

September 19, 2023  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 19, 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, Nick Klisch, Mike Meeks, Jed Rhubee, and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2023, regular meeting, and the minutes of the September 12, 2023, special meeting.

\* \* \* \*

Gale Bondhus, County Assessor, met with the board to ask that her retirement date be amended from September 30, 2023, to January 25, 2024, with her last day in the office being November 10, 2023. Bondhus stated that she would like to extend her office time to November 10<sup>th</sup> to finish training David Grev on the GIS system for splits and combinations, processing various abatements, and finish processing e-criv's. Bondhus stated that she would then use vacation time to January 25, 2024. Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, to approve to amend Gale Bondhus' retirement date to January 25, 2024, with November 10, 2023, as her last day in the office. Voting Aye – Gravley, Stevens, Appel, Anderson. Voting Nay – Holmen. Motion passed.

\* \* \* \*

Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, and Mike Meeks, Lead Heavy Equipment Mechanic, met with the board to discuss a few items. Klisch stated that in April 2022 Public Works was approved to purchase two new snow plow trucks with the equipment to be purchased from TBEI at a cost of \$108,656 per truck. The trucks have not been built as of today and the approved quote for the equipment portion expired August 31, 2023. Klisch stated that he has received a new quote for the equipment plus brine dispensing and monitoring equipment. The quote for the equipment from TBEI has increased \$51,147 making the cost of each truck \$159,803. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve the \$51,147 per unit increase on equipment from TBEI for the snow plow trucks ordered in 2022.

Klisch informed the board that there is an Area 2 water retention structure in need of repair along 260<sup>th</sup> Street, North of Jeffers.. Klisch presented two quotes: Mathiowetz Construction Company - \$45,070 and R&G Construction - \$41,643. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the quote from R&G Construction in the amount of \$41,643 for the repair of the Area 2 water retention structure.

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to move Marsha

Forsyth and Nick Anderson to permanent full-time status effective September 27, 2023 after successful completion of their 6-month probationary periods.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to accept the resignation from Alex Yonker, Heavy Equipment Operator, effective October 3, 2023 with appropriate payout of benefits.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the 2024 Blue Cross Blue Shield renewal as presented.

Discussion was then held regarding the health insurance, single coverage cap that the county has. Currently the cap is set at \$800. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to increase the health insurance, single coverage cap to \$900 effective 1/1/2024.

\* \* \* \*

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

County Revenue Fund	\$ 75,749.41
Long Term Capital Outlay	\$ 49,714.35
Ditch Fund	\$ 35,262.55
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 2,629.69
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 61,130.64
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 2,194.50
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 11,814.89</u>
	\$238,496.03

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, informed the board that Katie (Arneson) Jenkins accepted the position of Deputy Recorder and started employment with the County on September 11, 2023. Thongvivong also stated that Sara deAvila accepted the position of Corrections Administrative Assistant and will start on September 20, 2023, at a rate of \$21.90/hour (Range 8, Step 4).

Thongvivong also informed the board that Cottonwood County was awarded \$10,000 from the Minnesota Historical Small Grant Program for window design. Thongvivong stated the large grant application was submitted on September 15<sup>th</sup> and grants are to be awarded the beginning of November.

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner Appel gave an update on the OSHA findings and an update on the Public Works building.

\* \* \* \*

Chairman Anderson led further discussion on the 2024 proposed budgets and preliminary levy. Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to set the preliminary levy for 2024 at \$12,802,550, which is an increase of 6.75% from 2023 and as per state levy limit requirements.

\* \* \* \*

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

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

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

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