

December 27, 2011  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, December 27, 2011 at 9:00 a.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, Tom White, Ron Kuecker; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Ron Gregg, Todd Dibble, Andy Geiger, Greg Walsh, Rahn Larson, Wally Hunter, George Robinson, Anne Robinson, Geoffrey Johnson, Scott Hill, Jim Johnson, Brent Staples, Alan Staples, Ron Maurer and Klay Walinga. Absent was Commissioner Jim Schmidt.

Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by White, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2011 meeting as amended.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to discuss several items. Gregg presented a list of additional used equipment that he would like permission to sell on GovDeals, which is an online auction service that he was already approved to use. Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow Gregg to sell equipment as presented on GovDeals online auction site.

Gregg presented a new 2012 SCORE (Recycling) and Landfill budget as a result of the new single stream recycling program. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to accept 2012 SCORE (Recycling) budget as presented. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to accept 2012 amended landfill budget as presented.

Discussion was held regarding the Long Term Capital Outlay fund that was built using SCORE (Recycling) fund transfers and currently totaling \$67,100. Gregg recommended using \$35,000 of this fund for the construction of a new household hazardous waste facility at the landfill and to have the remaining funds placed in the SCORE (Recycling) account as reserves. No action was taken at this time.

Gregg presented a request from two employees at the Highway Department to allow them to donate unused vacation hours (28 hours total) to a fellow employee that they will lose at the end of the year if not used. The request was acknowledged and will be discussed at the next board meeting for further action.

A few questions were asked of Gregg. Gregg reported that the loan to the Highway Department from the Revenue Fund is currently \$800,000. He also reported that at the end of 2011 the Highway Department was fully staffed.

Andy Geiger, Planning & Zoning Administrator/Parks Director, and Todd Dibble, Veterans Officer, met with the board to ask permission to reconfigure Leslie Makovsky's work area so that it is more user-friendly for the two departments she works for on a daily basis. The two quotes received were as follows: Davis Typewriter - \$950.00 and Indoff Business Products - \$1206.00. Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow for the purchase of the HON office furniture for \$950.00 + tax from Davis Typewriter. This purchase will be made from the Long Term Capital Outlay funds from the N. 71 Building.

Geiger and Dibble discussed Leslie Makovsky's position as well as her salary. Leslie Makovsky's stipend that she has been receiving each month will end December 31, 2011. A suggestion was made by Kelly Thongvong to ask that Leslie Makovsky fill out a new job questionnaire as was required of all employees when Wayne Brede completed the county's pay study. Wayne Brede will then work to develop a job description and job title for Leslie's position. Once the job description is approved by the board it will be sent to Ann Antonsen, Springsted Incorporated, for possible re-pointing on the Hay System.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve Association of Minnesota (AMC) dues for 2012 as follows: AMC - \$6,728; LPHA - \$688; MACSSA - \$781.

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Discussion was held regarding possible consideration to add steps to the pay matrix for the Office Support Specialist Sr. position, as there are currently only 12 steps on the pay scale instead of the typical 15 steps. The consensus of the board seemed to be that they were opposed to adding additional steps since this position currently follows the guidelines of the merit pay scale.

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Information Services Director Greg Walsh met with the board to present the counter-proposal from Watonwan County for the Email Services Agreement. Motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote to approve Email Services Agreement with Watonwan County as presented today.

A state quote for the purchase of a new laptop to replace the old laptop for the Extension Office was presented as follows: Dell - \$959. Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow for the purchase of a new laptop for an amount not to exceed \$959 and to allow for the usage of the county credit card for this purchase.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to approve 2011 budget adjustments as presented and as follows: 31.061.6275 – increase from \$25,000 to \$83,000; 31.061.6301 – increase from \$25,000 to \$131,000; 06.111.6632 – increase from \$0 to \$14,562; 06.203.5899 – increase from \$0 to \$23,000; 06.281.5899 – increase from \$0 to \$26,000; 01.201.6835 – increase from \$298,000 to \$457,500 for 60% of invoice for delivery of Motorola console.

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

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set ditch levies for 2012 based on recommendations from each commissioner.

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

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The proposed addition of duties to the Board Executive Assistant position was presented to the board for their review. Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the addition of duties to the existing position. Kelly Thongvivong will fill out a new job questionnaire and send it to Wayne Brede, Human Resource Consultant, for development of an updated job description with additional duties. Once the job description is approved by the board it will be sent to Ann Antonsen, Springsted Incorporated, for possible re-pointing on the Hay System.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote to approve 2012 final budget in the amount of \$16,276,000 (revenues) and \$16,036,185 (expenditures) as presented by the Auditor/Treasurer.

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At the last board meeting, Sheriff Jason Purrington presented a quote in the amount of \$9,875 from Ron's Electric for electrical work to be done for the new UPS system for dispatch. Purrington was asked to try to get another quote for the electrical work. He contacted three additional vendors in reference to bidding the electrical work. Two of the vendors declined to submit a bid and the other vendor did not return any of the phone calls. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to accept the quote in the amount of \$9,875 from Ron's Electric.

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Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to adopt Fund Balance Policy as presented. This policy will become part of the Personnel Policy.

Motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote to accept Cottonwood County Board Fund Balance Designation as presented by the Auditor/Treasurer.

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Discussion was held regarding a request by one of the unions to change the policy relating to the catastrophic sick bank. The union would like to see that sick leave and catastrophic leave are used before any vacation hours are required to be used. The board would like more time to research this matter. No action was taken at this time.

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Brief discussion was held regarding eminent domain for the Des Moines River Valley State Trail. It was reported that two townships have already taken a stance on this issue and the DNR will not use eminent domain as per state

statute. With that being said, there was a motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote (Commissioner Jim Schmidt was absent) to move that we, the Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners, will not use the Right of Eminent Domain to allow the purchase of land from an unwilling seller for the purpose of establishing a recreational trail in Cottonwood County.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to increase the 2012 commissioner salary by \$400/year, which is an increase of less than 2.25% to \$19,270 and to keep the 2012 per diem rate at \$65/day and to again allow for a \$60 supplement to the salary each month to cover tech expenses. The board chairman will receive an additional \$500 for the year for additional duties.

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Brief update was given regarding union contracts. It was reported that three unions have already signed contracts and one is in the process of signing. The LELS deputy union has not yet agreed to the proposal as presented.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote to increase cell phone allowance from \$20/month to \$30/month effective January 1, 2012 for all employees that are allowed to get reimbursed.

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Discussion was held regarding a communication received from Andrew Roos, Blue Cross Blue Shield representative, relating to the PERA phased-retirement option. Since there is currently nothing in the county's personnel policy to address this issue, further research will be done so that a policy can be developed and presented to the board. This will be discussed again at the end of January. Commissioner Kuecker would like to see something in writing from Andrew Roos from an insurance standpoint in regards to the requirements.

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Discussion was held regarding recent financial questions that have come up regarding Cottonwood-Jackson Community Health Services. Chairman Holmen appointed Commissioner White to meet with Pat Stewart and Mary Bezdicek to seek further clarification regarding the financial questions.

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Commissioner Kuecker wanted to take this time to publicly thank Chairman Holmen for stepping in during the last two months of 2011 to fulfill Kuecker's remaining term as County Board Chairman so that he could pay closer attention to and take care of his recent medical issues.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

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Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Norm Holmen, Board Chairman

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Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant