

January 10, 2012
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 10, 2012 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, Jim Schmidt, Ron Kuecker; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Ken Leas, Donna Stresemann, Jason Purrington, Kim Hall, Rahn Larson and Craig Myers.

Motion by Kuecker, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2012 meeting.

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Ken Leas, AFSCME staff representative, met with the board in regards to his concerns with one of the employees at the landfill. Leas feels that Lonn Engler should not have to serve an additional 6-month probationary period after being promoted to Landfill Operator effective December 1, 2011 because even though his job title did not reflect it until that time, he had been working in that capacity since approximately May 1, 2011 after Gary Wood retired. Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns (Commissioner White abstained from the vote), unanimous vote to accept the AFSCME staff representatives recommendation to remove Lonn Engler from probation and to place him at his new rate of pay (\$14.04/hour) effective January 1, 2012. The County Engineer concurred with this recommendation.

Donna Stresemann met with the board to discuss the options she might have after her job is eliminated effective January 31, 2012 due to the abolishment of the Recycling Department. Ken Leas presented his suggestions for the board to consider and reported that Stresemann is currently certified as a Landfill Operator. After much discussion, there was a motion by Kuecker, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve the internal posting of a temporary part-time position for a Solid Waste Worker to be located at the Cottonwood County Landfill.

Motion by White, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to allow Donna Stresemann up to her last day of employment (January 31, 2012) to retire from her present position with Cottonwood County if she chooses to do so.

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Commissioner Kuecker reported that Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson, County Attorney Nick Anderson, Family Service Agency Director Craig Myers and himself recently met to draft a policy regarding the PERA phased-retirement option. A copy of the draft policy was presented to the board for their review. A few suggestions were made by the board. A final copy of the proposed policy will be presented at the next board meeting for consideration.

Sheriff Jason Purrington met with the board to discuss a few items. Purrington presented the I-Mobile Joint Powers Agreement for the board's consideration. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to allow Chairman Holmen and Auditor/Treasurer to sign 2012-2013 I-Mobile Joint Powers Agreement.

Purrington informed the board that the rental agreement with the Windom Police Department is due to expire in April. He questioned the process of determining the lease amount. The board suggested that he take into consideration past utility bills when determining the monthly rental rate for the new agreement. The board agreed that a 10-year agreement would be sufficient with a review of monthly rental rates every two years. Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to instruct the County Attorney to review the 10-year rental contract between Cottonwood County and the City of Windom and to add language into the new contract that states that the rate will be reviewed every two years.

No discussion was held regarding the MnDOT Cooperative Agreement at this time as no further information was yet available.

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Emergency Management Director Kim Hall met with the board in regards to consideration of her request for additional pay due to increased duties and responsibilities since being named as the Local System Administrator (LSA) for the ARMER system. Much discussion was held in regards to how long some of the increased workload will last since many of the additional hours will involve pre-requisite and initial training that will need to occur before the ARMER system is fully-implemented. A few different options such as updating the job description or the possibility of a stipend were discussed. Hall was instructed to keep track of her hours over the next few months and then to meet with the board again the end of March or beginning of April to discuss this further.

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve January warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$204,710.67
Ditch Fund	\$ 3,471.51
Road & Bridge	\$121,849.72
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 10,734.45
Landfill Enterprise	<u>\$ 14,524.10</u>
	\$355,290.45

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Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve Andy Geiger's recommendation to adopt 2012 camping rates as follows: Seasonal - \$1,050; Nightly R/V - \$22; Tent - \$14; Pumping - \$12; Seasonal Pass - \$10; Daily Pass - \$3. An administration fee of \$15 will be kept for all cancelled reservations in 2012.

Discussion was held regarding Southwestern Mental Health Center's request for Cottonwood County to loan them money and additional language that needs to be added to their existing Joint Powers Agreement. Commissioner Schmidt will be attending a meeting on Wednesday to discuss this further with SWMHC. A final document will be presented to the board at a later time for board approval.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to re-appoint Lowell Tjentland (2nd District) and Tom Fast (4th District) to another 3-year term on the Planning Commission.

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Chairman Holmen made 2012 AMC Policy Committee Appointments as follows: Environmental & Natural Resources Policy Committee – Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns; General Government Policy Committee – Commissioner Tom White; Health & Human Services Policy Committee – Commissioner Norm Holmen; Public Safety Policy Committee – Commissioner Jim Schmidt; Transportation Policy Committee – County Engineer Ron Gregg.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to accept Addendum B (non-union) as presented to the board for 2012 wage increases with the exception of Susan Miller (Social Service Supervisor) who will be handled separately.

Motion by White, second by Holmen to move Susan Miller to Step 5 of the 2011 pay matrix and then she will be granted an additional increase of ¾ of a step but not to exceed 2.25% for her new 2012 wage. Voting as follows: Aye – White, Holmen and Schmidt. Nay – Kuecker and Oeltjenbruns. Motion passed.

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Discussion was held regarding the four non-union employees that Department Heads requested special consideration for. Concerns were voiced regarding discrepancies with what was originally requested by Department Heads for consideration in November when performance evaluations were due, what was requested by Department Heads when Commissioners Schmidt and Oeltjenbruns met to discuss these requests and what was most recently being requested by Department Heads for consideration.

Motion by Schmidt, second by Kuecker to move Brenda Anderson (Deputy Auditor/Treasurer) from Step 7 to Step 8 on the 2012 matrix. Voting as follows: Aye – Schmidt and Kuecker. Nay – White, Oeltjenbruns and Holmen. Motion failed.

Discussion was held regarding the three remaining requests by Department Heads for consideration of an increase. No further action was taken on the other requests. It seems that the county needs to work on getting a more defined system in place to address possible "merit" increases.

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A few questions were asked in regards to payroll. The board agreed that the solid waste workers will be granted a ¾ step increase for the month of January 2012 as stated in the union contract.

The board agreed that the two non-union employees that will receive the \$525 lump sum payment for 2012 can be paid a one-time payment instead of two payments if they choose.

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Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson stated that Betty Twait should be taken off as clerk-hire status as she was grandfathered in several years ago.

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Brief discussion was held regarding the recent resignation of Mark Hanson, Windom EDA Director.

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A monthly trial balance was handed out for the board's review. It was noted that the loan to the Highway Department was \$600,000 at the end of 2011.

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Brief discussion was held regarding the Courthouse chimes. It was reported that the Lions Club actually has \$3,272.80 in the chimes fund that they will be transferring over to the county after July. A reserve fund will be set up for the Courthouse chimes so that these funds can be designated for that purpose.

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Brief discussion was held regarding 2012 appropriations. The Auditor/Treasurer will pay them as they are received other than those that are brought to the board each July for approval.

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Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow Kelly Thongvivong to attend training entitled "Human Resources for Anyone with Newly Assigned HR Responsibilities" on March 22, 2012 in Sioux Falls, SD.

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At the county board meeting on January 3, 2012 a closed meeting was held to discuss non-union Department Head performance evaluations. The following individuals were evaluated by the board for their consideration of a 2012 pay raise: Craig Myers – no deficiencies were noted; Gale Bondhus – no deficiencies were noted; Andy Geiger – no deficiencies were noted; Ron Gregg – deficiencies and improvements were noted; Todd Dibble – no deficiencies were noted; Kelly Thongvivong – no deficiencies were noted; Kim Hall – no deficiencies were noted. After coming out of the closed session, the board took action to set each individual Department Head's salary for 2012.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Norm Holmen, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant