

February 26, 2024
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Special Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Monday, February 26, 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, Norm Holmen, Kevin Stevens; Donna Gravley; Assistant County Attorney Casey Schofield-Mork, Chief Deputy Auditor/Treasurer Carolyn Rempel, Jason Purrington, Kathleen Kretsch, Nick Klisch, Bruce Sevcik, Sherry Sevcik, Ron Visker, Sue Visker, Darelyn Harrington, and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Holmen called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Anderson, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended.

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Discussion was held regarding the February 2nd special meeting, the resolution that was approved for advertising regarding changing the office of Auditor/Treasurer from elected to appointed, and the removal of an item from the February 20th agenda in regards to said resolution.

Discussion was then held regarding a new resolution that was drafted regarding a public hearing to consider changing the office of Auditor/Treasurer from elected to appointed. After much discussion, no action was taken.

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Jason Purrington, County Sheriff, met with the board to have a discussion regarding his 2024 salary.

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Kathleen Kretsch, County Recorder, met with the board to have a discussion regarding her 2024 salary.

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Commissioner Holmen asked if there were comments from the board regarding the County Attorney 2024 salary or the County Auditor/Treasurer 2024 salary. Assistant County Attorney Casey Schofield-Mork made a few comments about the case load in the Cottonwood County office compared to other counties in the 5th District.

Discussion was also had regarding the advertising of the Assistant County Attorney position. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to stop the advertising for the Assistant County Attorney position until a County Attorney has been hired.

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Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to enter into a legal services agreements with Kayla Johnson, Smith & Johnson Law Firm, for Child Protection Matters, Civil Commitment Matters, and Guardianship/Conservatorship Matters; and with the Jackson County Attorney's office for prosecution of criminal cases and provide signature to necessary contracts and documents as requested.

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Nick Klisch, Public Works Director, presented a State of Minnesota Agency Agreement for Federal Participation in Project and a resolution stating that the County Board Chair and County Engineer are authorized to sign said agreement.

Klisch stated that the agreement is for grant funds for purchasing electric vehicles. Motion by Stevens, second by Anderson, unanimous roll call vote to approve 24-02-26A Resolution for Agency Agreement. (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator’s office)

Commissioner Holmen stated that a date needs to be set for the groundbreaking of the new Public Works building. Consensus of the board is to set the date for Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 12:30 p.m.

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Paul Johnson, Emergency Management Director, informed the board that the Cottonwood County All Hazard Mitigation Plan has to be updated every five years. Johnson stated that the State is applying for a Federal grant for 13 counties whose plans are expired or nearing expiration. Johnson stated that the grant is a 75-25 match. The State sent a Letter of Commitment of Funds stating that Cottonwood County, as a sub-grantee in a Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program, commits the matching funds necessary for the proposed Cottonwood County All Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous vote to move forward with the Cottonwood County All Hazard Mitigation Plan Update and approve the signatures on the Letter of Commitment of Funds.

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Commissioner Larry Anderson led discussion regarding the County Engineer’s salary and a possible market value adjustment. After discussion, the Engineer’s salary should be brought back to the March 5th board meeting.

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Commissioner Gravley gave an update on the Jackson-Cottonwood JD #1 ditch assessment for Ray Salzwedel that has been discussed at the last two meeting. Gravley also stated that a new director has been hired for A.C.E.

Commissioner Stevens informed the board that he had a request from Donna Torkelson regarding her 2 years, 4 months of health insurance. Consensus of the board is to bring back to the March 5th board meeting for more discussion.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Carolyn Rempel
Chief Deputy Auditor/Treasurer

Norman Holmen, Board Chair

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator