

September 25, 2007
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 25, 2007 at 1:00 p.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, Gary Sorenson, Tom White, Ron Kuecker; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Doug Storey; Earl Warner, Bud Rachuy, Art Steen, Ron Tibodeau, John Tibodeau, Allan Nissen, Clifford Netsch, Kern Iverson, Phillip Batalden, Roy Schmidt, Kenneth Anacker, Steven Junker, Marilyn Bartsch, Larry Anderson, Glen Graff, Lynette Ewert, Luella Penner, Raymond Potter, Kay Clark, Dave Bucklin, Jason Purrington, Mark Marcy, Mike Hanson, Karen Boysen, Marlene Smith, Ron Gregg and Todd Dibble. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Sorenson, second by White, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2007 meeting as amended.

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Public Hearing was held for the order of an improvement to install 911 address signs at all rural residences in Cottonwood County. Cost of the signs was estimated at \$35.00 per sign. County Engineer Ron Gregg explained the process that has taken place so far to get the county to the public hearing process and then several individuals voiced their opinions/concerns in regards to the 911 address signage. After much discussion, the public hearing was closed at 2:00pm and the board decided to take the matter under consideration and to make a final decision at the next board meeting.

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Kay Clark and Dave Bucklin met with the board to give an update in regards to the Soil & Water Conservation District's 2008 budget and to update them on some of the things they have been doing in regards to the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA).

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Sheriff Jason Purrington and Emergency Management Director Mark Marcy met with the board to present quotes for the purchase of an ATV for the Sheriff's Department that will be paid for through the DNR ATV grant that was recently awarded in the amount of \$4,078. The quotes were as follows: Windom Farm Service - \$5,891.13; Miller Sellner - \$5,910.50; Jackson Sports, LLC - \$6,390.00. Motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to use the grant money for the purchase of an ATV in the amount of \$5,891.13 from Windom Farm Service, as this was the low quote. The remainder of the cost not covered by the grant will be paid for with funds from Emergency Management Long-Term Capital Outlay.

Purrington handed out information in regards to defibrillators that will be discussed at the next board meeting.

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Environmental Officer Mike Hanson met with the board to discuss the TMDL Coordinator position. He reported that it would be around April before the Coordinator would have much to do because of the timeline of the grant process so he didn't feel there was a need to extend the position at this time.

Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve appropriate payout of benefits for Karen Boysen, TMDL Coordinator, for her end of employment with Cottonwood County effective September 30, 2007. The board thanked Karen for her work with the TMDL project.

Hanson reminded the board that a conditional use hearing in regards to the Highwater Ethanol would be held on September 26th at 9:00am at the Environmental Office.

It was reported that a letter has recently been sent to a property owner in Amo Township from the County Attorney's Office in regards to the condition of the property.

Commissioner Kuecker read a letter that was recently received from RC & D in regards to the Red Rock Falls Park and the work that has recently been done by Mike Hanson, Greg Johnson & Sentence to Serve to clean up the park.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to discuss several items. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to approve payment in the amount of \$38,000 to Schneider Corporation for GIS Professional Services.

Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve a 50 foot pipeline easement to Heron Lake Bioenergy, LLC through the east side of Pat's Grove Park and to allow Board Chairman and Auditor/Treasurer to sign.

Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to give permission to sell a 1959 Flaherty Chip Spreader with a 13' hopper and 2001 transit bus (with a minimum bid of \$1,500 on the bus) and to advertise for sealed bids.

Motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote to accept Bill Hamilton's resignation from the Solid Waste Department with appropriate payout of benefits. Hamilton was hired for a temporary full-time position while Kevin Donahue was in Iraq with the Army Reserves and he has since returned.

Motion by White, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to approve permanent full-time status for Caleb Hanson in the Solid Waste Department and Jed Rhubee in the Highway Department as their 6-month probationary period has expired.

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

RESOLUTION 07-09-25

WHEREAS, The County of Cottonwood has applied to the Commissioner of Transportation for a grant from the Minnesota State Transportation Fund for the Construction of County Bridge 17J27 the Mountain Lake Outlet Structure.

WHEREAS, The amount of the grant has been determined to be \$200,000.00 by reason of the lowest responsible bid.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the County of Cottonwood does hereby affirm that may cost of the bridge in excess of the grant will be appropriated from the funds available to the County of Cottonwood, and that any grant monies appropriated for the bridge but not required, based on the final estimate, shall be returned to the Minnesota State Transportation Fund.

S/Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Discussion was held regarding the Administrative Penalty Order for the Cottonwood County Sanitary Landfill that was recently received. This will be discussed again at the next board meeting as to how the county plans to proceed.

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Discussion was held regarding an employee grievance due to a recent denial by the board for a request of reinstatement. After much consideration, there was a motion by Kuecker, second by Oeltjenbruns to recognize Leslie Makovsky's 15+ years of previous county experience and to reinstate her to Step 8 of the 2007 pay scale with a benefit accrual comparable to 6 years of employment effective October 1st. Voting as follows: Aye: Kuecker, Oeltjenbruns, Sorenson, Holmen. Nay: White. Motion carried.

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Discussion was held regarding county per diems. It was determined that this will be addressed further when the commissioner assignments are made at the beginning of the new year.

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Brief discussion was held regarding a request to get a drinking water system in the courthouse. There was no interest in doing so and no action was taken.

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Motion by Kuecker, second by White, unanimous vote to designate interest earnings from previous year to be kept in cash reserves for Family Services and Highway Department beginning in 2008.

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Brief update was given in regards to a meeting Commissioner Kuecker had with the County Assessor regarding a letter that was recently sent to the Department of Revenue from Rick Nordahl of the Westbrook Health Center.

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Commissioner Oeltjenbruns gave an update in regards to the Energy Board and the new standards that are being considered by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for the permitting of wind towers.

Oeltjenbruns also gave an update regarding the Clean Water Restoration Act and the change in language that is being proposed.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to allow the County Recorder's Office to increase their change fund from \$200 to \$300.

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Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to allow Chairman to sign deferred comp amendment which would allow loans to be made by participants against their deferred comp through VALIC.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to allow for blanket approval of October Road & Bridge warrants.

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Brief discussion was held regarding new audit requirements and procedures. From now on, each employee along with their Department Head will have to sign a form each year verifying their salary for that year.

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Brief discussion was held regarding the county's policy on expense reimbursements and the time limit for turning in claims for compensation. This will be discussed further at the next board meeting.

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Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to adjourn as the County Board and to convene as the Ditch Authority to discuss Lyle Muir's request to include tile as part of Cottonwood County Ditch #15 system.

Motion by Kuecker, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to accept recommendation of William Moldestad to include Lyle Muir's property as part of the County Ditch #15 system and to include a copy of William Moldestad's letter dated September 4, 2007 as part of the record of the regular board meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Ditch Authority, Chairman Holmen declared the meeting adjourned.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Norm Holmen, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvong, Bd. Adm. Assistant