

September 5, 2023
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 5, 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, Kathy Marsh, Gale Bondhus, Dave Grev, Mitchell Chmielewski, Nick Klisch, Kyle Pillatzki, Luke Ewald, Zachary Tess, Agnela Piltaver, Scott Roemhildt, Ben Schaefer, Brooke Hacker, Jonathan Beyer, Todd Hauge, Tracey Hildebrandt, Jenny Quade, and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Stevens, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2023, regular meeting, the minutes of the August 22, 2023, special meeting, and the minutes of the August 29, 2023, special meeting.

* * * *

A public hearing was held regarding the commercial property tax abatement applied for by Mork Properties for the construction of a drive-thru coffee shop on parcel number 25-820-0030. No opposition to the abatement was heard prior to or at the hearing. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-09-05 "Resolution Approving Tax Abatement for Certain Property Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 469.1813." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's office.)

Gale Bondhus, County Assessor, asked for more information regarding CPT and the staffing issues they have been having. Bondhus stated that her office is concerned with the CAMA data and how questions will be answered. Commissioner Holmen updated Bondhus with the information that he knew and told her to call the interim Director for more information.

Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to close the meeting at 9:12 a.m. pursuant to Minn. Stat 13D.05 for the Attorney-Client Privilege to Discuss the following Litigation: The Toro Company vs. Cottonwood County. Present for the closed session were: Commissioners Larry Anderson, Tom Appel, Norm Holmen, Kevin Stevens, Donna Gravley, County Attorney Nick Anderson, County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Kathy Marsh, Gale Bondhus, and Dave Grev.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to open the meeting at 9:38 a.m.

* * * *

Scott Roemhildt, Brooke Hacker, and Ben Schaefer, Minnesota DNR, met with the board to introduce themselves, review DNR lands and activities, Cottonwood County successful projects, opportunities, and challenges, 2023 Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT), and School Trust Fund Payments.

* * * *

Mitchell Chmielewski, Veteran Service Officer, met with the board to discuss Moving Greater Minnesota Forward, a grant program for mobility and services. Chmielewski stated that he is having difficulties finding volunteer drivers for veterans and has also had calls from non-veterans for rides, and thinks this program is a possibility to this problem. After discussion, board consensus is this is a program for a larger operation, such as SRDC.

Luke Ewald, DVHHS, was present to present some information on SHIP. The board asked that Ewald come back to a future meeting.

* * * *

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, informed the board that she did not receive any bids for tax forfeiture property demolition and would like to proceed in getting individual quotes from contractors. The consensus of the board was to proceed in getting individual quotes. Torkelson stated that if the structures cannot be torn down by the October 6 Tax Forfeiture Auction, the properties would be removed from sale listing.

* * * *

Zachary Tess and Angie Piltaver, MnDOT, provided an overview of the 10-year Capital Highway Improvement Plan including the State Highway Improvement Program (STIP), current and future transportation system conditions, changes in future investment priorities, and the 2023 construction program. Tess and Piltaver also answered questions the board members had.

* * * *

Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, and Kyle Pillatzki, Asst. Co. Engineer/Solid Waste Administrator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Klisch and Pillatzki presented the Landfill Land Lease with R.A. Muecke Sand and Gravel, Inc. for leasing approximately 6.25 acres south of the landfill. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve Landfill Land Lease with added indemnification clause and allow the Chairman to sign.

Klisch informed the board that Barnett Pro Care has not been meeting the requirements of the in-place mowing contract and would like to give 60-day notice of termination. After discussion, motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to terminate mowing contract with Barnett Pro Care immediately.

Klisch informed the board that Public Works has two leased pick-ups that have been pre-paid down to \$1 and that he would like approval to buy-out the leases. Klisch also stated that Public Works has a 2009 Chevy 2500 Extended Cab that he would like to sell. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve lease buyout of two 2022 GMC Sierra 3500's from Enterprise and allow the Public Works Department to sell Unit 13 - 2009 Chevy Extended Cab.

Commissioner Gravley asked a few questions regarding the sidewalk near the Our Saviors Lutheran Church as she has had some questions.

* * * *

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, stated she has requested funds from the Recorders Unallocated Fund for an electronic document management system, ISC Workflow, and scanners for Public Works and the A/T Office. Torkelson stated the committee that reviews fund requests has met and approved the purchase and so she is bringing to the board for approval. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the purchase of ISC Workflow and two scanners in the

amount of \$59,902, to be paid out of the Recorder's Unallocated Fund.

* * * *

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the amended Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area Joint Powers Agreement as presented and to allow Commissioner Anderson to sign as the delegate to RCRCA.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement for Joint Health and Human Services Entity as presented.

Thongvivong stated that four interviews were conducted for the Corrections Administrative Assistant position and the recommendation is to offer the position to an applicant at step 4 of range 8 (\$21.90). Jenny Quade, Probation Officer, provided some information regarding the Probation Office and this position. After a short discussion, motion by Stevens, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to allow the County Coordinator to offer the position of Corrections Administrative Assistant to the top candidate and negotiate the wage.

Thongvivong stated that she has heard back from the possible leaser of the N71 building and that she will know more after September 19th.

* * * *

Chairman Anderson led discussion regarding further meeting to discuss budgets. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to hold a Special Meeting on Tuesday, September 12 at 1:00 p.m. for the commercial tax abatement public hearing and to discuss budgets.

* * * *

Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve September warrants as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| County Revenue Fund | \$ 17,992.90 |
| Ditch Fund | \$ 3,830.81 |
| Road and Bridge Fund | \$ 79,410.70 |
| Waste Abatement/SCORE | \$ 685.00 |
| Landfill Enterprise Fund | <u>\$ 14,174.54</u> |
| | \$116,093.95 |

* * * *

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, reviewed the changes that were made from the last budget meeting and answered the questions that the board had.

* * * *

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

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

Larry Anderson, Board Chair

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator