

May 3, 2011
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, May 3, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Chairman Ron Kuecker. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Ron Kuecker, Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Jim Schmidt, Tom White; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; Assistant County Attorney Lori Buchheim; Don Reffer, Gale Bondhus, Jason Purrington, Ron Gregg, Mary Ellen Suhrhoff, Wendy Meyer, Kenneth Yoder, Rachel Yoder and Dave Bucklin.

Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Schmidt, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2011 meeting as amended.

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Don Reffer, Brush & Weed Control Specialists, met with the board to give an update regarding the 3-year maintenance rotation with the ditch spraying program. Reffer suggested that a contract be signed along with the quote this year which would allow the county to be additionally insured. Reffer will plan an inspection of all ditches in Cottonwood County in the next 2-3 weeks. A quote will be brought to the board after all ditches have been inspected.

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County Assessor Gale Bondhus and Sheriff Jason Purrington met with the board to discuss one of the county squad cars that is no longer being used by the Sheriff's Department that was being considered as an additional vehicle for usage by the Assessor's Office. Purrington updated the board on the condition of the vehicle and the many issues it has been having. The board suggested that Bondhus contact Craig Myers or Bob Pankratz at Family Services in regards to the expiration of their leased vehicles. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to authorize Purrington to do some further research on how to dispose of the old county squad car.

Bondhus discussed further the concept of True County Assessing and what it could mean for Cottonwood County. One of the benefits would be that Bondhus would have more control of assessing and better assurance that there is more uniformity amongst assessors. Bondhus presented a draft resolution that can be considered for adoption by the board after a Public Hearing is held. The county board will set a date for a Public Hearing to discuss True County Assessing at their next board meeting.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to discuss several items. Gregg reported that he has not yet received word from the Civil Rights Department on the Federal Project SP 17-090-001 the Mt. Lake Trail Project. Gregg has been in contact with the Civil Rights Department and they are experiencing an overload in their offices at this time. It was suggested that

perhaps someone from the City of Mt. Lake can put in a call to the Civil Rights Department as well. Assistant County Attorney Lori Buchheim presented a revised City of Mt. Lake resolution which removes the county from any liabilities in regards to the Mt. Lake Trail. This resolution was recently adopted by the Mt. Lake City Council at their last meeting.

Update was given regarding the Recycling Department. Gregg reported that he would like to hire two seasonal employees to help out in the Recycling Department for the summer. He also questioned if the county should reconsider a single stream system by putting out a request for proposal or seeking quotes for someone to take over the recycling program in Cottonwood County. The County Attorney's Office will do some further research as to whether a request for proposal or quotes would be best.

Gregg requested the use of reserves in the General Fund to offset the shortfall in the Highway Department budget due to snow removal costs. Gregg handed out information regarding the history of the last four snow seasons and requested that the county board consider reducing the current loan in the amount of \$700,000 that Road & Bridge has by \$205,000. After much discussion and recognition by the board of increased costs, there was a motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to transfer \$205,000 from Revenue to Road & Bridge to offset extra costs associated with snow removal activities. This will bring the loan by Road & Bridge to approximately \$495,000.

Gregg requested approval to advertise for summer help for both the Highway Department and Recycling Department. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to allow Gregg to advertise for two seasonal employees for the Highway Department and two seasonal employees for the Recycling Department.

Gregg asked that Chairman Kuecker sign the contract for SAP 17-627-02 the Mt. Lake mill and overlay project that was approved previously.

Update was given regarding the county landfill. It was reported that Gary Wood's last day of employment is May 13th but he is using two weeks of vacation before his last day. Lonn Engler is currently working on becoming a certified landfill operator. Gregg also has two certified landfill operators (Roger Ambrose and Scott Nesmoe) from the Highway Department that will be helping out during the interim period of hiring another landfill operator.

Gregg reported that Kevin Donahue has requested the use of his vacation, military leave, personal leave and sick leave during his deployment to Kuwait. Donahue has also asked if staying on the county's health insurance is an option during his deployment. The County Attorney's Office will do some further research in regards to military leave as well as Donahue's request to continue on county insurance.

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County Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson presented quotes for a new mower/snowblower for the Courthouse (on file in Commissioner's Office) that were received from three businesses (Midway Farm Equipment, Tri-County

Implement and GDF Enterprises, Inc.). It was reported that seven requests for quotes were sent out and only three responded. Johnson reported that Kevin Paulsen's recommendation was the quote from Tri-County Implement for the John Deere X724. After further discussion, it was suggested that Johnson try to get more for the trade-in allowance from Tri-County Implement and to get comparable quotes for the John Deere X724 from possibly the implement in Murray County as well as the implement in Worthington.

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Commissioner Oeltjenbruns gave an update regarding a visit to Mountain Park that he recently took with Parks Director Andy Geiger. Geiger had some suggestions to fix/clean up the area and will work on putting together some figures related to costs that might be involved.

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Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson handed out information relating to redistricting as a result of the 2010 census. It was noted that based on new census information, all current commissioner districts fall within the 10% guideline so Cottonwood County will not have to do anything further for redistricting.

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Commissioner White asked about the status of the presentation from last week in regards to the upgrade of the 911 system. It was reported that Sheriff Jason Purrington would be meeting with the board next week to discuss this further. It was suggested that the board members review the additional information that was sent out by Purrington in regards to the 911 system so that a decision could be made next week as to whether or not to accept the proposal.

White suggested that the county board might want to consider holding a work session during a portion of one of the county board meetings to prioritize and discuss such things as the list created by the commissioners of things that they feel need to be worked on in Cottonwood County. This could also be a time to bring forward new ideas to share with the board.

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Commissioner Schmidt gave an update regarding the camper at Talcot Park that was previously being used by the Parks Department. Schmidt will work on trying to start the process of obtaining a title for the camper. Chairman Kuecker also informed the board that Alan Staples has agreed to allow the camper to be advertised for sale on his property. The board suggested that the vacant lot at Talcot Park be offered to a Cottonwood County resident on the waiting list as a seasonal camping site for the 2011 season.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Ron Kuecker, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant