

December 15, 2020  
 Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
 Regular Meeting  
 Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Law Enforcement Center in Windom, MN. Present in person or via teleconference for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Kevin Stevens, Tom Appel, Norm Holmen, Larry Anderson, Donna Gravley; County Attorney Nick Anderson, County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Kathy Marsh, Nick Klisch, Alex Schultz, Jason Purrington, Dominic Jones, Jed Rhubee, Drew Hage, Glenn Johnson, and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Stevens called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2020 regular meeting.

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Nick Anderson, County Attorney, clarified the procedure for an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) and that the board should approve the resolution presented. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 20-12-15 as follows:

**Resolution 20-12-15**

Now, therefore, the Cottonwood County Board of Commissions hereby resolves: The above finding of fact constitutes the basis for the Board denying the petition on December 1, 2020 as the Lorentz Construction project is exempt from an EAW as there has already been final governmental approval.

S/Kevin Stevens, Board Chairman

S/Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Commissioner Gravley led discussion on a landowner awareness when work is done on a ditch. After discussion, Commissioner Holmen volunteered to draft a procedural checklist and will bring to the first meeting in January.

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Jason Purrington, Sheriff, met with the board to get approval to purchase a radar unit for a squad car to replace an unrepairable radar unit. Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to purchase a Stalker DSR 2X radar unit from Applied Concepts for the state contract price of \$3,151.00.

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Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to approve December warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$107,789.66
County Building Fund	\$ 7,608.37
Ditch Fund	\$ 11,144.67
Road & Bridge Fund	\$184,756.88
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 3,257.11
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 54,419.36</u>
	<b>\$368,976.05</b>

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to give blanket approval for year-end warrants.

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Commissioners Stevens and Anderson gave an update on the Jeffers Commercial tax forfeiture property that was torn down and the shared wall that was repaired. Anderson stated that the work is almost completed and the neighboring business is happy with the results.

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Dominic Jones, Red Rock Rural Water Systems, met with the board to get approval of a resolution. Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 20-2-15C "Resolution providing for the issuance, sale and delivery of a \$1,350,000 General Obligation Water Revenue Bond, Series 2020B (Red Rock Rural Water System) of Cottonwood County, Minnesota, to pay a part of the cost of water system improvements; establishing the terms and conditions therefor; and awarding the sale thereof." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator Office.)

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to extend the Temporary Part-Time Custodial position until March 31, 2021.

Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to hire Tesla Crowell as a part-time Jailer/Dispatcher on Range 11, Step B (\$20.05), on the 2020 wage matrix, after successful completion of all hiring requirements.

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Drew Hage, Windom EDA Director, met with the board to present a resolution of sponsorship of the Transportation Alternatives Program for the City of Windom. Motion by Anderson, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve resolution 20-12-15A as follows:

**Resolution 20-12-15A**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that Cottonwood County agrees to act as sponsoring agency for the project identified as Cottonwood Lake Drive Pedestrian Connectivity seeking infrastructure funding and has reviewed and approved the project as proposed. Sponsorship includes a willingness to work with the City of Windom who will be providing the guarantee for the local share of costs associated with this project and responsibility for seeing this project through to its completion, with compliance of all applicable laws, rules and regulations.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Cottonwood County is hereby authorized to act as agent on behalf of this sponsoring agency.

S/Kevin Stevens, Board Chairman

S/Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, and Jed Rhubee, Public Works Superintendent, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to approve final contract payment to R&G Construction in the amount of \$9,870.57 for Project 017-599-101 and 017-599-109.

Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to approve final acceptance of Project 017-611-019 in coordination with Brown County.

Rhubee presented two quote for the purchase of two Motor Graders. Quotes were as follows: RDO Equipment Company - \$411,269.80 and Ziegler CAT - \$448,975.00. Rhubee stated that the quotes include the trade-ins and extended warranty. Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to purchase two John Deere Motor Graders from RDO Equipment Company in the amount of \$411,269.80.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, brought forward a revised job description for the Engineering Technician. After much discussion, motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to amend and approve the revised Engineering Technician job description.

Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to approve promoting Todd Thurmer, Engineering Aide, to Engineering Technician effective January 4, 2021 and place on Range 14, Step D (\$26.39) of the 2021 wage matrix.

Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to accept the retirement resignation from Susan Amundson, Assessor Office Manager/GIS, effective approximately April 11, 2021, with appropriate payout of benefits. Amundson's last actual working day will be February 5, 2021.

Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, to post and advertise for the Assessor Office Manager/GIS position. Voting Aye – Holmen, Anderson, Appel, and Stevens. Voting Nay – Gravley. Motion passed.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to accept the resignation of Kristi Meyeraan, Assistant County Attorney, effective January 1, 2021, with appropriate payout of benefits.

Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to advertise for an Assistant County Attorney.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to set the 2021 COLA for non-union employees at 2.75%.

Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to set Nick Anderson's 2021 salary at \$117,135.00.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to set Jason Purrington's 2021 salary at \$105,062.00.

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to set Kathy Kretsch's 2021 salary at \$75,008.00. .

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to set Donna Torkelson's 2021 salary at \$82,817.00.

Motion by Anderson, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to set Commissioner per diems for 2021 at \$75 per day.

Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley to set the 2021 Commissioner's salaries at \$22,185, technology fee at \$60 and Board Chairman to receive an additional \$1,200. Voting Aye – Holmen and Appel. Voting Nay – Anderson, Gravley, and Stevens. Motion failed. Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to set the Commissioner's 2021 salaries at \$21,750, the technology fee at \$60, and the Board Chairman to receive an additional \$1,200.

Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 20-12-15B as follows:

**Resolution 20-12-15B  
Big Bend Snowriders Club**

**WHEREAS**, Cottonwood County has established the Cottonwood County Snowmobile Trails System; and

**WHEREAS**, the County, working with the Big Bend Snowriders Club, desires to see the continuation of the trails system; and

**WHEREAS**, Cottonwood County will act as legal sponsor for an application for the DNR Snowmobile Trails Assistance Program and may enter into agreement with the State of Minnesota on behalf of the Big Bend Snowriders Club; and

**WHEREAS**, Cottonwood County will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in the agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, Donna Torkelson, County Auditor/Treasurer, 900 Third Avenue, Windom, MN 56101 will act as the fiscal agent on behalf of Cottonwood County.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners hereby supports the acceptance of the grant on behalf of the Big Bend Snowriders Club.

S/Kevin Stevens, Board Chairman

S/Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to approve Proposal Option Two as the Agreement for legal services between the Drainage Authority and Rinke Noonan as described in the proposal letter dated December 1, 2020 for 2021 legal services.

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Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to certify the levy for 2021 at \$11,393,612.00, which is a 3% increase from 2020.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to set the 2021 Revenues and Expenditures by Fund. The total revenues for 2021 are \$22,140,974.00 and total expenditures for 2021 are \$22,140,974.00. Landfill total revenues for 2021 are \$1,057,385.00 and total expenditures for 2021 are \$1,023,820.00.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, led discussion regarding the use of laptops purchased with COVID dollars. Consensus of the board is that the laptops are for temporary use if an employee needs to work from home due to COVID related issues. A security agreement should be developed.

Discussion was held regarding the Sandblast software and the amount of time it takes for downloading documents. A form should be developed for exempting certain sites and the County Coordinator should check with MCIT as to liability.

Thongvivong stated she received an email from Jesse Harmon, Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health asking for CARES related information regarding any funding for food/beverage establishments, lodging establishments, parks, and manufacture home parks. Consensus of the board is for the Auditor/Treasurer to give him a list of the businesses that received funding and the total amount awarded not individual amounts.

Thongvivong informed the board that seven applications were received for the Deputy Auditor/Treasurer position and asked how the board wanted to proceed. Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, stated that she really needs someone with accounting background. Chairman Stevens appointed Commissioners Gravley and

Anderson, County Coordinator Thongvivong, and Auditor/Treasurer Torkelson to meet to discuss Auditor/Treasurer office staffing and bring a recommendation back to the board.

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Chairman Stevens informed the board that he was approached by a Department Head who has an employee that is going to lose vacation hours at the end of the year and would like the employee to be able to carry them over to 2021. No action was taken.

Commissioner Appel informed the board that he would like to hold a budget work session at the second meeting in January to discuss a number of budget items.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Kevin Stevens, Board Chair

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator