

April 18, 2023  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 18, 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, Norm Holmen, Kevin Stevens, Donna Gravley, County Attorney Nick Anderson, County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Simoine Bolin, Ed Iverson, Dylan Oeltjenbruns, Nathan Harder, Alex Schultz, David Briese, Tiffany Lamb, Nick Klisch, David Grev, Gale Bondhus, Mark Schenk, Joe Caruso, Jason Purrington, George Eilertson and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Gravley, 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 April 4, 2023 regular meeting.

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Nathan Harder, SWCD Program Technician, met with the board to ask that the county participate in the Minnesota Geological Survey County Geological Atlas Program. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel to sign letter of agreement for County Geologic Atlas Program and endorse Cottonwood SWCD/County to carry out in-kind well location activities. Voting as follows: Aye – Gravley, Appel, Stevens, Anderson. Nay – Holmen. Motion carried.

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Alex Schultz, Planning & Zoning Technician, met with the board to discuss the AIS grant application. The City of Mt. Lake and the Mt. Lake Commission have come together to ask for a \$20,000 grant from Cottonwood County's AIS program. Each year Cottonwood County gives this grant to Mt. Lake for the operation of a weed harvester. \$15,000 of the grant goes to the Harvester Replacement Fund and \$5,000 goes to maintenance and wages. Eventually the goal is to buy a newer harvester. The City of Mt. Lake pays in-kind for all the city's equipment usage, staff time, and volunteer work. Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve grant request for weed harvester.

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Tiffany Lamb, Windom EDA Director, met with the board to introduce herself and to bring forward two applications for residential property tax abatements. The first application is on behalf of Darla & Todd Deutchman. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to adopt resolution 23-04-18 (on file in County Coordinator's Office) calling for a public hearing to consider the proposed tax abatement.

The second application is on behalf of Cynthia & Arlen Klassen. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to adopt resolution 23-04-18A (on file in County Coordinator's Office) calling for a public hearing to consider the proposed tax abatement.

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, met with the board to discuss a few items. She requested that the board consider allowing for the purchase of a vehicle

to be used by the Ditch Inspector. The board authorized obtaining quotes for a vehicle that would be suitable for usage by the Ditch Inspector.

Torkelson reported that she has completed the application for credit cards with Bank Midwest. She also presented names of individuals that would like to request a credit card along with the amount of credit requested as follows: Paul Johnson - \$2,000, Nick Klisch - \$7,500, Gale Bondhus - \$5,000, Jason Purrington - \$5,000, Donna Torkelson - \$5,000, Kelly Thongvivong - \$5,000, Alex Schultz - \$2,000. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to allow Donna Torkelson to sign the credit card agreement for Cottonwood County and act as the administrator for the County's credit card program.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to report that interviews for seasonal workers were held on April 7<sup>th</sup>. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the hire of Dylan Serreyn (3rd year), Alex Altman (2nd year), Jayden Petersen (1st year), Bode Determan (1st year), and Barb Hepp (1st year), pending successful completion of all hiring requirements.

SW/WC Service Cooperative currently leases a small space within the N. 71 Building. The lease is due to expire on June 30, 2023 but SW/WC has requested that they be allowed to continue to lease the space beyond June 30<sup>th</sup>. Motion by Stevens, second by Apple, unanimous vote to allow for a month-to-month lease to continue beyond June 30<sup>th</sup> with either party to give at least 60 days' notice of intent to end the lease.

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Joe Caruso, Summit Carbon Solutions, cancelled the meeting with the board this morning due to a situation beyond his control. There was an individual that was present for the meeting who was allowed to speak to the board regarding his concerns.

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Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, met with the board to give an update regarding proposals that were received for architectural and engineering services for a new main Public Works facility. Five proposals were received and three firms (CBS Squared, Widseth and Wold) were interviewed on April 12<sup>th</sup>. The Building Committee recommends hiring Widseth to provide architectural and engineering services required for a new Public Works facility. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley to accept Widseth's architectural and engineering proposal and fee and to authorize the Public Works Director to enter into an agreement required for a new Public Works facility. Voting as follows: Aye: Holmen, Gravley, Anderson. Nay: Stevens. Commissioner Appel did not vote. Motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding the sunflower debate that the City of Mt. Lake has been dealing with. Motion by Appel, second by Stevens to recognize and support Resolution #10-23, which was adopted by the City of Mt. Lake approving the continuation of repainting the sunflower on CSAH 27 in the City of Mt. Lake. Voting as follows: Aye – Appel, Stevens, Gravley. Nay: Holmen. Motion carried.

Commissioner Tom Appel led discussion regarding county building project needs. An update was given on the current status of various building projects including Public Works, Courthouse roof, Courthouse windows, Health & Human Services/North 71 Campus, and Law Enforcement Center.

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George Eilertson, Northland Securities, met with the board virtually for the purpose of discussing potential Public Works bonding. The board requested further information regarding the tax impact on a \$10 million bond issued over 15, 20, 25 and 30-year terms. Brief discussion was also held regarding the development of a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

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Further discussion was held regarding the N. 71 Building and the possible move of DVHHS to that building at some point in the future. ISG will be contacted for possible quote for Scope of Work.

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Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve April warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$39,579.89
Long Term Capital Outlay	\$10,177.10
Ditch Fund	\$6,426.34
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$21,086.46
Road and Bridge Fund	\$18,573.17
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$412.23
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$17,399.94</u>
	\$113,655.13

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Commissioner Norm Holmen led brief discussion regarding a request from Prime West to fly flags of the Joint Powers owner counties in front of their facility in Alexandria. The board agreed to send them the county's colored logo so that they can use it on a flag on behalf of Cottonwood County.

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Commissioner Tom Appel led brief discussion regarding fund balances for some of the entities that Cottonwood County is involved in. One in particular is the Family Services Collaborative that has a fairly good-sized fund balance.

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Commissioner Larry Anderson gave a brief update regarding broadband and reported that a meeting would be held in the Commissioners Room on Thursday afternoon that all of the commissioners are invited to attend.

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Joe Caruso, Summit Carbon Solutions, stopped in to give a brief update and reported that Public Hearings would be held on May 2<sup>nd</sup> in Breckenridge and May 3<sup>rd</sup> in Fergus Falls if anyone is interested in attending.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m.

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Larry Anderson, Board Chair

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator