

January 29, 2013  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 29, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Chairman John Oeltjenbruns. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners John Oeltjenbruns, Jim Schmidt, Kevin Stevens, Tom White, Norm Holmen; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Jenny Quade, Jason Purrington, Gordy Olson, Gerry Engstrom, Rahn Larson, Kim Hall and Randy Illg.

Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2013 meeting. Motion by White, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2013 special meeting. Motion by White, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2013 special meeting. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2013 emergency meeting.

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Jenny Quade, Probation Officer, met with the board to present her recommendation of hire for the Corrections Administrative Assistant position. Quade reported that there were 16 applicants for the position and 5 applicants were interviewed for the position. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to hire Sadie Hackbarth as the part-time Corrections Administrative Assistant for the Probation Office at \$14.50/hour effective February 13, 2013 contingent upon successful completion of all necessary hiring requirements.

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Brief discussion was held regarding replacement of lighting in any remaining county offices that have not already updated their lighting. The board agreed to wait and see if the Energy Board has any rebate funds available before proceeding any further.

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Chairman Oeltjenbruns appointed Elizabeth Johnson to serve her first 3-year term on the MN Extension Agency Board of Directors as a representative from District 1.

Chairman Oeltjenbruns noted that Ron Kuecker and Dawn Eigenberg were appointed previously to the Mental Health Local Advisory Council and were inadvertently excluded from the committee assignments and should be added.

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Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve a special payment request in the amount of \$518.46 to Kathy Kretsch for her attendance at the MACO Conference.

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Sheriff Jason Purrington met with the board to discuss a few items. Purrington reported that he recently received a question from payroll in regards to whether the part-time employees in the Sheriff's Department were entitled to holiday pay when working on a scheduled holiday. Due to the fact that the current union contract language is a bit contradictory even though holiday pay has been allowed for part-time employees for the past 6+ years, Purrington requested that the two LELS unions agree that a Memorandum of Understanding be added to the existing contract to avoid any further confusion. Motion by White, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve Memorandum of Understanding between the county and the two LELS (deputies and jailer/dispatcher) unions and to allow Chairman Oeltjenbruns to sign.

Purrington requested an upgrade of the GeoComm mapping system. He reported that the existing system is approximately 6-7 years old and he would like to upgrade to the next version. The cost to upgrade the existing GeoLynx License is \$6,250. A state quote for the purchase of a new PC for the GeoComm system was received in the amount of \$776.89 from Dell. Motion by Schmidt, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow for the upgrade in the amount of \$6,250 for mapping and \$776.89 for a new PC. This will be paid for with 911 funds.

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Much discussion was held regarding IT and phone services. Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson reported that has supplied the City of Windom with a copy of the county's last phone bill. He also reported that he was not successful in being able to talk to anyone in Brown County regarding IT. Johnson handed out some information he compiled regarding IT services. This information will be sent out to all Department Heads and they will be told to be prepared to discuss IT needs at the next board meeting when they will all be invited to attend. Further discussion will then be held at the February 12<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

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Interim Planning & Zoning/Parks Administrator Gordy Olson was present to discuss a few items. Olson asked permission to advertise for three positions to help with the operation of the park system during the 2013 summer season. Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to allow for the advertisement of one 29-hour/week position and two 40-hour/week positions.

Olson reported that the 2013 parks budget has \$8,000 for part-time hired labor and over \$14,000 was spent in 2012. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to amend the 2013 parks budget from \$8,000 to \$14,000 for part-time labor to reflect the costs we anticipate expenses to be in 2013.

Chairman Oeltjenbruns appointed Gordy Olson as the Ag Inspector for Cottonwood County. The board briefly discussed a possible appeals committee if one would ever need to be used and the consensus seemed to agree that the Board of Adjustment could be used if necessary.

Discussion was held regarding a possible meeting that Chairman Oeltjenbruns is hoping to set up with Gordy Olson, Gerry Engstrom, Kyle Pillatzki, Commissioner Schmidt and himself to discuss solid waste, landfill, etc.

Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous roll call vote to adopt resolution as follows:

**Resolution 13-01-29**

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statutes 244.19 subdivision 6 outlines a process for state reimbursement to participating counties of 50% of the previous year's expenditure for their probation officer salaries, and

**WHEREAS**, 27 County Probation Officer counties and 28 Department of Corrections Contract counties participate in this process, and

**WHEREAS**, appropriations from the state have steadily decreased from 50% in 1996 to an all-time low of 31% in FY 2012, and

**WHEREAS**, the 55 counties participating in this process have been forced to absorb the \$2,963,000 deficit in the FY 2012 reimbursement funding for their probation officers, and

**WHEREAS**, the 2013 legislative session will be establishing the FY 14 and FY15 appropriation for probation officer salary reimbursement for these 55 counties, and

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Association of County Probation Officers has been working with the Department of Corrections and legislative staff to ensure that an accurate FY 14 and FY 15 appropriation amount is determined, and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners strongly requests the 2013 Minnesota Legislature to appropriate sufficient funds to reimburse the 55 participating counties for the full 50% of the cost of their probation officer salaries.

Dated: January 29, 2013

S/John Oeltjenbruns, Board Chairman

S/Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Randy Illg, AFSCME union steward, met with the board to request that the employees at the Highway Department be allowed to donate vacation leave to Jeff Yonker who was recently off work due to a medical issue. Per Policy 380 (Probationary Period), Yonker is not allowed to use vacation and sick leave benefits until after the first three months of employment. Per Policy 147 (Leave Benefits – Hardship Leave) employees are allowed to donate vacation leave to the injured/sick employee. Motion by Stevens, second by White to allow Yonker to use all current accumulated vacation and sick leave and to allow for the donation of 48 hours of vacation hours from co-workers that chose to donate. Voting as follows: Aye – Stevens, White, Holmen. Nay – Schmidt. Motion carried.

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Gerry Engstrom, Interim County Engineer met with the board to discuss several different items. Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve final contract in the amount of \$19,033.52 to Svoboda for bituminous surfacing on CSAH 13 and CSAH 17 (SAP 17-613-44 and SAP 17-617-16).

Engstrom provided the board with the notice of annual distribution that was recently received from MnDOT regarding the allotments that will be credited to the different Cottonwood County highway accounts in compliance with the Commissioner of Transportation's Order.

Engstrom reported on further information he received regarding Unit #43 (1990 International) that is currently in need of an overhaul or engine replacement. Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to allow for the replacement of the engine in Unit #43 at a cost of \$7,871.

Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to allow the county to apply for an OSHA Safety Grant which requires a 50% county match. Engstrom is hoping that the county can use the grant towards the purchase of chainsaw safety equipment.

Engstrom reported that he did some checking with Watonwan County in regards to how they do their cash flow reporting. It seems that the report that is currently being done in Cottonwood County probably covers more information. Engstrom did talk about possibly changing the current monthly report to allow for seasonal expenses.

Brief discussion was held regarding a cell phone allowance request for Jeff Yonker. The board asked Engstrom to do some further checking in regards to the need with all the new radio equipment.

Discussion was held regarding landfill responsibilities and Kyle Pillatzki's willingness to take over the responsibilities that were initially given to Rory Lindvall to take care of. After much discussion, there was a motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt to allow for a \$400/month stipend for Kyle Pillatzki during the months of February - May while taking over responsibilities at the landfill. Voting as follows: Aye – Holmen. Nay – Schmidt, White, Stevens. Motion failed. Motion by Schmidt, second by Stevens to allow for a \$500/month stipend for Kyle Pillatzki during the months of February – May while taking over responsibilities at the landfill. Voting as follows: Aye - Schmidt, Stevens, Holmen and Oeltjenbruns. Nay – White. Motion carried. The stipend will be reviewed sometime in May after the new County Engineer begins her employment.

Engstrom reported that he would be taking the month of February off.

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Discussion was held regarding the current performance evaluation system that the county has in place. It was suggested by Commissioner White, with the board's support, that a workgroup be developed to work on redoing the current performance evaluation system. The consensus of the board was to move forward with the development of a workgroup. It was suggested that two commissioners as well as Kelly Thongvong be assigned to this workgroup. Chairman Oeltjenbruns was asked to make his appointments to this workgroup at the next board meeting.

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Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to approve 2013 appropriation in the amount of \$7,440 to RCRCA.

Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve 2013 appropriation in the amount of \$300 to Southern Minnesota Tourism.

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Brief discussion was held regarding a possible mission statement for Cottonwood County, which has been discussed in years past but never completed. Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to have Commissioner Holmen and Kelly Thongvivong work on the development of a mission statement to present to the board at some point in the near future.

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Motion by Schmidt, second by White, unanimous vote to allow Commissioner Holmen to attend Pipeline Meeting on February 11<sup>th</sup> at the Windom Community Center.

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Commissioner White mentioned that the Travel Southwest annual meeting would be held on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at the Dayton House if anyone is interested in attending.

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Brief discussion was held regarding an e-mail recently received from JinYeene Neumann regarding the possibility of a few work sessions that the board would like to have with her before she officially begins her employment with Cottonwood County.

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Chairman Oeltjenbruns gave an update regarding a meeting he recently attended to find out further information from Geronimo Wind Energy in regards to the wind towers that will be going up in Cottonwood, Jackson and Martin counties.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

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Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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John Oeltjenbruns, Board Chairman

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Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant