

January 6, 2023  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Friday, January 6, 2023 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, Tom Appel, Donna Gravley, Norm Holmen, Kevin Stevens; County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Kathy Marsh, Jason Purrington, and Nick Klisch.

Commissioner Gravley, 2022 Chair, called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Gravley asked for nominations for 2023 Board Chair. Commissioner Holmen nominated Commissioner Larry Anderson. Gravley called for a vote to elect Commissioner Larry Anderson as the 2023 Board Chair. Vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Gravley then asked for nominations for 2023 Board Vice-Chair. Commissioner Stevens nominated Commissioner Norm Holmen. Gravley called for a vote to elect Commissioner Norm Holmen as the 2023 Board Vice Chair. Vote was unanimous.

2023 Board Chair Larry Anderson presided over the rest of the meeting. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2022 meeting.

\* \* \* \*

Jason Purrington, Sheriff, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept Sheriff Jason Purrington's letter for a Leave of Absence from his previous held position of Deputy Sheriff.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to re-appoint Dr. Rodney Dynes to a 4 year term as County Coroner, re-appoint Priscilla Comnick, RN, as Coroner's Investigator, and appoint the following Deputy Coroners: Brett Van Kley, MD, Jeff Taber, MD, Thomas Koehnen, MD, and Andrew Kopperud, MD, and include all in the county bond.

\* \* \* \*

Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, met with the board to discuss a few items. Klisch presented a Bridge Bonding Agreement (Grant) between the State of Minnesota and Cottonwood County for the replacement of Bridge 89511 on CSAH 4 in the amount of \$115,048. Klisch asked the board to approve the resolution allowing the County Engineer to execute the agreement. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-01-06A "For Agreement to State Transportation Fund, Local Bridge Replacement Program, Grant Terms and Condition, SAP 017-604-025." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's Office.)

Klisch presented an Agency Agreement for Federal Participation in Construction between Cottonwood County and the State of Minnesota. Klisch asked that a resolution be approved to allow the County Engineer to act as the county's agent to execute the agreement (MnDOT Contract No. 1052191). Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-01-06B

“Resolution for Agency Agreement.” (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator’s Office.)

Klisch then reviewed the 5-year construction plan and a bridge priority listing. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the 5-year construction plan as presented.

Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to allow the County Engineer to advertise 2023 projects for bids.

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-01-06C “Bridge Replacement Priority List”. (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator’s Office.)

Klisch reviewed and explained the Pavement Quality spreadsheet that was sent out prior to the meeting.

Klisch informed the board that two Ford pickups that were approved to purchase on August 2, 2022, have been cancelled by Ford. Klisch asked for approval to place an order for 2 Dodge pickups. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the purchase of 2 Dodge pickups from state bid to replace the two pickups that were previously approved for purchase in August of 2022 and cancelled by Ford.

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to declare that the County offices were officially closed on December 23 and 24, 2022, due to the inclement weather conditions and in accordance with County Policy No. 420.

Discussion was held regarding Policy No. 420 regarding employee time on days that County offices are closed. Consensus of the board is that if county offices are closed as a result of bad weather, employees have the option to use accumulated compensatory time, earned vacation, personal days, leave without pay **OR** to make up the time, as approved by the Department Head. The only option that has to be approved by the Department Head is making up the time.

Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to extend Shelly Baerg’s (Deputy Auditor/Treasurer) probationary period an additional 6-months due to the fact that the delinquent tax process is a large and complex part of her position, but has not worked with it yet. Baerg’s probationary period will be extended to July 7, 2023.

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to move Nathan Wildermuth (Appraiser – Trainee) to permanent full time status effective January 11, 2023.

\* \* \* \*

Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to set the 2023 meeting dates for the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month as presented with the exception of July 5 and December 6; that all meetings will begin at 9:00 a.m. with the exception of June 20 – Board of Equalization and December 6 – Budget Discussion Meeting (TNT) which will be afternoon meetings; and that 12 additional work sessions can be scheduled with no per diems.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept the commissioner assignments for 2023 as presented with amendments to MN

Extension and the addition of Southern MN Tourism. (Commissioner Assignment Listing is on file in the County Coordinator's office.)

Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to set meal rates for 2023 at \$10.00 for breakfast, \$15.00 for lunch and \$19.00 for evening meal. These amounts include a 20% gratuity.

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to set 2023 seasonal wages as follows: \$14.00 – 1<sup>st</sup> year; \$14.50 – 2<sup>nd</sup> year; \$15.00 – 3<sup>rd</sup> year; \$15.50 – 4<sup>+</sup> years.

Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to pay Auditor warrants with regular and customary payments for 2023, which might include: payroll and associated payables; utilities; bond payments; contract payments; payment to other government entities; tax settlements; refunds; reissue voids; well sealing; sewer loan contract payments; insurance payments, lease payments, and payments, which if not made, would result in additional penalties, interest or late fees.

Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to give blanket approval for year-end 2023 Commissioner Warrants that will be paid after the December 19 board meeting.

Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to authorize the County Auditor/Treasurer and deputies to make electronic transfers.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to re-designate official Cottonwood County Depositories as follows: Bank Midwest – Windom; Bank of the West – Windom; United Prairie Bank – Mt. Lake; First Security Bank – Storden; Stifel Nicolaus & Company – St. Louis, MO; Multi-Bank Securities – Southfield, MI; Wells Fargo Advisors – Minneapolis; MN Magic Fund, and Moreton Capital Markets.

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to re-designate official Cottonwood County Brokers as follows: Stifel Nicolaus & Company – St. Louis, MO; Multi-Bank Securities – Southfield, MI; Wells Fargo Advisors – Minneapolis; MN Magic Fund, Moreton Capital Markets, and Bank Midwest-Windom.

Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to set the 2023 Contingency Fund for the County Attorney's Office at \$3,000.

Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, to set the per diem for committee members other than commissioners at \$85 per meeting for 2023. Voting Aye – Stevens, Holmen, Appel and Anderson. Voting Nay – Gravley. Motion passed.

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to adopt resolution 23-01-06 "Resolution to Use Alternative Method to Disseminate and Receive Bids and Requests." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's office.)

Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to set the Cottonwood County crop damage rates at \$900/acre for corn and \$600/acre for soybeans for the 2023 growing season.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow a one-time, half-price tipping fee of \$31.67/ton plus \$6.67/ton surcharge plus \$5.38 waste tax billed to the cities in Cottonwood County for the use of a city wide clean up in 2023 and allow the Solid Waste Department to pick up mattresses at the city wide events at a charge of \$2 per piece. The pick-up price does not include the \$15 fee for disposal.

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the 2023 Fees Charged by County Offices as presented.

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner Gravley gave an update on Transit. Gravley also asked that the board schedule a special meeting to discuss salaries, buildings, ditches, and windows. Chairman Anderson, after a short discussion, set the date of Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. for the special meeting.

Commissioner Stevens led a short discussion on Highway funds that are being saved for the new Highway shop and the State Auditor recommendation.

\* \* \* \*

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve January warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 30,571.60
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 89,736.42
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 2,216.50
Landfill Enterprise Fund	\$ 2,304.61
	<u>\$124,829.13</u>

\* \* \* \*

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Larry Anderson, Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator