

GRAND FORKS COUNTY SPECIAL MEETING – December 1, 2009 – 3:00pm
Topic: Grand Forks County 2009 Flood Reimbursement

The Board met pursuant to adjournment with Commissioners Murphy, Knauf, Schmisek, Pic and Malm present.

Jim Campbell, Emergency Management Director, presented the recommendations of the Emergency Management Board regarding the reimbursement of clay dikes and Hessco Barriers. The recommendations are as follows:

Reimburse residents 50% of county sandbag costs or 50% of the actual cost of a dike, whichever is lower.

1. Clay dikes had to be built on or before April 1.
2. Not to include Hessco Barriers.
3. If you have flood insurance, \$1,000 will be deducted from the reimbursement whether or not you turned in a claim.
4. A copy of receipts and cancelled checks, front and back, must accompany the reimbursement request.
5. Verification of the actual height, width and length of each dike will be made by the EM Board.

Commissioner Pic asked if the dikes that were constructed are permanent dikes and have remained on the property. Mr. Campbell said yes but that has to be verified.

Commissioner Schmisek asked why the recommendation of the Emergency Management Board was to reimburse residents only at 50% when others had their total cost paid.

Commissioner Schmisek understands we would not reimburse the cost of the Hessco Barriers but why would we not pay for the cost of sand to fill the Hessco Barriers. Mr. Campbell said the Emergency Management Board had discussions on reimbursement at 100%, 75% and 50%. The Board felt 50% was a reasonable amount reimbursing people half of what the County would have spent and keeping in mind that a lot of individuals that had sandbag dikes spent thousands to have the sandbags removed. Mr. Campbell said we also did provide sand for the Hessco Barriers and he believes the bill was a little over \$6,000.

Commissioner Malm asked how much time should be given to the individuals that have not submitted a copy of their receipts and cancelled checks. Mr. Campbell said he would think by the end of the week.

Frank Burkholder, 4402 North Columbia Road, said he did not feel the recommendation of the Emergency Management Board is fair to only reimburse residents at 50%. It looks like Grand Forks County is telling our residents to build sandbag dikes instead of permanent dikes. Mr. Burkholder is listed as parcel number 9 on the attached list.

Terry Longtin, 4496 North Columbia Road, parcel number 2 on the attached list. Mr. Longtin asked that the same formula for reimbursement would be applied to all property. If the reimbursement for sand was at 100% than the reimbursement for clay should be at 100% of the cost of sandbags to a comparable height as the clay dike. Also flood insurance should not be deducted because it was not deducted from those that received sand. Mr. Longtin said if the County does not have the \$38,000 to pay 100% of cost, reduce the amount paid but keep the formula the same.

Ken Chisholm, parcel number 4, constructed his own dike using his own backhoe. His cost was determined using his formula to own and operate a backhoe at \$14.82 per hour times the 200 hours to construct the dike.

Commissioner Knauf said it has been a difficult process for the Emergency Management Board to make the reimbursement recommendation and they tried to be fair. They could not rule out that Grand Forks County has never paid for clay.

Commissioner Pic asked if we will have a flood policy in place for 2010. Mr. Campbell said he will present a draft policy and plan the second meeting in January. Mr. Campbell said he can say right now that his recommendation for the draft policy is empty sandbags only. That has been the policy the County has had for years.

Moved by Schmisek, seconded by Pic, to reimburse residents 100% of the County sandbag cost or 100% of the actual cost of the dike whichever is lower, Hessco Barriers are not included, flood insurance will not be deducted, a copy of receipts and cancelled check, front and back or other appropriate supporting documentation must be received by December 15, 2009 and the actual height, width and length of each dike will be verified by the Emergency Management Board. Motion was withdrawn.

Moved by Schmisek, seconded by Pic, to reimburse residents 100% of the County sandbag cost or clay dike cost whichever is lower. The clay dike must have been built on or before April 1, 2009 not including Hessco Barriers. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 3:44pm.

William Murphy, Chair
Grand Forks County Commission

Debbie Nelson, County Auditor