

October 15, 2019
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, October 15, 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, Jesse Harmon, Kathy Kretsch, Gale Bondhus, Kaylene Gohr, Andy Spielman, and Vicki Beckendorf.

Chairman Holmen called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Stevens, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2019 regular meeting.

* * * *

Jesse Harmon, Brown-Nicollet Community Health Director, met with the board regarding the Environmental Health Contract and 2020 license fees. Harmon informed the board that the license fees will be increased by 2%. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the 2020 Environmental Health Contract with the Brown-Nicollet Community Health Board as presented and acknowledge the license fee increase of 2%.

* * * *

Kathy Kretsch, County Recorder, met with the board to discuss two requests for use of the Recorder's Unallocated Fund. Kretsch stated that one request is for \$16,000.00 for updating the county website for ADA compliance and the second request is for \$3,680.00 for ACOM software in the Auditor/Treasurer's office. Kretsch stated that the Compliance Fund Committee has voted and a unanimous vote was received for both. Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to approve the website and ACOM software expenditures from the Recorder's Unallocated Fund in the amount of \$19,680.00.

* * * *

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Stevens, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to accept the resignation from Kathy Derickson, full-time Jailer/Dispatcher, effective October 31, 2019, with appropriate payout of benefits.

Motion by Anderson, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve internal posting for the vacant full-time Jailer/Dispatcher position and to advertise if necessary.

Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept the proposed change to Policy 240 "Over Remittance" and allow for 30-day posting for comments.

Discussion was held regarding the revised job descriptions for the positions in the Auditor/Treasurer's office. After much discussion, no action was taken.

* * * *

Andy Spielman, Windom Building Inspector, informed the board that a Cottonwood County Home Initiative application has been received from Candace K.

Soleta for a new, single family home. Spielman stated that all requirements to date have been met so a public hearing date needs to be set. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to adopt resolution as follows:

Resolution 19-10-15A

Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing on Proposed
Tax Abatement for New Residential Project

WHEREAS, Cottonwood County is committed to the best interests of the citizens of Cottonwood County; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes §469.1813 gives authority to a County to grant an abatement of taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the statutory requirements, on December 13, 2016, the Cottonwood County Commissioners approved the Cottonwood County Home Initiative Guidelines (the "Guidelines") and program documentation; and

WHEREAS, Candace K. Soleta ("Soleta") is the owner of the following described real estate within Cottonwood County, Minnesota:

Parcel #:	25-522-0010
Address of Property:	1940 Great Bend Boulevard, Windom, Minnesota
Legal Description of Property:	Lot 1 in Block 1 of Maplewood Estates Subdivision in the City of Windom, Cottonwood County, Minnesota.

WHEREAS, Soleta proposes to a construct a new home on this property; and

WHEREAS, Soleta has requested tax abatement on this property pursuant to the Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the abatement of taxes on the above-described parcel would be for the period of five (5) years commencing on the first year of taxes, payable for the assessed value related to the capital improvements, as outlined in the Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the estimated market value for the new home, submitted by the Applicant, is \$185,000; and

WHEREAS, based on an Estimated Market Value of \$185,000 for the new home and based on 2019 tax rates, the estimated tax abatement for Cottonwood County for this property would be approximately \$672 per year. The total estimated tax abatement by Cottonwood County for the five-year period is approximately \$3,360. (These figures were calculated using 2019 tax rates. The market value for the project is only an estimate, since the building has not been constructed and the tax rates will change each year.)

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes require that a public hearing be held prior to the approval of the proposed tax abatement.

Now, therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED by the COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR COTTONWOOD COUNTY, MINNESOTA**, as follows:

1. Public Hearing. A public hearing to consider the proposed tax abatement, as set forth above, shall be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2019, at 9:02 a.m. in the County Commissioners' Room in the Cottonwood County Courthouse, 900 Third Avenue, Windom, Minnesota.
2. Notice of Public Hearing. The Cottonwood County Auditor is authorized and directed to cause notice of the hearing to be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the County at least 10 days, but less than 30 days, prior to the date for the hearing. The public hearing notice shall include a description of the property for which the abatement is being considered and the total estimated amount of the proposed tax abatement based on current information.

Adopted this 15th day of October, 2019.

S/Norman Holmen, Board Chairman

S/Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

A public hearing was held in regard to the residential property tax abatement applied for by Chris Rogers and Stacy Crites for the construction of a single family home on parcel number 08-722-0010. No opposition to the abatement was heard prior to or at the hearing. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous roll call vote to approve the Chris Rogers and Stacy Crites Home Initiative application and resolution 19-10-15 as follows:

Resolution 19-10-15

**RESOLUTION APPROVING TAX ABATEMENT FOR
CERTAIN PROPERTY PURSUANT TO MINN. STAT. §469.1813**

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes §469.1813 gives authority to the County of Cottonwood to grant an abatement of property taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the statutory requirements, on December 13, 2016, the Cottonwood County Commissioners adopted the Cottonwood County Home Initiative Guidelines (the "Guidelines") which must be met before an abatement of taxes will be granted for residential development; and

WHEREAS, Chris Rogers and Stacy Crites ("Rogers-Crites") are the owners of the following described real estate within Cottonwood County, Minnesota:

Parcel #:	08-722-0010
Address of Property:	42033 440 th Avenue, Windom, MN 56101
Legal Description of Property:	Lot 1 in Block 1 of Shady Oaks Subdivision of Part of Section 29 and Part of Section 30 in Township 105 North, Range 36 West of the 5 th P.M. in Cottonwood County, Minnesota (abbreviated description) . This tract contains 2.5 acres, more or less.

WHEREAS, Rogers-Crites propose to a construct a new home on this property; and

WHEREAS, Rogers-Crites have made application to Cottonwood County (the "County") for the abatement of taxes as to the above-described parcel; and

WHEREAS, Rogers-Crites have met the statutory requirements outlined under Minnesota Statutes §469.1813 Subdivision 1(1) and Subdivision 1(2)(i) as well as the County's Home Initiative guidelines for tax abatement; and

WHEREAS, the County expects the benefits to the County of the proposed abatement agreement to at least equal the costs to the County of the proposed agreement and finds that the proposed abatement is in the public interest because it will increase or preserve the tax base.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COTTONWOOD COUNTY, MINNESOTA, AS FOLLOWS:

1. Cottonwood County does hereby grant an abatement to CHRIS ROGERS and STACY CRITES of the County's share of real estate taxes upon the above-described parcel based on the proposed construction of a new single-family home on said parcel.
2. The tax abatement will be for no more than five (5) years commencing on the first year of taxes payable for the assessed value related to the capital improvement (new home) outlined above.
3. The County shall provide the awarded abatement payment following payment by the property owners of the real estate taxes due annually. One single payment of the County's share of the abatement shall be made to the property owners of record by December 30th of that calendar Year.

- 4. The tax abatement shall be for the residential capital improvements only. Land values and the current base value are not eligible and will not be abated.
- 5. The abatement shall be null and void if construction of the new home is not commenced within six (6) months of the approval of this resolution or if real estate taxes are not paid on or before the respective annual payment deadlines.

Adopted this 15th day of October, 2019.

S/Norman Holmen, Board Chairman

S/Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

Gale Bondhus, County Assessor, informed the board that the Soleta Home Initiative Application is the 15th application and that the county share of taxes abated is approximately \$80,295.

* * * *

Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve October warrants, excluding the Higley Ford Windom expense of \$3,265.00, as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$151,566.23
Long Term Capital Outlay	\$ 16,000.00
County Building Fund	\$ 15,931.81
Ditch Fund	\$ 37.12
Agency Fund	\$ 100.00
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 280.00
County Revenue Fund	\$ 1,428.00
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 53,483.07
Waste Abatement/Score Fund	\$ 10,111.05
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 49,265.66</u>
	\$298,202.94

Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to allow the Chairman to approve the payment to Higley Ford Windom if a legitimate expense.

* * * *

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, led discussion regarding making it mandatory for all active employees/elected officials and their spouse to enroll in the county's current Medicare Plan upon turning 65. After much discussion, Thongvivong should research if, and how, other counties do this.

Thongvivong asked if all Commissioners plan to attend the AMC Conference in St. Cloud, December 8 – 11 and the response was yes.

* * * *

Commissioner Appel informed the board that GIS and IT position interviews would be held October 17.

Appel informed the board that two tuck pointing companies have looked over the Courthouse and will be submitting bids.

Commissioner Anderson updated the board on the Cottonwood County 150th Anniversary meeting he attended on October 13.

Commissioner Holmen informed the board of two ditch systems that he has been dealing with.

* * * *

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to close the meeting at 11:21 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, and Kathy Marsh.

Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to open the closed session at 11:36 a.m.

* * * *

Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to authorize the purchase of Cash Register/Miscellaneous Receipts from CPT for the Auditor/Treasurer's office in the amount of \$999.00.

* * * *

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

Norman Holmen, Board Chair

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator