

August 28, 2012
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 28, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Chairman Norm Holmen. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Jim Schmidt, Tom White, Ron Kuecker; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Ron Gregg, Jenny Quade, Todd Dibble, Andy Geiger, Kay Clark, Gale Bondhus, Jan Fransen, Farley Grunig, Tyler Clark, Clark Lingbeck, Dave Bucklin and Steve Nasby.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2012 meeting as amended.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to present the 2013 proposed budget for the Highway Department. Gregg mentioned the projects that are currently scheduled for 2013 as well as the funding sources for some of those projects. Gregg also presented proposed equipment purchases for the Highway Department. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of an extended bond term. Further discussion will be held at the next board meeting regarding the overall budget.

Gregg presented a draft copy of a document entitled "Cottonwood County Bonding Project \$2,000,000 County Road Repairs" along with a map for the board's review.

A proposed agenda for the September 13th Cottonwood County Highway Department Tour was presented.

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Jenny Quade, Probation Officer, met with the board to present the 2013 proposed budget for the Probation Office. Quade invited the board to attend a presentation entitled "Domestic Violence Investigation & Intervention" that will be held on September 13th at the BARC Building.

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Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to accept 2013 snowmobile maintenance grant agreement in the amount of \$101,576.40 and to authorize Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson to sign. This is a Cottonwood County grant, which covers trails in Jackson County as well.

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Veterans Service Officer Todd Dibble met with the board to present the 2013 proposed budget for the Veterans Office.

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County Attorney Nick Anderson presented a budget change request for the board to consider for the purchase of additional IT equipment that is necessary for his office as part of the MCAPS system. Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns,

unanimous vote to grant Anderson's request for an increase in the amount of \$25,000 to the County Attorney's 2012 budget.

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A complaint was recently received regarding a potential violation of Ordinance No. 37 "Ordinance Regulating Dangerous Dogs in Cottonwood County". After reviewing the ordinance and all documentation provided as well as the three incident reports provided by the Sheriff's Department, there was a motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White to determine that the dog is dangerous and to authorize that the dog be destroyed based upon Section 4 "Authority to Order Destruction" of Ordinance No. 37. Voting as follows: Aye – Oeltjenbruns, White, Schmidt and Holmen. Nay – Kuecker. Motion carried.

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Andy Geiger, Planning & Zoning/Parks/Solid Waste Administrator, met with the board to present the 2013 proposed budgets for the Environmental Office, Parks Department, Landfill, SCORE budget and Food, Beverage & Lodging. Geiger shared his thoughts regarding his desire to hire another full-time Landfill Operator position, which he feels would be justified as there is enough work to warrant another position.

Geiger presented information regarding the impact that increased fees at the landfill has generated. The total income at the landfill has increased by \$5,126.16 for the 1st through the 24th of August due to the price increases that went into effect on August 1st.

Geiger presented further information regarding efficiencies gained at the Parks Department this year due to operational changes that were made by Geiger, which has proved to be very cost effective.

Geiger presented a conditional use permit granted to Douglas Kuehl, Westbrook Township, to build a 30 x 80 storage unit. It was reported that there was no opposition at the hearing. Motion by Schmidt, second by White, unanimous vote to grant the conditional use permit to Douglas Kuehl based on a recommendation of the Planning Commission with four conditions as mentioned.

Discussion was held regarding the possibility of a joint venture with Jackson County for services such as Planning & Zoning/Solid Waste/Landfill/Parks that has been discussed between the two counties as the result of two recent vacancies in Jackson County. Motion by White, second by Schmidt to spend one month in preliminary exploration with Jackson County to see how a joint Planning & Zoning Administrator/Solid Waste position would work financially. Voting as follows: Aye – White, Schmidt and Holmen. Nay – Oeltjenbruns and Kuecker. Motion carried.

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Kay Clark, SWCD District Administrator, met with the board to present the 2013 budget agreement between Cottonwood County and SWCD. The budgeted amount for 2013 is \$107,000. Motion by White, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to accept the budget agreement as presented.

Clark presented the Cottonwood County Natural Resources Block Grant FY13 budget in the amount of \$108,345. Motion by White, second by Schmidt,

unanimous vote to approve the Cottonwood County NRBG FY13 budget as presented.

Clark reported that she recently attended the Board of Water and Soil Resources Regional Meeting in Marshall. Questions regarding the amended Water Plan were the focus of the meeting. Clark will plan to attend a future meeting for the adoption of the Cottonwood County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan Amendment.

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County Assessor Gale Bondhus met with the board to present contracts with two local assessors for the boards' approval. Motion by Schmidt, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the contracts as presented.

Bondhus also asked for permission for four employees in the Assessors Office to attend a Property Valuation Course in New Ulm on October 31st & November 1st at a cost of \$150/person and to use the county credit card. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to approve the request to attend this training.

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Steve Nasby, City of Windom Administrator, met with the board on behalf of Aaron Backman, Windom Economic Development Director, to request consideration of a public hearing for the establishment of a tax abatement program for Global Investment Properties (Big Game Treestands). Motion by White, second by Schmidt to adopt Resolution 12-08-28 calling for a public hearing on the establishment of a tax abatement program. Roll call vote as follows: Aye – White, Schmidt, Oeltjenbruns and Holmen. Nay – Kuecker. Motion carried.

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County Assessor Gale Bondhus suggested the development of an economic abatement policy for the county. Bondhus agreed to do some research on this matter for possible adoption of a policy at a future time.

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

Due to the fact that the viewers of the JD #31 improvement do not think it will be possible to get their work done in time for the public hearing, there was a motion by Schmidt, second by White, unanimous vote to cancel the JD #31 public hearing, which will be rescheduled at a later date once the viewers have completed their work.

Commissioner Oeltjenbruns gave an update regarding an issue that he has been involved with in regards to County Ditch 37.

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

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Discussion was held regarding information received from the Minnesota Department of Education regarding the 2013 minimum level of financial support to be provided for operating expenses for public library services to be eligible for

participation in the regional public library system programs pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 134.34. Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns to allow Cottonwood County to pay the state certified level of library support for 2013 in the amount of \$51,270. Voting as follows: Aye – White, Oeltjenbruns, Kuecker and Holmen. Nay – Schmidt. Motion carried.

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Discussion was held regarding the Blue Cross Blue Shield renewal for 2013 as well as the possibility of being able to accept bids for other health insurance coverage. A copy of the agreement with the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative will be requested for further review. Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns to approve renewal with Blue Cross Blue Shield for two insurance plans to be offered in 2013. Voting as follows: Aye – White, Oeltjenbruns, Kuecker and Holmen. Nay – Schmidt. Motion carried.

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Brief discussion was held regarding a meeting that would be held tonight in regards to the long-range plans for the Windom City Arena.

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Comments were made regarding the wonderful job that Andy Geiger has been doing since becoming an employee of Cottonwood County and the superb job he did with raising prices at the landfill to generate additional funds. A comment was also made regarding the difference in pay between Cottonwood and Jackson Counties for similar positions.

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Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson handed out budget levy forms and different scenarios that will be discussed further at the next board meeting.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Norm Holmen, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant