

November 19, 2019  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Tom Appel, Kevin Stevens, Norm Holmen, Donna Gravley, Larry Anderson; County Attorney Nick Anderson, County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Kathy Marsh, Drew Hage, Jim Schmidt, Jordan Burmeister, Nick Klisch, Ronda Allis, John Crawford, Gale Bondhus, Catherine Amick, and Vicki Beckendorf.

Chairman Holmen called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2019 regular meeting.

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Jim Schmidt met with the board to give an update on the Courthouse Window Grant application. Schmidt informed the board that the Courthouse Window Grant was not considered due to an issue with a photo key vs an image key. Schmidt and Jared Schmidt will make the revisions and resubmit the grant application in 2020 at no charge to the county.

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Jordan Burmeister, Project Manager – Geronimo, gave an update to the board on the Plum Creek Wind Farm. Burmeister stated that the 18 month permitting phase is now beginning and that the goal is to start construction during the summer of 2021 and be operational by the end of 2022.

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John Crawford, KLJ Engineering, and Ronda Allis, MnDOT, met with the board to give an update on the TH60/Windom Corridor Study. Crawford reviewed the process of the study and answered questions the board had. Both Allis and Crawford stated that they would be back in January for another update.

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Nick Klisch, County Engineer/Public Works Director, met with the board to discuss a few items. Klisch presented the bids for Project 017-599-101, Westbrook Township Bridge L6611: R&G Construction - \$181,907.00, Mathiowetz Construction - \$212,691.00, Midwest Contracting, LLC - \$199,726.00, Riley Bros. Construction, Inc. - \$222,801.00, Noomen Excavating, LLC - \$283,344.52. Klisch also presented bids for Project 017-599-109, Westbrook Township 36" Metal Pipe: R&G Construction - \$283,324.50, Mathiowetz Construction - \$284,649.50, Midwest Contracting, LLC - \$298,965.00, Riley Bros. Construction - \$304,083.00, Noomen Excavating, LLC - \$431,622.54. Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept the bid from R&G Construction in the amount of \$181,907.00 for Project 017-599-101 and the bid from R&G Construction in the amount of \$283,324.50 for Project 017-599-109.

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Klisch presented bids for a full service fuel contract: Staples Oil - \$201,105.82 and Jeffers Farmers Coop - \$220,275.00. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to accept the bid from Staples Oil in the amount of \$201,105.82 and allow the Public Works Director to sign the agreement.

Klisch presented revisions to various Highway Department permits. Klisch stated that on the Private Drainage Permit, the boring or tunneling under roadway fee increased \$50 to \$100 and the Open cut crossing – gravel roads only fee increased \$250 to \$750; on the Oversize/Overweight Permit, the Oversize Administration fee increased \$25 to \$50 and the Overweight fee increased \$50 to \$100; and on the Utility Permit the Open cut crossing –gravel roads only fee was increased \$250 to \$750. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the various revised Highway Department permits as presented.

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Drew Hage, Windom EDA Director, met with the board to give a summary of the Cottonwood County Home Initiative program. Hage stated that the 3 year window ends December 31, 2019 and he would like the board to consider continuing the program for another 3 years (2020-2022). Hage informed the board that 15 new single-family homes have been approved for the abatement and that the estimated valuation of new homes approved through the program was \$3,645,000. Hage stated if the board would consider extending the program, he would come back to the December 3 meeting with a resolution for approval.

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Cathleen Amick, Transportation Director of UCAP, presented a transportation agreement for approval. Amick stated that the only changes are that this contract would be ongoing instead of yearly and that the words “up to” have been added in paragraphs B1 and B2 to adjust for changes in MnDOT’s financial participation. Motion by Stevens, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to approve the United Community Action Partnership Transportation Agreement as presented.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Thongvivong informed the board that no comments were received for the revisions to Policy #240 “Over/Under Remittance” so would like the board to approve. Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to adopt revised Policy #240 “Over/Under Remittance.”

Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve posting revisions to Policy #170 “Leave Benefits – Sick” for a 30-day comment period.

Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve posting revisions to the Phased Retirement Option (PRO) policy for a 30-day comment period.

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Nick Anderson, County Attorney, asked the board for approval to hire an emergency hire in his office due to the death of an employee and also post internally and advertise, if necessary, for the Legal Secretary position. Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to post internally for seven days and then advertise, if necessary, for the position of Legal Secretary.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to hire a temporary employee as an emergency hire for hours deemed necessary by the County Attorney at the rate of \$21.42 per hour.

Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to honor the requests for the withdrawal of resignations from the Deputy Auditor/Treasurer and the Deputy Assessor.

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Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve November warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 65,422.93
Long Term Capital Outlay	\$ 8,165.80
County Building Fund	\$ 281.76
Ditch Fund	\$ 7,104.42
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 1,220.00
County Revenue Fund	\$ 156.05
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 5,922.72
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 531.55
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 575.11</u>
	\$89,380.34

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Commissioner Anderson gave an update on the Minnesota River Basin Meeting.

Commissioner Appel asked the Auditor/Treasurer for an explanation on Rural Service District.

Commissioner Gravley gave an update on the United Community Action Partnership meeting.

Commissioner Holmen informed the board of a letter he received regarding a FEMA meeting that will held on December 18, 2019.

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Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to close the meeting at 11:20 a.m. to discuss strategy for upcoming labor negotiations. Present for the closed session were: Commissioners Gravley, Appel, Holmen, Stevens, and Anderson; Kelly Thongvivong, Nick Anderson, Donna Torkelson, and Kathy Marsh.

Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to open the closed session at 11:46 a.m.

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, led discussion regarding the proposed 2020 budget. Commissioner Appel led discussion regarding buildings as it effects the budget. Appel stated that there are three building concerns that need to be addressed: Courthouse, Transit Garage, and A/T office remodel.

Consensus of the board is to proceed with both remodeling the garage door to the transit garage and building a lean-to on the transit garage, with the lean-to being the higher priority.

Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept quote from Building Restoration Corp. in the amount of \$123,199 for the tuck-pointing and repair of the Courthouse Tower.

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept quote from Karr Tuckpointing in the amount of \$73,188 for the tuck-pointing of the main structure of the Courthouse.

Consensus of the board is to move forward with ISG for the remodeling of the Auditor/Treasurers Office once a local contractor establishes that there are two I beams in the ceiling.

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, gave an update on a possible ditch audit.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:52 p.m.

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Norman Holmen, Board Chair

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator