

January 16, 2024
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 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, Donna Gravley, Norm Holmen, Kevin Stevens; County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Donna Torkelson, Kathy Marsh, Dylan Oeltjenbruns, Alex Schultz, Paul Johnson, Simoine Bolin, Jon Erichson, Mitch Froehlich, and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Holmen called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2024, regular meeting and the January 9, 2024, work session.

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Alex Schultz, Planning & Zoning Technician, presented a Conditional Use Permit applied for by Ulland Brothers for a mining pit in Selma Township, section 23. Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the Conditional Use Permit submitted by Ulland Brothers for a mining pit in Selma Township with the following conditions: (1) Be compliant with Cottonwood County Zoning Ordinance #28 and #36; (2) Shall obtain all necessary Federal/State Local permits and fees; (3) Keep a waste receptacle on site during construction; (4) Proper MnDOT signage posted on truck route; (5) Agreements with local road authorities on dust control and maintenance; (6) Phase 1 cultural survey to be conducted; (7) Proper Wetland mitigation; (8) Proper blast notification to adjacent neighbors; and (9) A bond of \$15,000 be issued for a reclamation plan.

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Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to recess as the County Board and to convene as the Ditch Authority.

Dylan Oeltjenbruns, Ditch Inspector, met with the Ditch Authority to get approval of the 2024 ditch assessments. After much discussion, motion by Gravley, second by Holmen, to approve the 2024 ditch assessments after Commissioners from Districts 1, 4, and 5 have met with the Ditch Inspector and approved their district's ditch assessments. Voting Aye – Gravley, Stevens, Appel and Holmen. Voting Nay – Anderson. Motion passed.

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, led discussion regarding a landowner on JD #1 Consolidated that is asking for his ditch assessment to be paid over five years with no interest and that the late fee and penalty be removed. Torkelson explained that the 2023 assessment for JD #1 Consolidated was increased by \$3,200 and \$2,200 of this fell to the landowner requesting the payment extension. No action was taken.

Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous vote to make a final payment of \$97,261.86 to the sinking ditch fund to zero out the account.

Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to adjourn as the Ditch Authority and to reconvene as the County Board

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Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer, met with the board to discuss a few items. Torkelson presented a billing in the amount of \$50,911.37 for a recently cleaned up nuisance property on County Road 22. Torkelson stated that she would like the board to approve placing the clean-up expense as an assessment on the 2024 payable property taxes. Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve adding an assessment for the clean-up expense of \$50,911.37 on the 2024 payable property taxes for parcel 05-027-0401.

Torkelson informed the board that a tree branch from a tree located on a tax forfeiture property fell onto the neighboring home. Torkelson would like someone to meet with the City of Windom Administrator to discuss a solution to get the property back on the tax rolls. Consensus of the board is for Commissioner Stevens and Commissioner Gravley to meet with the City of Windom Administrator.

Torkelson informed the board that funding has been received from Local Homeless Prevention Aid and Statewide Affordable Housing Aid. Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to assign the funding from the Local Homeless Prevention Aid to DVHHS to use in their Emergency Assistance Eligibility Programs for the entirety of the Local Homeless Prevention Aid program.

Commissioner Gravley should discuss with United Community Action Partnership how they could use the Statewide Affordable Housing Aid in Cottonwood County and bring back to the board.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Thongvivong and Paul Johnson, Emergency Management Director, informed the board that a presentation was given by TextMyGov at the Department Head meeting on January 10th. Thongvivong and Johnson listed some of the pros and cons to the software. Consensus of the board is for more research to be done on how many other counties use this software and their comments on how it works.

Thongvivong and Commissioners Appel and Holmen gave an update on the vault remodels in the A/T office and the HR office due to the OSHA inspection. Appel also stated that after the vaults have been completed, some remodeling should be done in the HR office.

Motion by Stevens, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to declare that County offices were officially closed at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, January 12, 2024, due to the inclement weather conditions and in accordance with County Policy No. 420.

Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to accept the resignation from Wyatt Krick, part-time Jailer/Dispatcher, with appropriate payout of benefits effective January 24, 2024.

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Chairman Holmen appointed Mike Haugen to the Planning and Zoning Committee for his first term.

Chairman Holmen also called for a special meeting to be held on Monday, February 26, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. for elected official 2024 salary interviews.

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Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve January warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 31,063.86
Ditch Fund	\$ 11,547.52
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 2,400.00
Road and Bridge Fund	\$159,137.41
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 1,397.00
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 1,862.55</u>
	\$207,408.34

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Commissioner Appel gave an update on the Minnesota Flag issue and voiced his concerns regarding DVHHS committees.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Donna Torkelson, Auditor/Treasurer

Norman Holmen, Board Chair

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator