

June 4, 2024  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Norm Holmen, Larry Anderson, Tom Appel, Kevin Stevens, Donna Gravley; County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, Auditor/Treasurer Carolyn Rempel, Kathy Marsh, Brian Cavness, Jason Purrington, and Joel Alvstad.

Chairman Holmen called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2024, regular meeting.

\* \* \* \*

Carolyn Rempel, Auditor/Treasurer met with the board regarding tax forfeiture properties. Commissioner Gravley stated that the owner of property 25-352-1130, on the tax forfeiture list, missed paying his back taxes of \$82.40 by a few days and is asking that the board accept this payment and take his property off the tax forfeiture list. Motion by Gravley, second by Anderson, unanimous vote to accept payment from property owner of \$82.40 for back taxes owed and remove property 25-352-1130 from the tax forfeiture listing.

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 24-06-04 "Notice of Public/Private Sale of Tax-Forfeited Lands" with the amendment of removing property 25-352-1130 from the List of Tax-Forfeited Land #25 for Public/Private Sale. (Resolution is on file in the County Coordinator's office.)

Motion by Gravley, second by Appel, unanimous vote to set the minimum bid for all parcels on the List of Tax-Forfeited Land #25 at \$100 and offer parcel 14-002-0203 to adjacent landowner before putting on auction.

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow the Auditor/Treasurer to advertise for bids for the clean-up and/or removal of buildings on tax-forfeited properties, if needed.

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Thongvivong stated that a grievance has been received from an ex-employee regarding the payout of his sick leave. After discussion, motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to pay Joe Saffert 100% of his sick leave to a Health Care Savings Plan pending re-payment of the 20% sick leave he has already received.

Thongvivong stated that she has received an email from the Jackson County Attorney stating that her office will no longer be able to handle the entire adult/juvenile criminal caseload for Cottonwood County effective July 1 but will still be able to help with the felony caseload. After discussion, Thongvivong should check to see if any surrounding county attorneys would be available.

Thongvivong stated that interviews were held for the legal secretary position. Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to hire Dana Kass as a Legal Secretary on Range 11, Step 5 (\$25.97) pending successful completion of all hiring requirements and to approve 2 weeks unpaid leave. Kass's tentative starting

date is June 20, 2024.

\* \* \* \*

Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve June warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 9,060.36
Ditch Fund	\$ 30,582.37
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 53,320.86
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 1,059.52
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 5,848.88</u>
	\$ 99,871.99

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner Stevens updated the board on the Mountain Lake Park National Historical Register re-certification. Stevens led discussion regarding the District 8 meeting that will be held in Round Lake on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, continued with items needing approval. Motion by Appel, second by Gravley, unanimous vote to hire Jon Wendinger as Heavy Equipment Operator, Jeffers Shop, on Range 10, Step 3 (\$23.06) effective June 10, 2024, contingent upon successful completion of all hiring requirements.

Motion by Anderson, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to terminate Tyann Galer as a part-time Jailer/Dispatcher, effective May 28, 2024, with appropriate payout of benefits.

Motion by Appel, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve a request by Pam Hogan, Sheriff's Administrative Assistant, for a \$30 monthly cell phone allowance effective June 2024.

Motion by Gravley, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept proposed language changes to Policy #740 – Drug, Alcohol, and Cannabis Testing Policy as presented and to post for a 30-day comment period.

Thongvivong presented two bids for a minisplit system for the HR office and vault. Bids are as follows: Schwalbach - \$10,560.00 and Tri-Town Plumbing & Heating, Inc. - \$11,976.58. Motion by Anderson, second by Appel, unanimous vote to accept the low bid from Schwalbach's in the amount of \$10,560.00 for a Bosch minisplit system for the HR Office/Vault.

Thongvivong informed the board that she has received notice from SW/WC that they will be vacating their office rental space at the N71 Office Building as of July 31, 2024.

Thongvivong informed the board that she has heard from David Drown & Associates that there are two applicants for the County Attorney position to date.

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner Holmen gave an update on the health insurance meeting that was held on Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup>.

\* \* \* \*

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

---

Carolyn Rempel, Auditor/Treasurer

---

Norman Holmen, Board Chair

---

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator