

January 28, 2014  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Vice Chairman Tom White. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Tom White, Norm Holmen, Kevin Stevens, John Oeltjenbruns; County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; Kathy Marsh, Gordy Olson, JinYeene Neumann, Leslie Makovsky, Jason Purrington, Rahn Larson, Andy Olson, and Elmer Wieneke. Absent was Chairman Jim Schmidt.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2014 meeting.

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Brief update was given regarding an accident that happened on the Courthouse steps.

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Brief update was given on the list of legislative issues that MRCC (Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus) has for possible consideration during the coming legislative session.

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Gordy Olson, Interim Planning & Zoning/Parks Administrator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Discussion was held regarding the unsealed well at the Highway 71 Building. Olson will look into seeing if the well is operational and then report back to the board at a future meeting.

Discussion was held regarding re-siding and re-roofing the maintenance building at Talcot Park and the purchase of a lawnmower. Olson will get quotes for the maintenance building and quotes for a lawnmower to present to the board at a future meeting.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to recess as the County Board and to convene as the Ditch Authority.

Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to set the hearing date for Cottonwood and Jackson Joint County Ditches #27 and #54 for Monday, March 17 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse.

Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set the hearing date for Cottonwood County Ditch #2 for Tuesday, March 4 at 9:05 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse.

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

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Discussion was held in consideration of making the County Attorney position fulltime as of January 1, 2015. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous roll call vote (Chairman Schmidt was absent) to adopt resolution as follows:

**Resolution 14-01-28A**

**WHEREAS**, the county board of any county in Minnesota by resolution may provide that the office of the county attorney shall be a full-time position and require that one elected to the office not engage in the private practice of law.

**WHEREAS**, if the office of county attorney is made a full-time position, the action shall be taken at the January meeting prior to the first date on which applicants may file for the office of county attorney. The salary shall be set by the county board as provided in section 388.18, subdivision 2.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners approved changing the office of the county attorney to a full-time position beginning January 1, 2015.

DATED: January 28, 2014

S/Tom White, Board Vice Chairman

S/Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Discussion was held regarding consideration of approving a one week leave of absence for Assistant County Attorney Lori Buchheim. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow Lori Buchheim a one week unpaid leave of absence from January 27 to February 2, 2014.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow Commissioner Oeltjenbruns to attend a pipeline meeting in St. James.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to pay MACO Conference hotel and meal expenses incurred by the County Recorder in the amount of \$643.62.

\* \* \* \*

JinYeene Neumann, County Engineer, met with the board to discuss a few items. Neumann asked for a motion for the appointment of Solid Waste Administrator. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to appoint Kyle Pillatzki as the Solid Waste Administrator. Discussion regarding the stipend for this position was tabled until the next meeting.

Neumann also presented information in regards to the landfill property rental lease. The ad for sealed bids will be placed in the paper and sealed bids will be brought to the February 25 board meeting.

Discussion was held on the Assistant Solid Waste Administrator job description. The job description was acceptable as presented but it was noted that during interviews it should be specified that the person will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the landfill.

Discussion was held regarding a hog barn that burned down in SW Minnesota and Cottonwood County was contacted as to disposing of them at the landfill. The board agreed that more information was needed before deciding if the ground carcasses should be brought into the county.

Motion by Stevens, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow Kyle Pillatzki to attend Waste Expo in Atlanta April 28 through May 1, 2014 and to pay expenses for travel, hotel, and meals.

Neumann presented a state quote from SHI for three laptops, two docking stations, and 1 desktop computer for the Highway Department at the cost of \$3,860.00. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept the state computer quote from SHI in the amount of \$3,860.00.

Neumann presented a 5-year plan for road and bridge construction jobs that are planned within the county.

Discussion was held regarding the Jeffers tower that the county owns. Neumann will look into options of leasing or selling.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote (Chairman Schmidt was absent) to adopt resolution as follows:

**Cottonwood County Board  
Resolution 14-01-28**

WHEREAS: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires that states agree to operate and maintain facilities constructed with federal transportation funds for the useful life of the improvement and not change the use of right of way or property ownership acquired without prior approval from the FHWA; and

WHEREAS: Transportation Alternatives Projects receive federal funding; and

WHEREAS: the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has determined that for projects implemented with alternative funds, this requirement should be applied to the project proposer; and

WHEREAS: Cottonwood County is the sponsoring agency for the Transportation Alternatives Project identified as Winfair Building student drop off area,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the sponsoring agency in conjunction with the Windom Area School District hereby agrees to assume full responsibility for the operation and maintenance of property and facilities related to the aforementioned Transportation Alternatives Project.

DATED: January 28, 2014

S/Tom White, Board Vice Chairman

S/Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Neumann reported that the wheelage tax has collected \$8,640 so far in December for Cottonwood County but the county has not yet seen any of the funds.

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Discussion was held in regards to the county offices 2-hour late start on Monday, January 27.

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Elmer Wieneke, seasonal camper, presented some concerns he has at Talcot Park. Concerns were noted and will be addressed by the Parks department.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Thongvivong presented the 2013 Pay Equity report that was submitted.

An update was presented regarding the compensation committee. An email has been sent out to department heads asking for volunteers that might be interested in serving on this committee. Thongvivong would like to have the committee in place soon so that the committee can begin working on salary comparisons and bringing recommendations to the board by July 1<sup>st</sup>. The board stated they would like monthly updates as to the progress of this committee.

Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to enter into a contract with RtVision for electronic timecards throughout the county at a cost of \$35,398.

Thongvivong asked for clarification as to the job duties concerning plumbing that the Building and Grounds Worker at the Law Enforcement Center does. The board advised Thongvivong to contact MCIT and let them decide as to the extent of plumbing that should be done.

Discussion was held in regard to succession planning within the county and that the county should become proactive. The board told Thongvivong to bring this up at a department head meeting and bring back comments to the board.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to give a 1.5% wage increase to Gordy Olson and increase his cell phone allowance to \$60 per month retroactive to January 1, 2014.

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Discussion was held in regard to the Planning and Zoning/Parks Administrator position. More discussion will be held after the February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting with Jackson County.

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, gave an update regarding the applications that she received for the 80% time Extension Office Manager position. She reported that four applicants were interviewed. Thongvivong recommended that the board allow her to hire Pam Hogan at a rate of \$14.79/hour (Step 2). Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to hire Pam Hogan for the Extension Office Manager position effective February 18<sup>th</sup> and contingent upon successful completion of the pre-employment requirements.

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Commissioner White thanked Rahn Larson of the *Citizen* for his attending board meetings and reporting on the possible purchase of a new building. Other options for land and buildings have been brought to the attention of the board because of the articles. The chairman and vice chairman will continue to pursue options for a possible building purchase.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

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Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Tom White, Board Vice Chairman

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator