

November 28, 2006
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, November 28, 2006 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, Gary Sorenson, Chuck Severson; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Doug Storey; Staci Veenker, Cheryl Hanson, Mike Hanson and Ron Gregg. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Holmen, second by Severson, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2006 meeting as amended.

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Staci Veenker, Courthouse employee, and Cheryl Hanson, Windom Chamber of Commerce, met with the board to ask for their consideration of allowing the Courthouse to be open on the evening of December 1st so that children can visit with Santa in front of the Christmas tree. Motion by Sorenson, second by Severson, unanimous vote to allow Windom Chamber of Commerce to use courthouse rotunda on December 1st beginning at 6:15pm when Santa arrives.

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Environmental Officer Mike Hanson met with the board to update them in regards to the 3 county ISTS Pilot Program. He presented copies of the letter, list of 71 residents, and final budget/work plan received from Bill Dunn on November 15, 2006 and agreed to by MPCA. Hanson reported that \$1,975.70 must be remitted to MPCA on or before December 1, 2006. There are 37 systems that will receive \$500 incentive money if installed and paperwork completed by December 31, 2007. Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to return \$1,975.70 to MPCA by December 1, 2006 and to modify final termination date of the program, which will now be December 31, 2007.

Hanson gave an update in regards to the Odin Wind Farm, which consists of five wind turbines in Cottonwood County and five wind turbines in Watonwan County. He reported that the conditional use hearings for the turbines in Cottonwood County would be held on December 6th beginning at 9:30am at the Environmental Office.

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The board reviewed a report that was received from the Department of Corrections in regards to the Sentencing to Service Program.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to allow Extension Office to donate old laptop that is no longer being used to the 4-H Program so that they are able to utilize the Quick Book Program.

Auditor/Treasurer Johnson reported that the final hearing regarding the alley assessment between Bank Midwest and United Medical Clinic as well as the 4th Avenue improvement project would be held on December 5th at 7:30pm in the City of Windom council chambers.

It was reported that the cost of the bookmobile contract would remain the same for 2007, which is \$800/month.

Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to accept 2007 Pandemic Flu Planning Grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. The amount that Cottonwood County Emergency Management will receive through this grant is \$7,268.

The board reviewed memo that will be sent out to all salaried revenue employees regarding accruals for vacation and sick leave. This memo will be sent out in the December 6th paychecks.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to discuss a few personnel issues. Motion by Kuecker, second by Severson, unanimous vote to instruct Ron Gregg to rescind his letter of November 14, 2006 terminating an employee in his Department. This individual should be informed of the need to return to full working duties as described in the job description. This individual shall also be informed of current ineligibility for FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act).

Discussion was held regarding current vacancy in the Jeffers shop of the Highway Department. It was reported that Gregg has received one intra-county request to fill the vacancy. No further action was taken at this time.

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Information in regards to the Truth in Taxation meeting was handed out for the board's review.

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The board reviewed a draft copy of a vehicle usage policy. There are a few things that may need to be revised so this will be discussed again at the next board meeting.

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Brief discussion was held in regards to the two options that were recently sent to the board from I & S Engineers & Architects regarding the remodeling project in the Commissioner's Room.

Chairman Kuecker had several miscellaneous items to discuss. He read an anonymous letter that was recently received by some of the board members in regards to the Sheriff's Department. Commissioners Holmen and Kuecker will meet with the Sheriff later in the week to discuss this further.

A copy of the letter that Chairman Kuecker received from Leslie Makovsky was shared with the board. Leslie will be contacted regarding the need for further information regarding her request.

A letter was received from Frank Madden & Associates in regards to their interest in providing efficient and cost effective labor relations and employment representation to Cottonwood County should the county ever need any assistance.

It was reported that Crystal Mohrhauser has recently been hired as the new Cottonwood County 4-H Program Coordinator. She will begin her duties on December 1, 2006.

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Update was given in regards to a recent grant application that was submitted by Kay Clark and Dave Bucklin, SWCD, on behalf of Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA). It was announced that GBERBA was recently awarded a grant in the amount of \$873,000.

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Commissioner Oeltjenbruns reappointed Cindy Garcia as a representative of District 5 to serve another 3-year term on the Extension Committee.

Oeltjenbruns gave a brief update in regards to the county wind initiative between the southwestern Minnesota region and the metro area.

Oeltjenbruns reported that there are still two counties that haven't yet approved the burn barrel resolution of support for the application of a grant through Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

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Commissioner Severson reported that Winifred Hoppert has served three consecutive 3-year terms with the Plum Creek Library Board and her current term will be expiring. If anyone has a suggestion for another appointment, let Severson know.

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Chairman Kuecker handed out some information that he has been compiling in regards to the county levy, health insurance and salaries that he wanted to share with the board.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Ron Kuecker, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Bd. Adm. Assistant