January 4, 2011
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 4, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cottonwood County N. 71 County Office Building in Windom, MN. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Ron Kuecker, Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Jim Schmidt, Tom White; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Nick Anderson; Kathy Kretsch, Kevin Heggeseth and Rahn Larson.

Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson called the meeting to order and distributed the oaths of office to John Oeltjenbruns, Jim Schmidt, Tom White, Kathy Kretsch and Nick Anderson. Sheriff Jason Purrington and Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson were previously given the oath.

Johnson then asked for nominations for Board Chairman. Motion by Holmen, second by White to elect Commissioner Kuecker as Board Chairman. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to cast a unanimous ballot for Commissioner Kuecker as Board Chairman for 2011.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White to elect Commissioner Holmen as Board Vice-Chairman. Motion by Schmidt, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to cast a unanimous ballot for Commissioner Holmen as Board Chairman for 2011. Presiding over the remainder of the meeting was Chairman Ron Kuecker.

Chairman Kuecker thanked Commissioner White for a job well done as Chairman for 2010.

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the December 28, 2010 meeting as amended.

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set 2011 meeting dates for the 1st, 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month as presented with the exception of December.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to accept commissioner assignments for 2011 as presented by Chairman Kuecker as follows:

**Commissioner Department Assignments – 2011**

**Commissioner Ron Kuecker**
Environmental Office
Emergency Management
Solid Waste Department

**Commissioner Norm Holmen**
Family Service Agency
MN Extension Services
Sheriff's Department
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
County Attorney
Board Administrative Assistant
County Highway Department

Commissioner Jim Schmidt
Veteran’s Service Office
County Assessor
County Transit System

Commissioner Tom White
County Auditor/Treasurer
Court Administration/Probation
County Recorder

Commissioner Committee Assignments – 2011

AMC Voting Delegates
Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Jim Schmidt
Commissioner Tom White
County Engineer Ron Gregg
Family Service Agency Director Craig Myers

Area II River Basin Projects
Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner Jim Schmidt, alt.

Board of Adjustment
1st District – Phyllis Bakken
2nd District – Lowell Tjentland
3rd District – Craig Thompson
4th District – Mike LaMaack
5th District – Jonathan Penner

Cottonwood County DAC
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns

Cottonwood County Dept. Head Meetings
Commissioner Ron Kuecker or
Commissioner Norm Holmen

Cottonwood County Ditch Authority
Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Jim Schmidt
Commissioner Tom White

Cottonwood County Historical Society
Commissioner Ron Kuecker

Cottonwood County Law Library
Commissioner Ron Kuecker

Cottonwood County Personnel
Jim Jorgenson (Westbrook)
Dennis Nelson (Windom)
Jerry Haberman (Mt. Lake)
Board of Appeals
Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Commissioner Jim Schmidt, alt.

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Tom White, alt.

Commissioner Tom White
(OPEN)

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Norm Holmen, alt.
(OPEN)

Commissioner Ron Kuecker

Commissioner Ron Kuecker
Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Jim Schmidt
Commissioner Tom White

Commissioner Norm Holmen
Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns

Commissioner Ron Kuecker - Chair
Commissioner Norm Holmen – Vice-Chair

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns

Commissioner Ron Kuecker

David Lightner
Becky Wiens
Ree Tschetter
David Johnson

Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson
County Assessor Gale Bondhus, alternate

Commissioner Ron Kuecker - Chair
Commissioner Norm Holmen – Vice-Chair
Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson
1st District – Jane Pederson (12/12)
2nd District – (OPEN)
3rd District – Monica Muller (12/11)
4th District – (OPEN)
5th District – Tom Appel (12/12)

Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns
Commissioner Ron Kuecker, alt.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board/Committee</th>
<th>Commissioner/Chair</th>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Commission (3-year terms – no term limit)</td>
<td>Commissioner Norm Holmen</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st District – Phyllis Bakken (12/12)</td>
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<td>2nd District – Lowell Tjentland (12/11)</td>
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<td>3rd District – Leland Thiesen (12/11)</td>
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<td>4th District – Tom Fast (12/11)</td>
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<td>5th District – Phil Harder (12/11)</td>
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<td>Plum Creek Library Board</td>
<td>Commissioner Jim Schmidt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Industry Council Chief Elected Officials Board Members</td>
<td>Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns</td>
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<td>Red Rock Learning Center</td>
<td>Commissioner Jim Schmidt</td>
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<td>Red Rock Rural Water</td>
<td>Commissioner Ron Kuecker</td>
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<td>Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Agency</td>
<td>Commissioner Norm Holmen</td>
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<td>Regional Radio Board</td>
<td>Commissioner Jim Schmidt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources Conservation and Development Steering Committee</td>
<td>Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns</td>
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<td>Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)</td>
<td>Commissioner Ron Kuecker, alt.</td>
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<td>Soil &amp; Water Conservation District</td>
<td>Commissioner Ron Kuecker</td>
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<td>Southern Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council (OPEN)</td>
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<td>Southern Prairie Health Purchasing Alliance</td>
<td>Commissioner Norm Holmen</td>
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<td>Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership</td>
<td>Commissioner Jim Schmidt</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Community Health Service Advisory Committee (SCHSAC)</td>
<td>Commissioner Rosemary Schultz (Jackson County)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SW Mental Health Center Board of Directors</td>
<td>Commissioner Norm Holmen</td>
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<td>Commission Jim Schmidt</td>
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<td>Robin Wies</td>
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<td>SW Mental Health Consortium</td>
<td>Commissioner Norm Holmen</td>
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<td>SW MN EMS Board</td>
<td>Commissioner Jim Schmidt</td>
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<td>SW MN Energy Task Force</td>
<td>Commissioner John Oeltjenbruns</td>
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<td>SW MN Regional Solid Waste Commission</td>
<td>Commissioner Jim Schmidt, alt.</td>
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The committees that have open positions will be assigned as soon as possible.

Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to appoint Dr. Rod Dynes to another 4-year term as County Coroner for Cottonwood County.

Brief discussion was held regarding the possibility of forming a Personnel Committee in Cottonwood County. Chairman Kuecker has been in contact with two counties in regards to how they handle the salary setting process and both of these counties have a Personnel Committee established. The consensus of the board is to possibly consider forming a Personnel Committee which could be utilized when setting salaries for 2012. More information such as the structure of these committees as well as established guidelines will need to be researched and considered.

One bid for the 2011 official newspaper was received and was as follows: Cottonwood County Citizen - $8.00/column inch plus $3.00 for the other two county papers; $.12/subscriber; and $1,484 for Financial Statement. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to award the bid to the Cottonwood County Citizen as the 2011 official newspaper.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve partial payment in the amount of $17,000 to Borsgard Construction for work completed to date with the remodeling project in the Assessor’s Office.

Brief discussion was held regarding the annual weed meeting that is generally combined with the township meetings. There was a suggestion to look to either the SWCD or Jackson County for assistance with presenting weed information to the townships.

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to recess as the County Board and to convene as the Ditch Authority at 9:45 a.m. to hold a conference call with Watonwan County for consideration of the acceptance of petition as Joint Board – Cottonwood County & Watonwan County for the redetermination of benefits of JD #1. Watonwan County Auditor Don Kuhlman and Commissioners Berg and Sanders from Watonwan County were available for the conference call. Motion by Holmen, second by Berg, unanimous vote to
adopt findings and order in the matter of the redetermination of benefits for JD #1 between Cottonwood and Watonwan Counties. Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to appoint Commissioners Holmen and Oeltjenbruns to serve as representatives for joint ditch (Cottonwood-Watonwan) for JD #1 redetermination of benefits.

Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson handed out ditch levy information to each commissioner that was approved at the last board meeting.

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

County Attorney Nick Anderson met with the board to present a state quote for a desktop computer as follows: Dell - $1288.33. Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to allow for the purchase of a new PC in the amount of $1288.33 + tax and shipping with an option to upgrade monitor for a cost not to exceed $40.

Motion by Holmen, second by White, unanimous vote to set 2011 contingency fund amount at $7,500 for the County Attorney’s Office.

Commissioner Kuecker gave a brief update regarding a gravel mine near the Talcot Lake area that Cottonwood & Jackson Counties are continuing to pursue.

Motion by White, second by Schmidt, unanimous vote to authorize Chairman Kuecker to sign Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act Notice of Decision.

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set 2011 meal rates as follows: $8.50 – breakfast; $13.50 – lunch; $17.00 – evening meal with gratuity included in these rates.

The county follows the IRS rate for mileage reimbursement which is $.51/mile for 2011.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to pay regular and customary payments for 2011, which might include: payroll and associated payables; utilities; bond payments; contract payments; payments to other government entities; tax settlements; refunds; reissue voids; well sealing; sewer loan contract payments; emergency payments; insurance payments and lease payments.

Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson reported that the redetermination of benefits for JD #1 will more than likely not be completed real soon as the viewers are busy with other projects at this time.
Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set 2011 clerk hire wages at $10.50.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to set 2011 seasonal rates as follows: 1st year - $8.70; 2nd year - $8.95; 3rd year - $9.20.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to close the meeting at 10:36 a.m. for personnel reasons to discuss Department Head evaluations. Individuals present were: 5 Commissioners, Kelly Thongvivong, Jan Johnson and Nick Anderson.

At this time Nick Anderson’s salary request for 2011 was also discussed and information was given to the board for their review.

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to open the meeting at 11:29 a.m.

Salaries for 2011 were set as follows for Elected Officials and Department Heads:

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to set Jason Purrington’s 2011 salary at $71,338.

Motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns to set Kathy Kretsch’s 2011 salary at $50,960. Voting as follows: Aye – Holmen, Oeltjenbruns, Schmidt and Kuecker. Nay – White. Motion carried.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by White, unanimous vote to set Jan Johnson’s 2011 salary at $87,495.

The board agreed to set Nick Anderson’s 2011 salary at the next board meeting so they had an opportunity to review the information presented at today’s meeting by Anderson.

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set Craig Myers’ 2011 salary at $88,536.

Motion by White, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to set Gale Bondhus’ 2011 salary at $60,261.


Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set Todd Dibble’s 2011 salary at $48,388.

Motion by White, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to set Kelly Thongvivong’s 2011 salary at $43,411.

Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to authorize Chairman Kuecker to sign two LELS (Jailer/Dispatcher & Deputies) union contracts for 2011. The unions agreed to a 2% increase for 2011.

Brief discussion was held regarding a letter recently sent to Dale Minion in regards to a cement pile that needs to be cleaned up in the near future. A copy of this letter will be forwarded to the County Attorney for his records.

Brief discussion was held regarding a request by Leslie Makovsky to attend training in February as a county designated employee for the Environmental Office. This request will be discussed further with SWCD for their input.

Overtime reports for all departments were handed out to the board for their review. Commissioner White asked that these reports be handed out monthly. Auditor/Treasurer Johnson suggested quarterly reports.

Discussion was held regarding the SWMHC lease at the N. 71 County Office Building. It was reported that the lease for SW/WC Service Cooperative expires in 2012. There was a question as to whether there was an error with the SWMHC lease as they were drafted at the same time.

The board agreed that it would be good to review all leases and list them all on a spreadsheet so that they can be better monitored for renewal.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Ron Kuecker, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Bd. Adm. Assistant