

September 4, 2012
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 4, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Chairman Norm Holmen. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Jim Schmidt, Tom White, Ron Kuecker; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; Assistant County Attorney Lori Buchheim; Liz Struve, Taunya Swenson, Greg Walsh, Ron Gregg, Cheryl Avenel-Navara and Rahn Larson.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2012 meeting as amended.

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Much discussion was held regarding the possibility of an IT position of some kind for Cottonwood County. The board questioned the possibility of hiring a shared position with Jackson County as well as the potential for hiring a position solely for Cottonwood County.

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Liz Struve, Minnesota Small Business Development Centers, met with the board to present the 2011 Annual Report and to request an appropriation from Cottonwood County for 2013. Struve reported that 9 clients were served during the 2011 calendar year and 166 consulting hours were provided. Taunya Swenson, owner of a new fitness facility in Windom, spoke to the board about her experiences with SBDC since opening her new business. Motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote to approve the \$3,000 appropriation request by SBDC for 2013.

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Much discussion was held regarding the Dangerous Dog Ordinance and the motion that was passed at the August 28th board meeting. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to rescind the motion made on August 28th based on the advice of the County Attorney. The motion on August 28th read as follows: "Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White to determine that the dog is dangerous and to authorize that the dog be destroyed based upon Section 4 "Authority to Order Destruction" of Ordinance No. 37. Voting as follows: Aye – Oeltjenbruns, White, Schmidt and Holmen. Nay – Kuecker. Motion carried." The County Attorney's Office plans to research this matter further for possible revision to the existing ordinance.

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Greg Walsh, Information Services Director, was present to discuss several items that will be necessary in order for the County Attorney's Office to be compliant with a new system in their office. Greg also gave an update regarding the county's existing antivirus software (Sophos) that is currently being purchased by Trebron Company Inc. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to amend the current purchase agreement with Trebron Company Inc. to include secure e-mail and disk encryption at a cost savings of approximately \$500/year.

County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to continue the highway budget discussion from the last board meeting and to also discuss the preliminary levy. After careful review of the three Highway Department budgets, the board was able to trim approximately \$96,000 from several line items.

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After a 45-minute recess, the board further discussed budgets, bonding for road improvements (which included discussion regarding the Thomas gravel pit and the costs that may be involved) and levy increases which will need to be determined in the near future as to how the county would like to proceed. The board shared their thoughts in regards to the levy and how much of an increase they feel they could support. Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson will work to put further figures together for discussion at the next board meeting when the preliminary levy will need to be set.

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Brief discussion was held regarding a request by Ron Gregg to re-evaluate the job description of the Highway Office Manager/Accountant due to a change in job duties. Commissioner Holmen and Kelly Thongvivong, HR, will work together to incorporate the change of duties into the existing job description for possible consideration of re-evaluation by Wayne Brede and Ann Antonsen.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to agree that the county contribution for the Cottonwood-Jackson Health and Human Services will be a 52% Cottonwood and a 48% Jackson split for County operating levy and contribution of reserves if a merger is approved. This split will be reviewed each year following the National Census with the first evaluation occurring in 2021 and every ten years thereafter.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Norm Holmen, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant