

January 4, 2005
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 4, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Chuck Severson, Ron Kuecker, Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Gary Sorenson; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Doug Storey; Lori Mickelson, Verlyn Nickel, Jim Bloch, Gale Bondhus, and Bob Haken. Auditor/Treasurer Johnson called the meeting to order and distributed the oaths of office to Ron Kuecker, Norm Holmen, Verlyn Nickel and Jim Bloch. Johnson then called for nominations for chairman. Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to nominate Severson as chairman for 2005. Severson then called for nominations for vice-chairman. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to nominate Kuecker as vice-chairman for 2005.

Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the additions of the agenda. Motion by Holmen, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the December 28, 2004 meeting as amended.

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Auditor/Treasurer Johnson opened up the one bid that he had received for the 2005 official newspaper. Bid was as follows: Cottonwood County Citizen - \$6.40/column inch plus \$2.10 for other two county papers; \$.10/subscriber; and \$1,150 for Financial Statement. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to award the bid to the Cottonwood County Citizen as the 2005 official newspaper.

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Chairman Severson reported on a few miscellaneous items. He mentioned that the leak at Southwestern Mental Health has been looked at and Bargaen will be looking at it again to repair the problem.

Letter of support for the Sober Cab will be typed up and reviewed at the next board meeting.

Concerns were raised regarding S.E.H. deadline of February 1st. Auditor/Treasurer Johnson will contact S.E.H. to find out what some of the county's options may be. He will report back his findings at the next meeting.

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County Assessor Gale Bondhus met with the board to seek permission to fill Assessor's Office Manager position. Motion by Holmen, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to post internally and advertise simultaneously for the position of Office Manager.

Bondhus also presented a proposed fee schedule for documents that are requested of the Assessor's Office and Auditor/Treasurer's Office. The proposed schedule will be reviewed and discussed at the next board meeting.

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Chairman Severson made the following Commissioner Department/Committee appointments for 2005 as follows:

Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Court Administration
Sheriff's Department

Commissioner Gary Sorenson
County Assessor
County Recorder
County Auditor/Treasurer

Commissioner Norm Holmen
County Attorney
Board Administrative Assistant
County Transit System

Commissioner Chuck Severson
County Highway Department
Solid Waste Department
Emergency Services
Family Service Agency

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Environmental Office
Veterans Service Office
MN Extension Service

Committee Assignments
AMC Voting Delegates

Commissioner Gary Sorenson
Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Commissioner Chuck Severson
Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
County Assessor Gale Bondhus
CSSA Director Jeff Minor

Area II River Basin Projects

Commissioner Gary Sorenson
Commissioner Norm Holmen, alt.

Board of Adjustment

1st Dist. Phyllis Bakken
2nd Dist. Mike LaMaack
3rd Dist. Dennis Hoehne
4th Dist. Larry Stevens
5th Dist. Jonathan Penner

Brown-Nicollet-Cottonwood County Joint Powers Board Agreement Bd. Of Directors

Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns

Cottonwood County DAC

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns

Cottonwood County Ditch Authority

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Commissioner Chuck Severson
Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner Gary Sorenson

Cottonwood County Law Library

Commissioner Chuck Severson

Cottonwood County Personnel Board of Appeals

Stephen Kjorness
Dennis Nelsen
Emily Doughty

Cottonwood County Seed Capital Fund Advisory Board

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Norm Holmen

Des Moines River Drinking Water Project	Commissioner Ron Kuecker Commissioner Gary Sorenson
Des Moines River West Fork Project	Commissioner Ron Kuecker Commissioner Gary Sorenson, alt.
Family Service Agency Labor-Management Committee	Commissioner Norm Holmen
Family Services Collaborative Board	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Ron Kuecker, alt.
Heron Lake Watershed District	Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Intergovernmental Relations Board	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Ron Kuecker Commissioner Chuck Severson Commissioner Norm Holmen Commissioner Gary Sorenson
Juvenile Screening	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Labor-Management Committee	Commissioner Chuck Severson Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Land Use Advisory Committee	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Mental Health Local Advisory Council	David Lightner Becky Wiens Jeff Minor Ree Tchetti
MN Counties Computer Cooperative Delegate	Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson
MN Extension Agency Board of Directors	Commissioner Chuck Severson Commissioner Ron Kuecker Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson 1 st Dist. Karlain Erickson 2 nd Dist. Tom Resch 3 rd Dist. Robert "Mike" Stone 4 th Dist. Sarah Wiebe 5 th Dist. Curt Feil
MN Noxious Weeds Appeals Board	Commissioner Norm Holmen Commissioner Gary Sorenson Coralee Krueger Mark Hesse
Planning Commission	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns 1 st Dist. – Phyllis Bakken 2 nd Dist. – Mike LaMaack 3 rd Dist. – Leland Thiesen 4 th Dist. – Tom Fast 5 th Dist. – Phil Harder

Plum Creek Library Board	Commissioner Chuck Severson
Prairie Health Purchasing Alliance	Commissioner Gary Sorenson
Private Industry Council Chief Elected Officials Board Members	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Agency	Commissioner Norm Holmen Commissioner Gary Sorenson, alt.
Resource Conservation and Development Steering Committee	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Gary Sorenson, alt.
Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	Commissioner Chuck Severson
Soil & Water Conservation District	Commissioner Ron Kuecker
South Central MN 13-Counties Comprehensive Water Planning Project	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Norm Holmen, alt. C. Michael Hanson, Tech. Advisor
Southern Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council	Laura Esplan, lay member
SW Mental Health Center Board of Directors	Commissioner Chuck Severson Commissioner Ron Kuecker Marlowe Nelsen
SW Mental Health Consortium	Commissioner Ron Kuecker
SW MN Energy Task Force	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Gary Sorenson, alt.
SW MN Regional Solid Waste Commission	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Gary Sorenson, alt.
SW Regional Development Commission	Commissioner Gary Sorenson
Travel Southwest MN	Commissioner Chuck Severson C. Michael Hanson, Env. Officer Randy Markl, DNR
Tri-County Children Day Treatment	Commissioner Norm Holmen
Western Community Action, Inc.	Commissioner Chuck Severson
37-County MN River Basin Projects	Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns Commissioner Norm Holmen, alt.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to authorize payout of benefits for Jerry Engstrom.

Sheriff Bob Haken met with the board to report that Kristin Porath is the only internal applicant that had applied for the full-time Sheriff's Secretary position. Motion by Holmen, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to move Kristin Porath from part-time to full-time Sheriff's Secretary. The added hours will allow her to keep up with the workload and to provide staff support for the Emergency Management Director.

Brief discussion was held regarding the current procedure to post internally for a position that is going from part-time to full-time. This discussion can be held further at Labor-Management.

Haken gave an update as to the Emergency Management trailers and equipment. He reported that an inventory of the equipment has been completed. Mark Marcy will now work on distributing some of the equipment and deciding what to do with the three generators. It was suggested that the generators be stored in a few different locations within the county so they are not all kept at the same location.

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County Attorney Storey gave an update on a recent Tax Court case regarding Westbrook Hospital, Clinic, and Peterson Estate. The court ruled that the Clinic should be tax-exempt and that Peterson Estate should remain taxable.

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Much discussion was held regarding the possibility of a dairy operation being established in the Westbrook area. Invitations will be sent out to commissioners regarding a Tour of a dairy farm in the Morris area on January 15th.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to accept Tri-County Recycling Agreement. It was suggested that Murray County be asked to also include a statement in the agreement that says that \$60,000 will be kept in the Operating Reserve Fund.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to accept Highway Department union contract for 2005-2006.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to re-advertise 15-passenger van for sale with no minimum bid required. Bids will be accepted until January 24th and opened at the January 25th board meeting.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to accept Mike Kirchmeier's retirement letter effective December 31, 2004 and to authorize payout of benefits.

Chairman Severson will be responsible for signing all Solid Waste bills until the County Engineer/Solid Waste Officer starts his duties.

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Auditor/Treasurer Johnson mentioned the possibility of instituting a \$50 administration fee on all county ditches. After much discussion as to how this might work for those ditches that have no activity throughout the year, it was decided to leave as is.

Brief discussion was held regarding current workweek and the possibility of changing it to read: "beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and ending at 12 midnight the following Saturday". The personnel policy currently reads: "beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday and ending at 12 midnight the following Friday". This will be discussed further at the Family Service Agency meeting at the end of the month.

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Commissioner Holmen appointed Sarah Wiebe to the Extension Board as a replacement for Val Graff whose term had expired. He also re-appointed Tom Fast to the Planning Commission. Motion by Holmen, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to accept two appointments to designated committees.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to recess as the County Board and convene as the County Ditch Authority. Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve 2005 maintenance ditch levies per each commissioner's recommendation within his district.

Auditor/Treasurer Johnson gave a brief update on JD #5. He stated that he has received the preliminary viewers report and will have a revised one within the week.

Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to adjourn as the Ditch Authority and reconvene as the County Board.

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There being no further business, there was a motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Chuck Severson, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Bd. Adm. Assistant