

December 20, 2022  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Larry Anderson, Norman Holmen, Donna Gravley, Kevin Stevens, Tom Appel, County Attorney Nick Anderson, County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Senator Bill Weber, Representative Marj Fogelman, Becky Buchholz, Mitchell Chmielewski, Jason Purrington, Jason Rupp, Gale Bondhus, Brad Brake, Simoine Bolin, Craig Myers, Dan Quade, Dave Grev and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Gravley called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2022 regular meeting.

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Senator Bill Weber and Representative Marj Fogelman met with the board to discuss the upcoming legislative session and to listen to comments and concerns of those in attendance.

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Commissioner Appel presented information regarding the Cottonwood-Middle Minnesota watershed plan. Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve and sign the Memorandum of Agreement for the Cottonwood-Middle Minnesota watershed planning process for 1W1P and Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

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Becky Buchholz, SWCD Program Technician, met with the board in regards to SSTS low interest loans and interest rates. Motion by Anderson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to reduce the MDA AgBMP low interest loan rate for septic system loans in Cottonwood County to 1.5% for all new loans effective January 1, 2023.

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Mitchell Chmielewski, Veterans Service Officer, met with the board in regards to current charges for veterans receiving volunteer rides. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to eliminate the charges to veterans for volunteer rides.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator presented a resolution for consideration by the board. Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to approve Resolution 22-12-20 Authorizing the Issuance and Delivery of an Allonge to the \$3,926,000 General Obligation Water Revenue Note, Series 2022A; and the \$905,000 General Obligation Water Revenue Note, Series 2022B.

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve signing of 2-year agreement between Cottonwood County and Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc. (Local No. 144), which will be effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024.

Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to approve signing of 2-year agreement between Cottonwood County and Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc. (Local No. 346), which will be effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024.

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Sheriff Purrington met with the board for the purchase of new duty weapons. Two quotes were presented as follows: Kiesler Police Supply - \$8,816.69 (includes \$300 trade-in value per hand gun) and Pro Force Law Enforcement - \$13,012.47 (no trade-in value for current hand guns). Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous vote to accept quote in the amount of \$8,816.69 from Kiesler Police Supply for the purchase of the Glock handguns with holsters.

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Jason Rupp, Jail Administrator, and Dan Quade, Jailer/Dispatcher Supervisor, met with the board in regard to jail medical services. It was reported that the current medical provider, MEnD Correctional Care, has filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy and has given a 90-day termination of services notice. Three other correctional medical providers have been contacted. The only one that was interested in providing a quote was Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve contract with Advanced Correctional Healthcare, Inc. for jail medical services in the amount of \$117,999 and to authorize the Sheriff to sign the contract.

Brief discussion was held regarding nurse funding. Rupp was instructed to work with the County Attorney to come up with language for possible reimbursement for the nurse during the transition from MEnD to the new provider.

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Motion by Anderson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the new pay matrix for 2023 as presented and the placement of all non-union employees on that matrix.

Brief discussion was held regarding the placement of some of the positions on the new pay matrix. The board discussed the possibility of doing an internal review in 2024.

Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to set Nick Anderson's 2023 salary at \$124,872.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen to set Kathy Kretsch's 2023 salary at \$83,567. Voting aye: Gravley, Holmen and Anderson. Voting nay: Appel and Stevens.

Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to set Jason Purrington's 2023 salary at \$119,813.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen to set Donna Torkelson's 2023 salary at \$95,540. Voting aye: Gravley, Holmen, Anderson and Stevens. Voting nay: Appel.

Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to set the 2023 Commissioner salary at \$23,000, per diems at \$100/day, technology fee at \$60/month and the Board Chair to receive an additional \$1,200 for the year.

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, had discussion with the board regarding the 2023 tax levy and budget. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to certify the levy for 2023 at \$11,993,021, which is a 4.5% increase from 2022.

Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to determine 2023 total revenues and 2023 total expenditures based on figures that will be calculated before the end of the year based on salaries that were approved at today's board meeting.

Motion by Anderson, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to set up commitment account for tax court attorney for \$100,000.

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Commissioner Stevens and County Attorney Anderson gave a brief update regarding an internal investigation. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to hire the law firm of Rupp, Anderson, Squires & Waldspurger to conduct an internal investigation.

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Brief discussion was held regarding calls that have been received regarding the Windom City Arena and the possibility of no longer offering horse shows.

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Commissioner Appel asked for further discussion regarding two employees who are over the top of the new pay matrix and whether or not they should receive a stipend of some kind. Motion by Appel, second by Stevens to offer these two individuals a 1.5% stipend for 2023. Voting aye: Appel. Voting nay: Gravley, Holmen, Stevens and Anderson.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve December warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 59,984.56
County Building Fund	\$ 64.00
Ditch Fund	\$ 7,044.00
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 2,317.50
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 65,366.31
Waste Abatement/Score Fund	\$ 1,822.00
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 39,916.55</u>
	\$173,514.92

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Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve Mt. Lake Golf Course liquor license.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to close the meeting at 11:49 a.m. as permitted by Minnesota Statute 13D.05 Subd. 3(b) to discuss the following litigation: FSG Ag Acquisition Company LLC vs. Cottonwood County. Those present for the closed session were: Commissioners Appel, Stevens, Holmen, Anderson and Gravley, County Attorney Nick Anderson, County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Assessor Gale Bondhus and Deputy Assessor Dave Grev.

Motion by Holmen, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to open the meeting at 11:56 a.m.

Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to hire Ethan Waytas as an Appraiser for litigation.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Donna L. Gravley, Board Chair

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator