

January 6, 2026

The Codington County Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at the Codington County Court House. Commission members present were: Lee Gabel, Tyler McElhany, Myron Johnson, Randall Schweer, and Troy VanDusen; Chair VanDusen, presiding. The pledge of allegiance was led by Auditor, Brenda Hanten.

**CALLS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST ITEMS**

Chair VanDusen called for public comments to be taken up during the open portion of the meeting; none were offered. There were no conflict-of-interest items to note.

**AGENDA APPROVED**

Motion by McElhany, second by Gabel, to approve the January 6, 2026, agenda as posted; all voted aye; motion carried.

**MINUTES APPROVED**

Motion by Johnson, second by Schweer, to approve the minutes of December 30, 2025; all voted aye; motion carried.

**BOARD ADJOURNS SINE-DIE FOR 2024**

Motion by Gabel, second by Schweer, to adjourn sine-die, at 9:02 a.m., for the year ending 2025; all voted aye; motion carried.

**NOMINATIONS FOR 2026 CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

Auditor, Brenda Hanten, called for nominations for Chair for 2026. Commissioner Gabel nominated Commissioner VanDusen. Commissioner Schweer nominated Commissioner McElhany. There were no other nominations forthcoming. The Board cast secret ballots for Chair with the following results: Commissioner VanDusen – 4 votes and Commissioner McElhany – 1 vote. Commissioner VanDusen was declared 2026 Chair. Chair VanDusen then called for nominations for Vice-Chair. Commissioner Gabel nominated Commissioner McElhany. There were no other nominations forthcoming. Motion by Johnson, second by Gabel, to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Commissioner McElhany; all voted aye; motion carried.

**COUNTY COMMISSIONER 2026 WAGE**

Motion by Johnson, second by McElhany, to increase Commissioners salaries, 2.6% over the 2025 rate of \$2,229.78, the same increase provided to all County employees in 2026, resulting in a salary of \$2,287.75 per month for 2026; a substitute motion by Gabel to increase the salary by 0% as budgeted, second by Schweer; a roll call vote was taken - Johnson, McElhany, and VanDusen voted no; Gabel and Schweer voted aye; motion failed. Back to the original motion a roll call vote was taken - Gabel, Schweer and VanDusen voted no; Johnson and McElhany voted yes; motion failed. Motion by Johnson, second by McElhany, to increase Commissioners salaries, 2.5% over the 2025 rate of \$2,229.78, resulting in a salary of \$2,285.82 per month for 2026; a roll call vote was taken – Johnson, McElhany and VanDusen voted aye; Gabel and Schweer voted no; motion carried.

## MONTHLY REPORTS

**4-H/Youth Program Advisor, Jodi Loehrer**, updated the Board: shooting sports, archery & BB gun will begin this week with 39 in BB gun, 53 in archery and 9 in air pistol/air rifle will continue on Tuesday and Thursday nights through April, thank you to the shooting sports volunteer coaches; Farm Show prep is underway for the 4-H Leader's three lunch counters, will need volunteers to help with the lunch counters, community members can call the office to volunteer to help, there is also open class quilts and photography, a Farm Safety Poster Contest and a Youth LEGO contest; NE 4-H Calf Show will be held at the conclusion of the Farm Show on Saturday, February 14, it is open to youth in the NE SD Counties of: Brookings, Clark, Codington, Day, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Kingsbury, Marshall, Roberts, and Spink Counties. **Veterans Service Officer, Jay Roberts**, updated the Board: metrics for the month, 134 open claims (working claims) 59 pending action from VA, 358 completed (YTD), Hamlin 16 open (working claims) 9 pending from VA, 21 completed (YTD), currently working for 8 veterans and have completed 27 claims for veterans from outside our county; \$10,962 for the month December 2025, increase in monthly compensation for veterans or their dependents YTD monthly increase \$0; \$24,919 for the month of December 2025, retro-payment to bring a claim current to monthly compensation YTD retro-payments \$0; 1 veteran DAV transports in December, 2 - currently scheduled for January, currently 5 drivers; CURRENT – State requirements for State reimbursement for salary paid to the County for Veterans Service Officer(s), host at least one veteran outreach event each quarter – go into nursing homes or assisted living centers to meet with the occupants and or their families, meet with insurance agents and investors, retirement summit with the National Guard; Eric currently has his PIV card which gives him all permissions to submit claims and monitor them through completion; FUTURE – meeting with the commanders on Jan. 6, 2026 at the VFW; radio shows KWAT – 8:30 and KXLG – 9:05 on Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026; Jan. 10, 2026, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Pelican Lake Recreation Area GFP will be holding an event titled Veterans Rod Building Class, the class has limited space, and veterans must preregister by calling Cassy Behnke at 605-882-5088; March 24, 2026 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. What's Brewing outreach event at the Watertown Readiness Center, SDDVA will provide information on the following: burial benefits including grave markers, SD State Veterans Cemetery, SD State Veterans Home; Sioux Falls VHA will provide information on the following: VA Health Care eligibility, caregiver support, including respite care, nursing care, and nursing home services.

## BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Motion by McElhany, second by Gabel, to approve the following list of 2026 Liaison appointments; County Appointed Board Assignments and other duties; and State/Regional Board appointments; all voted aye; motion carried.

### **Commissioner Department Liaisons (section 10.3, Codington County Personnel Policy & Procedures Manual)**

<b>Commissioner District</b>	<b>Liaison agencies</b>	<b>Areas of oversight</b>
<b>I (Gabel)</b>	Sheriff's Office	Law Enforcement, Warrants,
	Detention Center	Jail, 24/7 Alternatives
	States Attorney's Office	Prosecutor, Victim Assistance
<b>II (McElhany)</b>	Emergency Management Office	Emergency Management, Dive Rescue
	Maintenance Dept.	Buildings, Grounds, Memorial Park
	Weed Supervisor	Weed and Pest control
<b>III (Johnson)</b>	Health Nurses Office	Immunizations, wellness, WIC, Dietician
	Welfare Office	Care of Poor, Indigent Burials
	Veteran's Service Office	Veterans' Claims Assistance
	County Extension Office	Extension Activities
<b>IV (VanDusen)</b>	Treasurer's Office	Tax Collection, Vehicle Licenses & Titles

<b>V (Schweer)</b>	Director of Equalization's Office	Real Property Assessments/Valuation
	Coroner	Coroner
	Highway Dept.	Road/bridge construction & maintenance
	Auditor's Office	Voter Registration, Elections, Budgeting, Payments, County records
	Register of Deed's Office	Vital/property records, Marriage Licenses

#### County-Appointed Board Assignments and other duties

Board/Duty	Frequency/Term	Appointees
Aging Council	Annual	Troy VanDusen
Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator	Annual	Myron Johnson
Codington County Home Health	Annual	Troy VanDusen
E-911	Annual	Randy Schweer
Glacial Lakes & Prairies Tourism Assn	Annual	
Inter Lakes Community Action Program	Annual	Randy Schweer
Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative Committee	Annual	Lee Gabel, Troy VanDusen
Legislative contact	Annual	Myron Johnson
Local Emergency Planning Committee	Annual	Tyler McElhany, Randy Schweer
Planning Board	Annual	Myron Johnson
Watertown Area Transit	Annual	Randy Schweer
Watertown Development Company	Annual	Troy VanDusen
Weed Board	Annual	Tyler McElhany
Codington County Human Resource Committee	Ex Officio	Current Chair, Vice Chair
County/City Committee	Ex Officio	Current Chair and Vice Chair
Behavioral Health and Justice Working Group	Biennial, even yrs	Lee Gabel, Myron Johnson
Codington County Justice Advisory Committee	Biennial, odd yrs	Troy VanDusen, Lee Gabel
Watertown-Codington County Regional Railroad Authority	3-years (up 2027)	Tyler McElhany, Myron Johnson
Housing and Redevelopment Board	4-year (up 2029)	Randy Schweer

#### State/Regional Board Appointments

Board	Frequency/Term	
Catastrophic Legal Expense Relief Program (CLERP)	Indefinite	Lee Gabel
Catastrophic Poor Relief Fund	Indefinite	Myron Johnson
SDSU Ag & Bioscience Advisory Board	Indefinite	Myron Johnson
SD Retirement System (SDRS)	4-yr (up 2026)	Myron Johnson
SDACC Executive Committee Proxy	Annual	Myron Johnson
SD LE Officers Standards & Training Commission	Biennial	Troy VanDusen
First District Assoc. Local Govts.	Annual	Myron Johnson

#### **LEGAL NEWS PAPERS**

Motion by Johnson, second by Gabel, to designate, per SDCL 7-18-3, legal newspapers, the Watertown Current and South Shore Gazette, for Codington County 2026 publications, all voted aye; motion carried.

#### **EMPLOYEE CELL PHONE STIPENDS**

Motion by Gabel, second by McElhany to approve the cell phone stipend list for 2026 based on each applicable employee's salary classification per the wage scale; all voted aye; motion carried.

**2026  
ANNUAL REQUEST FOR CELL PHONE STIPENDS**

<b>EMPLOYEE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT</b>
Bakken, Alison	40.00	States Attorney
Collignon, Angie	40.00	Community Service
Dargatz, Matt	25.00	Highway
Dolen, Jamie	25.00	Highway
Eischens, Keith	25.00	Highway
Falvey, Randy	40.00	Highway
Foust, Sara	40.00	Community Service
Halajian, Justin	40.00	Detention Center
Hartley, Ron	25.00	Ag. Building
Hedding, Dave	25.00	Highway
Hedges, James	25.00	Ag. Building
Hoff, Cody	25.00	Highway
Jordan, Wade	25.00	Highway
Laframboise, Joseph	25.00	Highway
Kallhoff, Mitch	25.00	Highway
Kosak, Erik	25.00	Highway
Miller, Klayton	25.00	Highway
Nills, Shawn	40.00	Detention Center
Pauli, Thomas	40.00	Director Equalization
Pederson, Michelle	40.00	Director Equalization
Rounds, Harold	25.00	Highway
Schwinger, Brad	25.00	Highway
Sears, Melissa	40.00	Director Equalization
Selchert, Heidi	40.00	Director Equalization
Solberg, Lynn	40.00	Highway
Stahlke, Steve	25.00	Detention Center
Swanson, Scott	25.00	Ag. Building
Torstenson, Doug	25.00	Highway
Torstenson, James	20.00	Emergency Management
Vogelsang, Lonie	25.00	Highway

**BANK DEPOSITORIES**

Motion by Johnson, second by McElhany, to approve bank depositories for 2026; as submitted by Treasurer, Carol Maloney; all voted aye; motion carried: Reliabank Dakota will continue to be used for checking and the depositing of cash. The following banks will be authorized to sell the County certificates of deposit and for investments at competitive bids: American Bank & Trust, Dacotah Bank, First Bank & Trust, First Premier Bank, First Interstate Bank, Minnwest Bank, Plains Commerce Bank, Reliabank Dakota, SD Fit, and Wells Fargo Bank. The list of Authorized warrant signers will be staff from the Treasurers' Office and Auditor's Office and said list will be secured in the Auditor's Office for security purposes.

**TRAVEL REQUESTS**

Motion by Gabel, second by Schweer, to approve the following travel requests: Codington County Public Health Nurse staff to assist with school services; Emergency Management staff to State surplus and Crisis Track training; all voted aye; motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Commissioner Gabel noted that the foundation work on the new jail is coming to a close, working on soil composition, anticipated completion of the new jail project is 2027.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion by Johnson, second by Schweer, to enter into executive session, per SDCL 1-25-2 (1) consulting with legal counsel or reviewing communications from legal counsel about proposed or pending litigation or contractual matters (SDCL 1-25-2(3)) at 9:32 a.m., all voted aye; motion carried. The Board returned to regular session at 10:02 a.m., and no action was taken. Community Service Director, Sara Foust and Codington County Health Nurse, Codi Storm, were present for executive session.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon conclusion of all business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Johnson, second by Schweer to adjourn at 10:03 a.m., all voted aye; motion carried.

ATTEST:

Brenda Hanten

Codington County Auditor

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