

February 1, 2005
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, February 1, 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 Thongvong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Doug Storey; Gale Bondhus, Ron Gregg, Mike Hanson, Jim Jorgenson, Bruce Jorgenson and David Jorgenson. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the additions of the agenda. Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2005 meeting.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to recess as the County Board and convene as the County Ditch Authority to discuss matters relating to JD #5, which is North of Clear Lake. The final viewers report on JD #5 has been received which includes reassessment of benefits. Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set up preliminary meeting between the viewers and the landowners to discuss re-determination of benefits. A public hearing will be scheduled sometime after this meeting is held. Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to adjourn as the Ditch Authority and reconvene as the County Board.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to close the meeting at 9:12 a.m. to discuss pending Tax Court Litigation. Those present were: 5 Commissioners, Kelly Thongvong, Jan Johnson, Doug Storey, and Gale Bondhus. Motion by Kuecker, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to reopen the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to accept proposed settlement recommendations as given by Department of Revenue in the Aquila Tax Court case.

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Brief discussion was held in regards to animal control of stray animals. More discussion will be held at a future meeting as to how to handle this situation.

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Commissioner Sorenson gave a brief update to the meeting that he attended last Friday evening in regards to a potential Dairy Farm in the Westbrook area.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to update them on a few different items. Gregg mentioned that the new sign truck arrived yesterday and

some of the employees as well as himself were given a brief training on the safety aspect of the truck.

Gregg presented two quotes for a new wire welder and was as follows: Praxair Distribution, Inc. Windom - \$1,414.34 and Praxair Distribution, Inc. Mankato - \$1,489.34. Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to accept low quote in the amount of \$1,414.34 for the purchase of a new wire welder from Praxair Distribution, Inc. of Windom.

Brief discussion was held regarding the potential addition of a part-time clerical person at the Highway Department. Gregg will work with the Office Manager/Accountant to revise the present job description.

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Environmental Officer Mike Hanson met with the board to discuss the proposed dairy feed lot in the Westbrook area. Much discussion was held in regards to this matter. The Jorgenson brothers will do some further checking with their other business partner to see what they want to do next and whether or not they will want to proceed with obtaining a conditional use permit and going through the hearing process.

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Brief discussion was held regarding a conditional use hearing that is scheduled for February 15th in regards to the Red Rock Quarry.

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Commissioner Kuecker mentioned that Family Service Agency had recently received a letter from Assistant County Attorney Nick Anderson in regards to pre-placement screening meetings. County Attorney Storey said that he would look into the matter.

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It was noted that Jean Fast extended an invitation to all of the Commissioners to attend the Southern Minnesota Tourism Association meeting on February 16th & 17th at the Guardian Inn. She also mentioned that if the board would ever like her to give an update on SMTA, she would be happy to do so.

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Auditor/Treasurer Johnson mentioned that he received a refund from Murray County in the amount of \$15,305.29 for recycling.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to allow Chairman Severson to sign Understanding of Services with State Auditors Office.

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Information was shared regarding Fitness Center participation through Blue Cross Blue Shield. It seems that Blue Cross Blue Shield participants can now be reimbursed a certain portion of their monthly dues if they join a qualified fitness center and attend at least 8 times throughout the month. Since the county is self-insured, there would be an administrative fee of \$1.39/participant/month for this service. The board took no action on this matter.

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Discussion was held regarding Demo/Clean-Up Committee. The current balance as of 12/31/05 was \$23,345.81. Motion by Holmen, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote not to reappoint Demo/Clean-Up Committee but to maintain Demo/Clean-Up fund with all applications to begin coming before the county board.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve two applications submitted from the City of Mt. Lake to pay 50% of demo landfill charges. The first request is for a house at 1019 9th Avenue in Mt. Lake, which will be demolished and the second request is for the demolition of two small houses on the property adjacent to Heritage Estates.

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Chairman Severson gave a brief update in regards to a Highway 60 meeting that he recently attended. He stressed that legislators need to be contacted so that we can let ourselves be known in Southwestern Minnesota.

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Commissioner Oeltjenbruns gave a brief update regarding the DAC building proposal. They have not yet obtained a quote.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Chuck Severson, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Bd. Adm. Assistant