

August 10, 2010  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 10, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Chairman Tom White. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Tom White, Ron Kuecker, Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Gary Sorenson; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Doug Storey; Jason Purrington, Kristi Sell, Kim Hall, Todd Dibble, Ron Gregg, Liz Maiers, Becky Wiens, Rahn Larson and Dan Birkholz.

Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Sorenson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2010 meeting as amended.

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Sheriff Jason Purrington and Jail Administrator Kristi Sell met with the board to present the 2011 proposed budget for the Jail as well as the Sheriff's Department. Brief discussion was held regarding contracted dispatching fees and whether or not they should be increased for 2011. Purrington will research this matter.

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Emergency Management Director Kim Hall met with the board to present the 2011 proposed budget for Emergency Management as well as the Safety Program.

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Veterans Service Officer Todd Dibble met with the board to present the 2011 proposed budget for the Veterans Office.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to move Kim Hall (Emergency Management Director) to permanent full-time status effective August 22<sup>nd</sup> after successful completion of her 6-month probationary period. Hall will be granted a 1-step increase.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to discuss a few different items. Gregg reported that he recently conducted a 6-month evaluation on Roger Ambrose and that he recommends that Ambrose be placed under regular full-time status with all benefits and pay. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to move Roger Ambrose (HEO) to permanent full-time status effective August 16<sup>th</sup> after successful completion of his 6-month probationary period.

Gregg requested that the board review the salaries of the landfill employees. Gregg reported that Caleb Hanson has been taking on more responsibilities of a landfill operator and the pay does not reflect the added

responsibilities. After further discussion, there was a motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to re-classify Caleb Hanson as a Landfill Operator on Step 1 of the 2010 pay scale effective August 16<sup>th</sup> based on the Department Head's recommendation as well as additional responsibilities. Hanson was previously classified as a Solid Waste Worker.

Update was given regarding the e-waste collection that took place this past weekend. 2 ½ semi loads of e-waste were collected. On Friday 72 people used the service and on Saturday 45 people used the service.

Discussion was held regarding County Road 1 south of Mt. Lake and some of the concerns with collapses of the ditch and it not being safe to mow. The landowners in this area have concerns that this situation will not be taken care of and will be forgotten about.

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At 10:55 a.m., Chairman White excused himself from the meeting due to a possible conflict of interest so that discussion could be held regarding the consideration of findings from Deputy Sheriff Jeff LaCanne's investigation of Greg Johnson which was discussed at the August 3<sup>rd</sup> board meeting. Commissioner Kuecker presided over the meeting at this time.

After much discussion in regards to the situation, there was a motion by Sorenson, second by Holmen to request that the County Attorney prepare a Loudermill Hearing Notice for Greg Johnson for disciplinary action that could include dismissal. Roll call vote was as follows: Aye – Sorenson, Holmen, Oeltjenbruns and Kuecker. Commissioner White was not present.

Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to schedule a Special Meeting on August 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. so that a Loudermill Hearing can be held per request of Dan Birkholz (legal counsel) on behalf of Greg Johnson to conduct such a hearing.

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Chairman White returned at 11:18 a.m. to preside over the meeting.

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Liz Maiers, Southwest Initiative Foundation, met with the board to give an annual update and to report on some of the projects the organization has been involved with. Maiers also reported that the Southwest Initiative Foundation is requesting an appropriation of \$3,650 for 2011 from Cottonwood County, which is the same as 2010.

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Kelly Thongvivong, Administrative Assistant/Transit Coordinator, met with the board to present the 2011 proposed budget for the Commissioner's Office as well as the Transit System.

\* \* \* \*

Becky Wiens, Social Service Supervisor, met with the board to report that interviews for an Adult Social Worker were recently conducted. Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to offer the position to Leslie

McCue on Step 2 of the 2010 pay scale effective August 23<sup>rd</sup> and contingent upon successful completion of a background check and drug test.

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Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson presented 2011 proposed budgets for Court Administration, Law Library, Auditor/Treasurer, County 125 Plan, General Administration, Elections, Courthouse Grounds & Buildings, N. Highway 71 Office Building, Coroner, Community Health and Cottonwood County Library.

The board asked that a report regarding the boiler at the N. Highway 71 Office Building be given at a future meeting.

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Chairman White left the meeting at this time and Vice-Chairman Kuecker presided over the remainder of the meeting.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve August warrants as follows:

County Revenue Fund	\$101,743.34
Long-Term Capital Outlay	\$ 1,457.78
County Building Fund	\$ 186.00
Ditch Fund	\$ 3,617.06
Taxes & Penalties Fund	\$ 182.80
Road & Bridge	\$ 94,137.53
Waste Abatement/SCORE	\$ 5,085.15
Landfill Enterprise	<u>\$ 28,677.89</u>
	\$235,087.55

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Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to authorize payment of \$10,000 to Lohrenz, Inc. with balance to be paid after negotiations on remaining portion.

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The monthly trial balance was handed out for the board's review. Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to recognize the transfer of \$675,000 loan from the Highway Department back to the General Fund.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to adopt resolution as follows:

**2011 Transit Grant Application  
Resolution 10-08-10**

Resolved that Cottonwood County enter into an Agreement with the State of Minnesota to provide public transportation service in Cottonwood County.

Further resolved that Cottonwood County agrees to provide a local share of 15% of the total operating cost and 20% of the total capital costs.

Further resolved that Cottonwood County authorizes the Transit Coordinator and the Auditor/Treasurer to execute the aforementioned Agreement and any amendments thereto.

S/Ron Kuecker, Board Vice-Chairman

S/Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Brief discussion was held regarding upcoming insurance meeting on August 19<sup>th</sup> at Jackpot Junction. Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson is planning on attending the meeting.

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Commissioner Kuecker gave an update regarding the Des Moines River Watershed Alliance. Motion by Sorenson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to appoint Commissioner Kuecker to serve as a representative to the Des Moines River Watershed Alliance.

Kuecker asked that Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson put together some figures regarding regional dispatch such as initial costs and ongoing costs.

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Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson gave an update regarding one of the tax-forfeiture parcels that is located on a bare piece of land in Storden. Johnson reported that one of the adjacent property owners is interested in the purchase of this parcel. As stated in Section 6757 of the statute, there was a motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to authorize Johnson to sell Parcel 23.029.0210 at a private sale for adjacent landowners only.

Update was given regarding tax-forfeiture property that the Windom EDA was initially interested in purchasing.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow for payment of two bills (Indoff - \$7.47 and BankCard Center - \$84.39) as they were not received before the deadline for bills to be paid this month.

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Brief discussion was held regarding time off requests by employees of the Environmental Office. All time off requests are to be submitted to the Commissioner's Office for review and approval by the County Board. A calendar will be kept in the Commissioner's Office to keep track of time off requests with the goal being that either Mike Hanson or Greg Johnson is working at the Environmental Office at all times. It was reported that Mike Hanson's vacation request for August 12<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, which was received on August 9<sup>th</sup> was approved by Chairman White. Mike Hanson had also listed August 25<sup>th</sup> as a possible day that he would like to use vacation.

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Commissioner Sorenson presented a draft copy of a letter of reprimand that will be placed in the Highway Department Head's personnel file due to the failure of following the hiring policy of seasonal employees. Sorenson will meet with the Department Head in regards to this matter.

Commissioner Sorenson reported that he recently did some further research in regards to cell phone records and time cards of a county employee. This information will be turned over to Deputy Sheriff Jeff LaCanne.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to designate Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson as the individual authorized to approve monthly utility bills for the Environmental Office until a new Department Head is in place.

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Discussion was held regarding Environmental Officer position and how the board would like to proceed with the filling of this position. Information compiled by Mike Hanson in regards to his job responsibilities was handed out to the board for their review. No action was taken.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

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Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

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Tom White, Board Chairman

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Kelly Thongvong, Bd. Adm. Assistant