

April 26, 2011  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 26, 2011 at 1:00 p.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; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Jason Purrington, Andy Geiger, Ron Gregg, Gale Bondhus, Joe Fick, Frank Jarman, Rahn Larson, Mary Ellen Suhrhoff, Perry Zieske, Dave Bucklin, Wendy Meyer, Rich Meyer, Kenneth Yoder, Rachel Yoder, Kay Clark, Lloyd Kalfs, Tom Muller and Alan Coners.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2011 meeting as amended. Voting aye: Holmen, Schmidt, White. Voting nay: Oeltjenbruns and Kuecker. Motion carried. Commissioners Oeltjenbruns and Kuecker opposed the amendment of the paragraph relating to septic systems.

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Sheriff Jason Purrington met with the board for approval to pay an invoice for radio equipment that was purchased with PSIC grant money. He needs to provide proof that payment was made and he would like to take the check along to the Regional Radio Board meeting that will be held next Wednesday. Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to allow for the payment of radio equipment.

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Joe Fick and Frank Jarman met with the board representing Independent Emergency Services (IES) and Cassidian Communications. They gave a presentation regarding the 911 Evolution and NG 9-1-1 migration path for Sentinel users. This system would be an upgrade to the county's existing 911 system in the Sheriff's Department. This upgrade would also include new phones, a voice mail option and abilities for new medias for the Sheriff's Department. The base system cost is \$169,263.48 and four additional years of maintenance would be \$26,523.40. Purrington currently receives approximately \$7,100 in the 911 fund each month which could be used for such a purchase. This will be discussed again at a future time.

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Parks Director Andy Geiger met with the board to discuss several items. Geiger reported that interviews were held for summer seasonal help at Talcot Park. He recommends that the board hire two part-time maintenance workers and one part-time entry station attendant for Talcot Park. Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to hire James Burton and Ron Willard for the seasonal maintenance positions and Eric Jass for the seasonal entry

station position contingent upon successful completion of all hiring requirements. James Burton will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> year hire and Ron Willard and Eric Jass will be 1<sup>st</sup> year hires.

Geiger asked that the board consider allowing Leslie Makovsky and himself to receive a cell phone allowance for work related calls that they have been making/receiving on their own personal cell phones. Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow a cell phone allowance in the amount of \$20/month for Geiger year round and for Leslie Makovsky effective April 1<sup>st</sup> until the parks close for the season. Proof of a cell phone plan has to be provided to the Auditor/Treasurer's Office annually.

Geiger presented his recommendation for selling ice at Talcot Park for the camping season. Geiger reported that Glacier Ice would be supplying 5 lb. bags and 20 lb. bags for sale at Talcot Park. The county will pay Glacier Ice \$1.36 for a 5 lb. bag and \$3.70 for a 20 lb. bag. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to allow the county to sell ice at Talcot Park at a rate of \$3.00 for a 5 lb. bag and \$5.00 for a 20 lb. bag which includes tax.

Geiger gave an update about what he found out about the possibility of selling firewood at Talcot Lake. He reported that the only company he heard back from was Kolander Tree Service. The cost for a cord of wood from Kolander would be \$150. He reported that Kolander Tree Service would split and deliver the wood but would not be responsible for bundling it. Geiger was asked to do some further checking to see if he can purchase the wood for a cheaper price.

Brief discussion was held regarding Mountain Park. It was reported that the wheels to the gate of the entrance are broken and there is some concern with possible vandalism to the park in the meantime. Geiger and Commissioner Oeltjenbruns will plan to visit Mountain Park in the near future.

Geiger reported that a Pepsi machine will remain at Talcot Park and will be handled exclusively by the Pepsi Company. They will stock the pop machine and handle all the money so the county does not have to do anything with it. A one time payment will be made from the Pepsi Company to Cottonwood County at the end of the summer.

Commissioner Schmidt gave an update regarding the condition of the county-owned camper at Talcot Park. Schmidt believes that the camper is still in fairly good shape and should be sold as is. Geiger will try to work on a plan of getting the camper moved from Talcot Park so that it can be advertised for sale.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to discuss several items. Gregg reviewed the status of federal projects SP 17-613-38 and SP 17-090-001. The Civil Rights Department of MnDOT cleared project SP 17-613-38 for final award. Gregg recommended the award of project SP 17-613-38 to Knife River Corporation for the surfacing of CSAH 13. Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to award the bid for project SP 17-613-38 in the amount of \$3,050,684.30 to Knife River Corporation.

Gregg reported that no word has been received from the Civil Rights Department on the federal project SP 17-090-001 the Mt. Lake Trail Project. County Attorney Nick Anderson and Mary Ellen Suhrhoff (Attorney for the City of Mt. Lake) will work together to update a resolution on behalf of the City of Mt. Lake so that Cottonwood County does not have any liabilities in regards to the Mt. Lake Trail.

Gregg received comments/suggestions from the board in regards to possible changes to the monthly budget report.

Gregg reported on his findings regarding the hiring of an employment agency to help with the process of finding a qualified landfill operator. The board decided against hiring an employment agency at this time. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to post internally for one week and then to advertise for the landfill operator position.

Gregg reported that he was recently contacted by Hometown Sanitation in regards to the possibility of accepting waste from Martin County for a one-time clean-up day for the City of Trimont. Gregg reported that at some point he needs to begin the process of updating the Solid Waste Management Plan. Because the request from Martin County is for a one time event, there was a motion by Schmidt, second by Oeltjenbruns to honor the request for a one-time clean-up for the City of Trimont. Voting as follows: Aye – Schmidt, Oeltjenbruns, Holmen and Kuecker. Abstaining from the vote was Commissioner White. Motion carried.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to accept Tiffany Harder's resignation as Clerk Typist II with appropriate payout of benefits. Tiffany Harders' last day of employment with Cottonwood County will be May 11<sup>th</sup>.

It was reported that Gary Wood has requested an Exit Interview before his last day of employment which will be granted to him. Commissioner Kuecker and Kelly Thongvivong will set up a time to meet with him in the next few days.

Gregg will organize a going away party for Gary Wood.

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Discussion was held regarding septic systems and how the county plans to manage the arrangements between Cottonwood County and SWCD. Currently Alan Coners is licensed to design, inspect, install and clean septic systems. The information that was sent out for the board's review was discussed. The board agreed to utilize Alan Coners' services and to allow him to help with the septic system needs of Cottonwood County since he is already an existing employee and has the necessary license and training. He will then serve as a mentor to Andy Geiger and Lloyd Kalfs in the interim period of them beginning the process to become licensed to work on septic systems themselves. County Assessor Gale Bondhus will remain as Alan Coners' main supervisor and together they will work with all the other parties involved. Motion by Schmidt, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to promote Alan Coners to permanent full-time status effective May 1<sup>st</sup> and to grant him a one step increase

to Step 10 on the 2011 matrix. His salary will be split 75% (Assessor's Office) and 25% (Environmental).

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to set Highway Road Tour for May 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m.

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County Assessor Gale Bondhus met with the board to discuss a few items. Bondhus presented two quotes for a pedestal desk/console shell/mobile pedestal file/2 drawer file cabinet as follows: Indoff Business Products - \$1,635.00 and Livewire Printing Company - \$1,470.15. Bondhus also presented two quotes for 3 office chairs as follows: Indoff Business Products - \$1,269.00 and Livewire Printing Company - \$1,234.77. Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to accept the low quotes from Livewire Printing Company in the amounts of \$1,470.15 and \$1,234.77.

Bondhus presented information to the board regarding the concept of "True County" Assessing. According to "True County" Assessing, any county in the state of Minnesota, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, is authorized and empowered to provide for the assessment of all taxable property in the county by the county assessor. The Assessor's Office is currently responsible for the assessment of 16 of the 25 cities/townships in Cottonwood County. The election to provide for the assessment of all property in the county by the county assessor shall be made by the board of county commissioners by resolution. This will be discussed further at the next board meeting.

Bondhus reported that the Assessor's Office received a rebate from the City of Windom in the amount of \$720 for new lighting that was recently added to the newly remodeled Assessor's Office. Bondhus also reported that the rebate will end on December 31<sup>st</sup> if there is a need in any other offices for new lighting.

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Brief discussion was held regarding Sentence to Serve. There are some concerns that the county does not always seem to be the first priority with work that needs to be completed. This will be discussed further at the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting when Brad Odegard, STS, meets with the board.

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The board reviewed the Cottonwood County lease listing that was put together by Karla Ambrose. It was noted that the transit garage lease is obsolete. The dispatching services for the City of Westbrook and the City of Mt. Lake were questioned as there does not seem to be a standing contract at this time. It was suggested that each of these leases be reviewed approximately 2 -3 months before the lease is due to expire.

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Commissioner Holmen gave an update regarding a recent meeting that was held to discuss FLSA and overtime hours. Holmen reported that he shared with the group (Jason Purrington, Ron Gregg, Jan Johnson and Kelly Thongvivong) the board's intent to begin reducing overtime hours by upwards of

50% or more. Holmen mentioned that discussion was held regarding cross-training of employees within a department as well as the possibility of using flex time in place of overtime whenever possible. Holmen handed out a draft copy of an overtime form and reported that Family Services and the Sheriff's Department currently use a similar form for all of their employees that needs to be filled out when claiming any overtime hours. It was suggested that the other Department Heads begin documenting employee overtime hours in a similar format as well.

Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson handed out the overtime report that showed cumulative overtime hours through March. The board requested that this report show monthly as well as cumulative overtime hours in the future.

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Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to allow the commissioners to receive a per diem for the Blandin Foundation meeting that will be held on the evening of May 3<sup>rd</sup> if they choose to attend.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to authorize payment of 2011 appropriation in the amount of \$1,000 to Travel Southwest.

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Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson handed out a worksheet that is designed to assist a local unit of government in examining aspects of a position to determine whether the worker holding it is an independent contractor, or an employee who may be subject to the laws governing the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA).

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

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Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Ron Kuecker, Board Chairman

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Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant