

November 5, 2013  
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, November 5, 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; County Coordinator Kelly Thongvivong; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; Shannon LaCanne, Kay Clark, Dave Bucklin, Gale Bondhus and Bob Pankratz.

Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2013 meeting as amended.

\* \* \* \*

Shannon LaCanne met with the board to present a new project that the Safe Routes to School Program would like to seek funding for. LaCanne reported that the Windom school district is in support of the project and is asking for the county's support as a sponsor for the project. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to agree to support the project as presented.

\* \* \* \*

Discussion was held regarding a septic issue that an individual recently called about. County Attorney Nick Anderson sent a letter to MCIT regarding septic issues and will do some follow-up with MCIT next week. The septic guidelines that have been drafted will be sent out to the board for their review.

\* \* \* \*

Kay Clark, SWCD Administrator, met with the board to ask for acceptance of the Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) Agreement in the amount of \$72,138. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to accept the grant and to authorize Chairman Oeltjenbruns to sign.

Brief update was given regarding Lloyd Kalfs and it was reported that a benefit would be held on November 30th on his behalf.

\* \* \* \*

Dave Bucklin, SWCD, met with the board to give an update regarding JD #3. Bucklin reported that the last he heard from Murray County was that they directed the engineering firm (Bolten & Menk) to study the downstream impacts related to the ditch but no further information has been received at this time.

Bucklin presented a Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act Notice of Decision on behalf of David Carlson regarding a ditch clean out in Westbrook Township. Motion by Schmidt, second by White, unanimous vote to approve Notice of Decision for David Carlson with conditions as listed.

\* \* \* \*

Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator, gave an update regarding the applications that she received for the full-time HR Technician position. She reported that 29 applications were received for the position and six applicants were interviewed.

Thongvivong recommended that the board allow her to hire Kathy Marsh at a rate of \$17.0993/hour (Step 5) effective November 16th. Marsh has been an employee of Cottonwood County for the past 11 years. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to hire Kathy Marsh for the HR Technician position effective November 16th.

Thongvivong reported that Glenn Johnson's six month probationary period will end on November 6th and she has heard only positive things about his work. Motion by Holmen, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow Glenn Johnson to move to permanent full-time status effective November 6, 2013.

\* \* \* \*

Motion by Schmidt, second by White, unanimous vote to set the 2014 budget meeting for December 17, 2013 at 5:45 p.m.

Motion by Holmen, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to set December meeting dates for December 3rd at 9:00 a.m., December 17th in the afternoon with the time yet to be determined, and December 31st at 9:00 a.m.

Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to allow early closure of county offices on Tuesday, December 24th at 12:00 p.m. and Tuesday, December 31st at 3:00 p.m.

\* \* \* \*

County Attorney Nick Anderson asked the board to approve the Westlaw contract at a rate of \$349.14/month. Motion by White, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to allow for this purchase.

\* \* \* \*

County Assessor Gale Bondhus met with the board to report that she had 19 applications for the part-time Assessor Technician position and four applicants were interviewed for the position. Bondhus recommended that the board allow her to hire Meridee Paulson at a rate of \$12.66/hour effective November 12th. Motion by Stevens, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to hire Meridee Paulson for the Assessor Technician position effective November 12th and contingent upon successful completion of the pre-employment requirements.

\* \* \* \*

Brief discussion was held regarding information that was recently received from Drew Hage, SRDC Development Planner, regarding the Guaranteed Energy Savings Program (GESP) that the county may be interested in participating in.

\* \* \* \*

Bob Pankratz, Director of Business Management, met with the board to discuss a few items. Pankratz gave an update regarding some issues that they are having with the FSA parking lot. The city street department and the highway department will be involved in the process of making some improvements.

Pankratz reported that he has received one quote for a handicapped accessible door opener for Family Services and needs to obtain one more quote. Motion by White, second by Stevens, unanimous vote to request that Pankratz obtain one more quote and to use his discretion with accepting the lowest quote for a price not to exceed \$3,000.

Discussion was held regarding the possible repair of a bathroom fan at Family Services. The board agreed that this is normal maintenance/repair and he could go ahead and do what was needed.

Pankratz reported that he will have further discussion and quotes regarding the Citrix server at the next board meeting.

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner White brought up a suggestion that he wanted to discuss with the board regarding the possible formation of a Capital Improvement Plan Committee. He feels that the county should be more involved in the development of a 5-year plan to prepare for capital improvements countywide. White will also plan to do some further research regarding the threshold for bonding companies.

Further discussion was held regarding the possibility of exploring further options for blending the Planning & Zoning Offices in Cottonwood and Jackson Counties. The board questioned the possibility of having a couple of preliminary meetings before the beginning of the new year.

\* \* \* \*

Commissioner Schmidt and Stevens voiced their concerns with the county no longer offering passport services to the residents of Cottonwood County. They mentioned the possibility of having another office in the county providing the services since there is an existing employee who has worked with the issuance of passports in the past. The board agreed that it is a service that we should have in the county. Schmidt and Stevens will continue to work on some further thoughts regarding this matter.

\* \* \* \*

Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson reported that he borrowed \$225,000 to the Highway Department out of the General Fund until they receive their state funding.

Johnson gave an update regarding the upcoming change to bi-weekly payroll. A memo will be sent out with the paychecks in the near future regarding the pay dates and time card due dates.

\* \* \* \*

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Oeltjenbruns, Board Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Thongvivong, County Coordinator