

October 3, 2023
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, October 3, 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, Donna Gravley, County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Kathy Marsh, Jason Purrington, Dylan Oeltjenbruns, Nick Klisch, Jed Rhubee, Kyle Pillatzki, Gale Bondhus, Kathy Kretsch, Paul Johnson, Mark Schenk, Mary Dieken, Abby Rieckman, Representative Joe Schomacker, Steve Nasby, Jason Purrington, Greg Hanefeld, and Joel Alvstad. Absent was Commissioner Kevin Stevens.

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 Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2023, regular meeting.

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Representative Joe Schomacker met with the board to introduce himself, give a legislative update, and to answer questions and concerns the board had.

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Mary Dieken, MnDOT, and Abigail Rieckman, Alliant Engineering, met with the board to give a presentation on the study being conducted on the three intersections of Highway 60 at Mountain Lake. Dieken stated the goal of the study is to look at potential improvements that focus on reducing the frequency and severity of crashes, improving safety and traffic flow, and preparing for a future pavement rehabilitation project scheduled for 2028.

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Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, and Jed Rhubee, Public Works Superintendent, met with the board to discuss 2024 Park fees. Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to increase the seasonal camping rates \$150 to \$1,350 for regular sites and \$1,550 for premium sites; permit golf carts to seasonal campers only with a permit fee of \$150; daily camping rates will remain the same at \$32 per night; wood bundles will increase \$1 to \$7; ice will remain the same at \$5 per bag; and the shelter house will be free on a first come, first serve basis.

Klisch led discussion regarding CD #37 culverts that cross under CSAH 3. Klisch stated that one of the two culverts has failed and left a void in the roadway. Klisch asked the board if the Public Works Department should repair the culverts or if the culverts should be replaced, and, at whose expense. After much discussion, consensus of the board is to have the Public Works Department repair the culverts.

Klisch informed the board that he would like to apply for Local Road Improvement Project funds for the CSAH 10 improvement project from TH71 to the Brown County line. Klisch also stated that Westbrook Township and the City of Windom are also asking Cottonwood County to sponsor LRIP applications on their behalf. Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-10-03 "Exhibit E for Grant Agreement to State Transportation Fund Local Road Improvement Program Grant Terms and Conditions – SAP 017-610-036." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's Office.)

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-10-03A "Resolution of Sponsorship from Supporting Agency for the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) Grant Application." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's Office.)

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-10-03B "Resolution of Sponsorship for Sponsoring Agency." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's Office.)

Klisch informed the board that solicitation is open for Minnesota Highway Freight Program funds and that he would like to apply for funds for the CSAH 28 improvement project from TH71 to CSAH2/TH60. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 23-10-03C "Resolution for Authorization for a Local Financial Commitment between Cottonwood County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation." (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's Office.)

Klisch asked the board for permission to sell surplus equipment on minnbid auction. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to allow Public Works staff to sell surplus equipment: three pickups (2020 Ram 1500 Crew Cab, 2016 GMC Sierra 1500 Crew Cab, and 2008 Ford F-250 Crew Cab), and miscellaneous items all valued below \$5,000 via minnbid online auction.

Klisch stated that the Area 2 Structure Repair was awarded to R&G Construction at the September 19, 2023, meeting and that he and the County Attorney were asked to do further research regarding using buffer funds for the expense. Klisch stated that the County Attorney determined that buffer funds would be an allowable expenditure. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to allow buffer funds to be used to pay expenses on the Area 2 Structure repair.

Klisch led discussion regarding the employee cost of family coverage health insurance for 2024.

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Kyle Pillatzki, Assistant County Engineer/Solid Waste Administrator, presented a Solid Waste Management Alternatives Feasibility Study done by SEH, Inc. Pillatzki asked for a sub-committee to be formed to go through the alternative. Consensus of the board is for the county board to be the committee.

Commissioner Appel also led a short discussion on Waste to Energy.

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Paul Johnson, Emergency Management Director, met with the board to discuss a few items. Johnson presented a SafeAssure Service Agreement for 2024 and stated that there is an 8.25% increase. Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve payment of \$9,204.41 and sign the service agreement with SafeAssure for 2024.

Johnson gave a short summary on the OSHA visit that happened on September 6th.

Johnson also presented the 2022 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) for approval. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to accept the 2022 EMPG grant agreement and have the Board Chair and Auditor/Treasurer sign the agreement.

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Alex Schultz, Planning & Zoning Technician, met with the board to get

approvals for three conditional use permits. Schultz presented a Conditional Use Permit applied for by Minnesota Paving and Materials to continue mining, washing, concrete production and asphalt production at the present site and to expand the quarry 20 acres to the north. Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve a 30-day recess as requested by the Planning and Zoning Commission and to approve a 30-day extension to the Conditional Use application deadline for the application submitted by Minnesota Paving and Materials.

Schultz presented a Conditional Use Permit applied for by Katie Steen to build an 8' kitchen addition and a 30' x 40' garage addition within shoreland, in Rosehill Township, Section 28. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the Conditional Use Permit applied for by Katie Steen to build an 8' kitchen addition and a 30' x 40' garage addition within shoreland, in Rosehill Township, with the following conditions: (1) be compliant with Cottonwood County Zoning Ordinance #28, (2) shall obtain all necessary Federal/State/Local permits and fees, (3) keep a waste receptacle on site during construction, and (4) maintain erosion controls during operation.

Schultz presented a Conditional Use Permit applied for by Scott Kuecker to build a 32' x 50' addition to the Vet Clinic within shoreland, in Great Bend Township, Section 24. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the Conditional Use Permit applied for by Scott Kuecker to build a 32' x 50' addition to the Vet Clinic within shoreland, in Great Bend Township, with the following conditions: (1) be compliant with Cottonwood County Zoning Ordinance #28, (2) shall obtain all necessary Federal/State/Local permits and fees, (3) keep a waste receptacle on site during construction, (4) elevation of expansion must be at least 1366' or higher, (5) maintain erosion controls during operation, and (6) the driveway bridge opening must be maintained free flowing, not reduced in diameter, and all debris or obstructions must be removed ASAP. Flood elevations will increase if there is any blockage of the culvert/bridge opening.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to move Saije Galer to permanent part-time status as Jail/Dispatcher effective October 3, 2023.

Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to rescind Tyann Galer's resignation effective October 6, 2023, and to allow her to remain as a part-time Jailer/Dispatcher.

Thongvivong informed the board of the new statute that takes effect January 1, 2024, regarding "Earned Sick and Safe Time" for all employees in Minnesota. Thongvivong stated that because of the new leave law, personnel policies #133, #170, #380, and #420 have been revised. Thongvivong asked the board for permission to post the policies for a 30-day comment period. Motion by Holmen, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to post for a 30-day comment period proposed revised policies as follows: Policy #133 "Leave Benefits – Bereavement", Policy #170 "Leave Benefits – Sick", Policy #380 "Probationary Period", and Policy #420 "Emergency Closing."

Thongvivong and Mark Schenk, Building Operations Manager, presented quotes for a new tractor/mower/blower for the Courthouse grounds. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the purchase of a 4WD gas

tractor, 54” mower deck, 47” snow blower, hard cab, tuck-away heater, heater quick connect kit, switch panel fuse block kit, and an auxiliary alternator kit, from C&B Operations, LLC in the amount of \$26,001.40 plus shipping. (Quotes on File in the County Coordinator’s office) Schenk was told to sell the present tractor on minnbid.

Thongvivong informed the board that Cottonwood County received a Minnesota Historical & Cultural Heritage Grant in the amount of \$10,000 and that the county is to provide matching funds in the amount of \$954.00. Thongvivong was asked to get more information from Dr. Jared Schmidt before the board accepts the grant.

Thongvivong informed the board that Windom Area Health is interested in leasing office space at the N71 Office Building. Thongvivong stated they are interested in the office space on the south side of the building beginning mid-October for approximately six months to one year. Consensus of the board is draft a lease for a minimum of six months at \$14.75/square foot and bring to the next board meeting for approval.

Thongvivong informed that board that she had been contacted about leasing or purchasing the N71 church building. Consensus of the board is not to lease the building due to no sewer system.

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

County Revenue Fund	\$ 23,471.60
Ditch Fund	\$ 1,641.62
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 1,155.37
Road and Bridge Fund	\$138,965.03
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 2,521.64</u>
	\$167,755.26

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Commissioner Gravley updated the board on the use of the Recorder’s office unallocated funds and the new driver’s license law that took effect October 1st.

Commissioner Appel led discussion regarding a list of potential projects that the SWCD office would like to request buffer funds for. Appel stated that in the past the SWCD office has requested \$5,000 of buffer funds for projects and is now requesting \$20,000 for the projects. Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to allow the SWCD office to spend \$4,000 of buffer funds for the Long Lake Outlet Dike Repair project.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

Larry Anderson, Board Chair

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator