

August 8, 2023
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Special Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at 8:00 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, Nick Klisch, Rod Hamilton, Michael Mueller, Mike Nelson, Tiffany Lamb, Gale Bondhus, David Grev, 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.

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The Mountain Lake EDA has been in conversations with a developer and local investors to construct a 45-room hotel. Hotel R&D, LLC completed a Hotel Lodging Assessment and the recommendation is that the planned hotel is a midscale to upper-midscale property. The property when completed is over 15,000 square feet and therefore not "TIF" eligible. The public finance tool available is tax abatement to assist with this development. Mountain Lake is a small city and the tax abatements that may be approved (for all projects) cannot exceed \$200,000 annually. Mountain Lake has seen excellent business and residential growth and has limited remaining abatement capacity. Mountain Lake EDA is seeking the county's full participation in the tax abatement program and is requesting a 100% tax abatement for a period of 9 years. After much discussion and several questions being answered, there was a motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to set a Public Hearing date for August 29th at 8:00 a.m.

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Update was given on the new proposed Public Works Facility. A Schematic Design Plan and drawings were provided for the board's review. The estimated total project cost is \$14,248,031.28. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve the Schematic Design Plan as presented to the board.

Further discussion was held regarding bonding and funding of the project and how bills are to be paid. After much discussion, there was a motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous (Commissioner Gravley was absent) vote that all building expenses on the new Public Works Facility will be paid and processed as currently done with other Public Works expenses out of the Road and Bridge account by Public Works staff. All pre-construction costs including engineering, management and land costs will be funded by Road and Bridge cash balance, and will not be reimbursed from the county building fund.

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Commissioner Appel gave a brief update regarding several items such as the east entrance to the Courthouse, vinyl chloride leak at the landfill, Assessor salaries, DVHHS payments, State Auditor Exit Interview and County Road 13 construction.

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The next regular board meeting will be held on August 15th at 9:00 a.m. Widseth will be meeting with the Building Committee sometime in the afternoon that day as well.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

Larry Anderson, Board Chair

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator