

September 18, 2018  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 18, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Tom Appel, Donna Gravley, Kevin Stevens, Norm Holmen, Jim Schmidt; County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong, County Attorney Nick Anderson, Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson, Kathy Marsh, Nick Klisch, Jed Rhubee, Cathleen Amick, Drew Hage, Gale Bondhus, Dave Bucklin, and Rahn Larson.

Chairman Gravley called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Motion by Schmidt, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Holmen, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the September 4, 2018 regular board meeting as amended.

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A public hearing was held in regard to the sale of Sara Park. No opposition to the selling of this park was heard prior to or at the meeting. Motion by Schmidt, second by Holmen, to hold an auction at Sara Park on Saturday, October 13, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. for the sale of Sara Park and to set the minimum bid at \$7,500. Voting Aye – Schmidt, Stevens, Holmen, and Gravley. Commissioner Appel abstained.

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Dave Bucklin, SWCD District Technician, met with the board to get approval for the FY2019 Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Program Grant Agreement. Motion by Stevens, second by Appel, unanimous vote to approve the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) MPCA FY2019 SSTS Program Grant Agreement totaling \$18,600.

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Cathleen Amick, United Community Action, met with the board to discuss a few items. Amick gave a review of the transit program, program wide and specific to Cottonwood County.

Amick informed the board that as per the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan, the 2013 Ford Elkhart passenger bus has been selected for capital replacement funding in 2019. Amick stated that Cottonwood County had given Community Transit reserve funds in 2013 earmarked for future bus replacement and that there is still \$20,124.19 in the fund. Amick asked the board if they would like to keep the funds in reserve and budget the 20% local share cost in the amount of \$16,600. Motion by Appel, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to use the funds in the Community Transit reserve fund to purchase a new bus in 2019. (Commissioner Schmidt was absent at time of vote).

Amick presented a draft copy of the 2019 Fare Policy and asked the board for approval. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the 2019 Fare Policy as presented.

Amick also asked the board for support to perform a fare study and acquire new technology to obtain and track fares. Motion by Schmidt, second by Stevens, to support the implementation of automated fare collection software and give consent to move forward with a fare study that will provide recommendations for fares beyond 2019. Voting Aye – Stevens, Schmidt, Appel and Gravley. Voting Nay -

Holmen. Motion passed.

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Drew Hage, Windom EDA Director, stated that he has received a Home Initiative application from Joel and Dawn Luitjens for a new, single family home. Hage stated that all requirements to date have been met so a public hearing date needs to be set. Motion by Schmidt, second by Stevens, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 18-09-18 as follows:

**Resolution 18-09-18**

Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing on Proposed  
Tax Abatement for New Residential Project

**WHEREAS**, Cottonwood County is committed to the best interests of the citizens of Cottonwood County; and

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statutes §469.1813 gives authority to a County to grant an abatement of taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to the statutory requirements, on December 13, 2016, the Cottonwood County Commissioners approved the Cottonwood County Home Initiative Guidelines (the "Guidelines") and program documentation; and

**WHEREAS**, Joel Luitjens and Dawn Luitjens, husband and wife, (the "Luitjens") are the owners of the following described real estate within Cottonwood County, Minnesota:

Parcel #: 19-723-0050

Address of Property: 1139 Bingham Lake Drive, Bingham Lake, MN  
56118

Legal Description of Property: Lot 5 in Block 1 of Smith South Shore Addition in  
the City of Bingham Lake, Cottonwood County,  
Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, the Luitjens propose to a construct a new home on this property; and

**WHEREAS**, the Luitjens have requested tax abatement on this property pursuant to the Guidelines; and

**WHEREAS**, the abatement of taxes on the above-described parcel would be for the period of five (5) years commencing on the first year of taxes, payable for the assessed value related to the capital improvements, as outlined in the Guidelines; and

**WHEREAS**, based on an Estimated Market Value of \$400,000 for the new home and based on 2018 tax rates, the estimated tax abatement for Cottonwood County for this property would be approximately \$1,503 per year. The total estimated tax abatement by Cottonwood County for the five-year period is approximately \$7,515. (These figures were calculated using 2018 tax rates. The market value for the project is only an estimate, since the building has not been constructed and the tax rates will change each year.)

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statutes require that a public hearing be held prior to the approval of the proposed tax abatement.

Now, therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED by the COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR COTTONWOOD COUNTY, MINNESOTA**, as follows:

1. Public Hearing. A public hearing to consider the proposed tax abatement, as set forth above, shall be held on Tuesday, October 2, 2018, at 9:30 a.m. in the County Commissioners' Room in the Cottonwood County Courthouse, 900 Third Avenue, Windom, Minnesota.

2. Notice of Public Hearing. The Cottonwood County Auditor is authorized and directed to cause notice of the hearing to be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the County at least 10 days, but less than 30 days, prior to the date for the hearing. The public hearing notice shall include a description of the property for which the abatement is being considered and the total estimated amount of the proposed tax abatement based on current information.

Adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2018.

S/Donna L. Gravley, Board Chairman

S/Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Hage also received a Home Initiative application from LaCanne Funeral Homes, LLC for three new, single family homes. Hage stated that all requirements to date have been met so a public hearing date needs to be set. Motion by Schmidt, second by Holmen, unanimous roll call vote to approve resolution 18-09-18A as follows:

**Resolution No. 18-09-18A**

Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing on Proposed  
Tax Abatement for New Residential Project

**WHEREAS**, Cottonwood County is committed to the best interests of the citizens of Cottonwood County; and

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statutes §469.1813 gives authority to a County to grant an abatement of taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to the statutory requirements, on December 13, 2016, the Cottonwood County Commissioners approved the Cottonwood County Home Initiative Guidelines (the "Guidelines") and program documentation; and

**WHEREAS**, LaCanne Funeral Homes, LLC ("LaCanne") is the owner of the following described real estate within Cottonwood County, Minnesota:

Parcel #s: 25-362-0020, 25-362-0030, & 25-362-0040

Addresses of Properties: 2275 Seventh Avenue, Windom, MN 56101  
2265 Seventh Avenue, Windom, MN 56101  
2255 Seventh Avenue, Windom, MN 56101

Legal Descriptions of Properties: Lot 2, Block 1; Lot 3, Block 1; and Lot 4, Block 1 all in Hoffmann LaCanne Subdivision in the City of Windom, Cottonwood County, Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, LaCanne proposes to a construct a new home on each of the three lots listed above; and

**WHEREAS**, LaCanne has requested tax abatement on these three properties pursuant to the Guidelines; and

**WHEREAS**, the abatement of taxes on the above-described parcels would be for the period of five (5) years commencing on the first year of taxes, payable for the assessed value related to the capital improvements, as outlined in the Guidelines; and

**WHEREAS**, based on an Estimated Market Value of \$260,000 - \$280,000 (\$280,000) for each new home and based on 2018 tax rates, the estimated tax abatement for Cottonwood County for these properties would be approximately \$1,074 per year per home. The total estimated tax abatement by Cottonwood County for the five-year period for the three homes is approximately \$16,110. (These figures were calculated using 2018 tax rates. The market values for these projects are only estimates, since the buildings have not been constructed and the tax rates will change each year.)

**WHEREAS**, Minnesota Statutes require that a public hearing be held prior to the approval of the proposed tax abatement.

Now, therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED** by the **COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR COTTONWOOD COUNTY, MINNESOTA**, as follows:

1. Public Hearing. A public hearing to consider the proposed tax abatements, as set forth above, shall be held on Tuesday, October 2, 2018, at 9:35 a.m. in the County Commissioners' Room in the Cottonwood County Courthouse, 900 Third Avenue, Windom, Minnesota.
2. Notice of Public Hearing. The Cottonwood County Auditor is authorized and directed to cause notice of the hearing to be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the County at least 10 days, but less than 30 days, prior to the date for the hearing. The public hearing notice shall include a description of the properties for which the abatements are being considered and the total estimated amount of the proposed tax abatements based on current information.

Adopted this 18th day of September, 2018.

S/Donna L. Gravley, Board Chairman

S/Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, met with the board to discuss a few items. Motion by Stevens, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to promote Heather Janssen from part-time to full-time Jailer/Dispatcher effective September 19, 2018.

Thongvivong, on behalf of the Emergency Management Director, presented SafeAssure Contract Renewal. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to approve the 2019 SafeAssure renewal contract in the amount of \$7,651.31.

Thongvivong stated that Jenny Quade, Probation Officer, informed her that her copier/printer/scanner/fax is in need of replacement in 2019 and that she will not have enough in the 2019 Probation budget for this. Quade asked that an additional \$2,300 be put in the Probation budget for 2019. Motion by Stevens, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to budget \$3,000 in the Probation Long Term fund for 2019.

Thongvivong presented health insurance renewals for 2019. Thongvivong stated that the current \$6,350 deductible plan will not meet Affordable Care Act requirements and recommends moving to the \$6,750 plan. Thongvivong presented the options of \$2,250 deductible and \$3,375 deductible Select Rx plans and \$2,250 deductible and \$3,375 deductible Classic Rx plans. Thongvivong stated that BCBS will no longer offer the Select Rx plans in 2020. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to offer the following plans in 2019 - \$2,250/\$4,500 deductible Classic Rx plan, \$3,375/\$6,750 deductible Classic Rx plan, and the \$6,750/\$13,500 deductible Classic Rx plan.

Thongvivong informed the board that Kathy Kretsch, County Recorder, contacted her after the agenda was out regarding new desk quotes for the new employee in her office. Quotes received are as follows: Indoff Business Products - \$1,558.00 and 1 Office Solution – declined. Motion by Schmidt, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow the County Recorder to purchase a new desk from Indoff Business Products in the amount of \$1,558.00 from the Recorder's Long Term fund.

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Commissioner Holmen gave an update on PrimeWest.

Commissioner Appel gave an update on the AMC Fall Policy Conference that Commissioner Schmidt, Holmen and he attended on September 13 and 14. Appel also gave updates on the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Office Building and Counties Providing Technology (CPT).

Chairman Gravley appointed Commissioner Stevens to the utilities portion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Office Building.

Commissioner Schmidt informed the board that there is a possibility that a student from the Windom senior class may make the roof replacement on the building at Pat's Grove their senior project.

Commissioner Gravley informed the board that the Jeffers Wind Energy repowering meetings will be starting soon and asked that Commissioner Schmidt be involved in those meetings.

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Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer, informed the board that he has been contacted by the SWCD office that there is a landowner who has not paid a SSTS Construction Permit Fee of \$150 for a compliance inspection and has requested that it be placed on the county tax roll as an assessment. Motion by Schmidt, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to place an assessment of \$150 for an unpaid SSTS permit fee on the landowner's taxes payable in 2019.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve September warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 53,702.97
Long Term Capital Outlay	\$ 1,504.60
County Building Fund	\$ 12,475.60
Taxes and Penalties Fund	\$ 6,210.98
County Revenue Fund	\$ 4,522.37
Road and Bridge Fund	\$ 62,477.39
Waste Abatement/Score Fund	\$ 5,615.35
Landfill Enterprise Fund	<u>\$ 57,815.90</u>
	\$204,325.16

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After discussion on the proposed 2019 budget, motion by Stevens, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to set the preliminary levy for 2019 at \$10,737,941, which is an increase of 3% from the 2018 levy and as per state levy limit requirements.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

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Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Donna L. Gravley, Board Chair

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Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator