

August 6, 2013
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 6, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Chairman John Oeltjenbruns. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners John Oeltjenbruns, Jim Schmidt, Kevin Stevens, Tom White, Norm Holmen; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Linda Fransen, Jason Purrington, Kim Hall, Gale Bondhus, Gordy Olson, Gerald Engstrom, Dave Bucklin, Rahn Larson, Kristi Sell, Margaret McDonald, Jim Rogotzke, Allan Werner, Thomas Volk, Jay Simonson, Clarence Davis, Sharon Pankonin, Audrey Davis, Guy Dammann, Duane Bendixen, William Modestad, Jim Weidemann, Arvid Redman, Mark Redman, Jeff Pankonin and Diane Harder.

Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Schmidt, second by White, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2013 meeting as amended. Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the July 31, 2013 emergency meeting as amended.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to recess as the County Board and to convene as the Ditch Authority to continue JD #31 final hearing. Much discussion was held in regards to the best option for installing the 24" tile in question. It was also reported that the length of the tile had been increased from 4,700 feet to 5,262 feet since the original proposal was presented.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to establish JD #31 improvement project.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to obtain quotes for JD #31 improvement with two options as stated with the first option being an outlet into Section #4 and the second option being an outlet into Section #10 and to quote both dual wall plastic as well as concrete tile. The quotes will be accepted until the close of business on August 30th with bids to be opened on September 3rd at the board meeting.

Motion by Schmidt, second by White, unanimous vote to adopt viewers report as amended and presented.

Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to accept redetermination of benefits as presented at the February 5th board meeting.

Motion by Stevens, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to adjourn as the Ditch Authority and to reconvene as the County Board.

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Linda Fransen, Director of Historical Society, and Margaret McDonald, Board Treasurer, met with the board to present the appropriation request for 2014 for the Historical Society. They are once again requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$68,000.

Sheriff Jason Purrington and Jail Administrator Kristi Sell met with the board to present the 2014 proposed budgets for the Jail and the Sheriff.

Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve ATV grant in the amount of \$4,930 for the next two years.

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Emergency Management Director Kim Hall met with the board to present the 2014 proposed budgets for Safety and Emergency Management.

Hall gave an update regarding the Jeffers' ambulance request to help out with the purchase of supplies for emergency bags. Hall suggested that the Jeffers ambulance approach some of the local businesses to ask for donations to complete the bags. In addition a fundraiser was recently held and \$900 - \$1,000 was raised for this cause.

Discussion was held regarding NIMS training and the changes that will be taking place in the near future and the new requirements that will be expected in order to continue to receive EMPG grant dollars.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow Kelly Thongvong to send in letter of intent (non-binding) and letter of commitment to Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) for possible mini-grant.

Chairman Oeltjenbruns appointed Commissioner Stevens to serve on the SHIP Committee as a representative from Cottonwood County.

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County Assessor Gale Bondhus met with the board to present the 2014 proposed budgets for the Assessor's Office and GIS.

It was noted that Jill Defries has resigned her position as part-time Assessor Technician.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve Redwood-Cottonwood River Septic Loan Program for 2013.

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Brief discussion was held regarding the request to implement bi-weekly payroll and to have 26 pay periods instead of 24. The board seemed to be receptive to this request but no action was taken at this time.

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Only one quote was received for the tree removal at the N. 71 County Office building as follows: Ryan Tree Service - \$1,603.13 (removal of three boxelder trees and stumps and trimming of the locust in the courtyard); \$320.63 (trimming of other trees). Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to accept the base quote of \$1,603.13 + the option of \$320.63 from Ryan Tree Service.

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Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to allow the use of the county credit card for the purchase of additional car magnets for the Assessor's Office at a cost of \$107.21.

Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow the use of the county credit card for lodging for Kim Hall at the AMEM Conference on September 15-18 at Breezy Point at a cost of \$570.00.

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Discussion was held regarding the motion to rescind the previous motion made on July 23rd to change the Deputy Auditor/Treasurer pay scale. Due to the fact that there was no effective date discussed for the increases in salary at the July 23rd board meeting, it was determined that no further action could be taken in rescinding the previous motion as the new salary became effective that day.

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Chairman Oeltjenbruns appointed a group of individuals to serve on a septic system committee to set up guidelines for future potential septic claims as follows: County Board Chairman, Planning & Zoning Administrator, County Attorney, Clark Lingbeck and Dave Bucklin or Kay Clark.

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Quotes for tax-forfeiture demolition were as follows: Jeffers Dray Line Inc. - \$9,000 (207 Best Avenue, Jeffers); Therkelsen Construction - \$4,850 (207 Best Avenue, Jeffers); Lohrenz Excavating, Inc. - \$4,750 (207 Best Avenue, Jeffers); Lohrenz Excavating, Inc. - \$3,500 (320 9th Street South, Mt. Lake); Lohrenz Excavating, Inc. - \$3,500 (330 9th Street South, Mt. Lake); Lohrenz Excavating, Inc. - \$4,000 (724 7th Avenue South, Mt. Lake); Lohrenz Excavating, Inc. - \$4,750 (810 10th Street, Mt. Lake). Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to hire Lohrenz Excavating, Inc. for the demolition of all five properties and to get started as soon as possible.

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County Attorney Nick Anderson met with the board to present the 2014 proposed budgets for the County Attorney's Office.

Anderson asked for consideration of the board to pay for part of the cost of being a member of the Minnesota Bar Association. Anderson stated that some of the forms that are made available to him through the bar association can also be used for his work as the County Attorney. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to pay \$135 towards Nick Anderson's Bar Association dues, which is approximately 1/2 of the cost of the dues.

Anderson reported that he may see a greater need for the use of a smart phone in the upcoming months but would like the board to consider receiving more of a reimbursement than \$30/month. After further discussion, there was a motion by Schmidt, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to reimburse Anderson \$75/month for a cell phone allowance.

Brief discussion was held regarding the new law library location in the Commissioner's Room at the Courthouse and the availability of the room. It was agreed that the door to the Commissioner's Room will remain unlocked and will be available at all times with the exception of a closed board meeting.

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The board was asked whether or not they were interested in hearing a presentation by the Minnesota Small Business Development Center this year for budgets. The board agreed that they did not feel the need at this time.

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Brief discussion was held regarding a recent presentation that was given by Bill Chukuske (Bill Chukuske Insurance Services, Inc.) and Heidi Hansen (Southwest Insurance Service) in regards to services that they may be able to offer to the county. The board agreed that they are not interested in pursuing their services at this time.

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Interim Planning & Zoning Administrator Gordy Olson met with the board to discuss a few items. Olson presented a conditional use permit for Brittany Winters in section 32 of Midway Township. This application is to construct a home on lots 12 and 13 in the Mt. Lake Lakeshore Sub-division on the south side of the lake. After much discussion and after hearing comments from Diane Harder, mother of Brittany Winters, there was a motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to refund Brittany Winters \$450 for money paid for a conditional use permit that was not needed. The conditional use permit request was withdrawn.

Olson presented an application to rezone 73.37 acres of property owned by Poet Biorefining in section 16 of Lakeside Township from agricultural to industrial. Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the rezoning of the property owned by Poet Biorefining as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Brief discussion was held about septic issues and how involved Olson should be with them. Olson will continue to track hours for work that he is currently doing for both feedlots and septic systems.

Olson gave a brief update regarding Talcot Lake and further discussion was held regarding the possible removal of a chimney at the Dynamite Park shelter house.

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Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson presented the 2014 proposed budgets for the following departments: Court Administration, Law Library, Auditors, County 125 Plan, General Administration, Courthouse Grounds & Buildings, N. 71 Office Building and Long Term Capital Outlay for the Courthouse.

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Much discussion was held regarding payment of compactor for the landfill. Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to pay for compactor out of the general revenue and then have Kyle Pillatzki work through details of other possible purchases before working to obtain loan from local bank. The interest free loan from the general revenue fund will need to be paid back by October 1st.

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Commissioner White gave an update regarding RSVP and questioned where the appropriation for 2014 should be paid from since Jackson County is currently not a part of RSVP and the appropriation currently is paid through Cottonwood County Family Services. No action was taken.

Much discussion was held regarding the property at 1815 1st Avenue (Towlerton property) and a letter that was recently received from Vetter & Johnson Architects. Motion by Schmidt, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to put the proposed purchase of the property located at 1815 1st Avenue on hold for 45 days. The proposed purchase will be revisited in 45 days if the property is still on the market at that time.

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Chairman Oeltjenbruns informed the board that there would be a meeting to learn about ditch law on September 9th if anyone is interested in attending.

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Brief update was given regarding the status of the Deputy Auditor/Treasurer position. A few interviews will be scheduled later in the week.

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Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to close the meeting at 3:45 p.m. to discuss strategy for labor negotiations. Individuals present were: Commissioners Oeltjenbruns, Schmidt, Stevens, White and Holmen; Executive Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson.

Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to open the meeting at 4:06 p.m.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

John Oeltjenbruns, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Executive Assistant