

October 17, 2023  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, October 17, 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, Kay Gross, Brad Odegard, Jesse Harmon, Nick Klisch, David Grev, Jenny Quade, Jason Purrington, 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 October 3, 2023, regular meeting.

\* \* \* \*

Kay Gross, SWCD District Administrator, met with the board regarding the FY2024 and FY2025 Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) – Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) Program Grant Agreement. Gross stated the funding for both years totals \$93,266 and covers 2024 Local Water Management, Wetland Conservation Act, Shoreland, and Septic Treatment Systems and 2025 Local Water Management, Wetland Conservation Act, Shoreland. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the SWCD District Administrators signing of the FY2024 and FY2025 BWSR Natural Resources Block Grant Program Grant Agreement.

Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the SWCD District Administrator’s signing of future BWSR grant agreements.

\* \* \* \*

Brad Odegard, MN Department of Corrections, met with the board to explain the change of funding, passed by the legislature, for probation services in Minnesota. Odegard stated that in the past funding was at approximately 26% and, since the passing of new legislation, Cottonwood County is now being funded at approximately 81%.

\* \* \* \*

Jesse Harmon, Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health Director, met with the board to discuss a few items. Harmon presented the 2024 Annual Contract between Cottonwood County And Brown-Nicollet Community Health Board and stated that there was a 3% increase. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve and sign the 2024 contract between Cottonwood County And Brown-Nicollet Community Health Board in the amount of \$16,938 as presented.

Harmon also presented to the board the Community Health Boards dissolution notification letter that would take effect 1/1/2025. Harmon stated that Nicollet County and Brown County are in the process of creating their own independent Community Health Boards and answered any questions the board had.

\* \* \* \*

Nick Anderson, County Attorney, led discussion on the public input heard at the public hearings held on September 19<sup>th</sup> regarding the Cannabis Ordinance. After discussion, the board asked that Anderson make a few revisions to the

ordinance and bring back to the November 7 meeting for approval.

\* \* \* \*

Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, met with the board to discuss a few items. Klisch presented two Resolutions of Sponsorship for Sponsoring Agency for Local Road Improvement Projects, one in Jeffers and one in Westbrook. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous roll call vote to adopt resolution 23-10-17 "Resolution of Sponsorship for Sponsoring Agency" for the City of Jeffers. (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's office.)

Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous roll call vote to adopt resolution 23-10-17A "Resolution of Sponsorship for Sponsoring Agency" for the City of Westbrook. (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's office.)

Klisch asked the board to increase the cell phone reimbursement from \$30 to \$60 for the Lead Heavy Equipment Mechanic and add a \$60 cell phone reimbursement for the Heavy Equipment Mechanic as cell phones are being used to remotely diagnose equipment codes and are being used more often for county business. Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to increase the cell phone reimbursement to \$60 for the Lead Heavy Equipment Mechanic and add a cell phone reimbursement of \$60 for the Heavy Equipment Mechanic.

Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to make final payment to Towne & Country Excavating, LLC, in the amount of \$27,814.13 for Project No. 017-592-001 in Great Bend Township.

Klisch asked for approval of the 2023-2024 snow removal agreements. Klisch noted that the amount went up to \$1,500 per center line mile. Motion by Stevens, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve the 2023-2024 snow removal agreements with the City of Jeffers, City of Westbrook, City of Mountain Lake, and Lakeside Township.

Klisch stated that he would like to purchase a 1993 International 4900 Fire Truck Tanker that is for sale on minnbid for use in transporting leachate. Klisch stated that this is a all-in-one unit that has a 3,000 gallon tank. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to bid up to the reserve amount for the 1993 International 4900 Fire Truck Tanker for sale on minnbid and, if awarded bid, to inspect before purchase.

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner Gravley informed the board that she had been contacted regarding a possible appropriation for the food shelves in Cottonwood County. Gravley stated there are three food shelf's in the county – Westbrook, Windom, and Mountain Lake. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve a one-time appropriation of \$750 to each of the food shelf's in 2024.

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to move Dan Riordan, full-time Heavy Equipment Operator, to permanent full-time status effective October 24, 2023 after successful completion of his probationary period.

Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to appoint David Grev as County Assessor effective November 11, 2023 at the rate of \$39.67 per hour (Range 23, Step 3) and to allow a step and COLA increase on December 18, 2023.

Motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the request by a specific employee to use 40 hours of unpaid time per pay period during FMLA leave through December 8, 2023.

A brief discussion was held regarding a GIS position. No action was taken.

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve and accept the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant Agreement and to authorize the project director and authorized officer from Cottonwood County to sign and date the agreement.

Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve office space lease agreement between Cottonwood County and Windom Area Health beginning November 1, 2023, for a period of six months and ending on April 30, 2024, and then month-to-month as necessary.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve a Joint and Cooperative Agreement for the Continuing Operation of Area II Minnesota River Basin Projects as a Joint Power Entity as presented with an end date of December 31, 2025, at which time the agreement shall terminate unless renewed by the participants.

\* \* \* \*

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

County Revenue Fund	\$ 93,706.75
Ditch Fund	\$ 8,073.22
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 2,664.75
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 35,723.70
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 21,520.10
Landfill Enterprise Fund	\$ 18,365.66
	<u>\$180,054.18</u>

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, informed the board that she had been contacted as to the process of setting elected official salaries. Thongvivong stated that maybe the elected official, one commissioner, and herself meet and then bring a recommendation to the board.

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner Appel led discussion regarding a DVHHS finances, Auditor/Treasurer staircase, and Landfill vinyl chloride.

Chairman Anderson stated that a work session will be scheduled for Tuesday, November 14 at 9:00 a.m. for landfill discussions.

\* \* \* \*

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

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

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

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