

August 22, 2006
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 22, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Presiding over the meeting was Chairman Ron Kuecker. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Ron Kuecker, Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Gary Sorenson, Chuck Severson; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; County Attorney Doug Storey; Jason Purrington, Ron Gregg, Gale Bondhus, Mike Hanson, Holli Arp, Mary Ann Anderson, Denise Stinson, Steve Durkee, Mark Vaniman, Gene Petersen, Wendy Petersen and Terry Tegels. Motion by Sorenson, second by Severson, unanimous vote to approve additions to the agenda. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2006 meeting.

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Sheriff Jason Purrington met with the board to present the 2007 proposed budgets for the Sheriff's Department and the County Jail. He also informed the board that two squad cars will be up for lease in December and mentioned that the county may need to update the present record management system at some point in the near future, which would be split 50/50 with the Windom Police Department.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to seek approval to advertise for construction of CSAH 44 (17-644-01) & CSAH 9 (17-609-10). Motion by Sorenson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to allow Gregg to advertise for bids for construction of CSAH 44. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Severson, unanimous vote to allow Gregg to advertise for bids for construction of CSAH 9. Both of these projects are currently in the 5-year plan.

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County Assessor Gale Bondhus met with the board to present the 2007 proposed budget for the Assessor's Office.

Bondhus also asked that the board give consideration of her request in regards to the appraiser position and salaries for employees within the Assessor's Office. After much discussion and after reviewing the data that Bondhus compiled for the board's review, there was a motion by Holmen, second by Severson, unanimous vote to compensate Jean Gode on Step 4 of the Appraiser position when she is out assessing. This will be effective August 16th.

Commissioners Kuecker and Holmen will get together with Bondhus to review the information presented and to discuss the request for consideration of salary increases for the two other positions.

Environmental Officer Mike Hanson met with the board to present 2007 proposed budgets for several different departments. Hanson also updated the board on a few upcoming meetings.

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Holli Arp met with the board representing the University of Minnesota Extension to present the 2007 proposed budget for the Extension Office. Arp also asked the board for approval of a Memorandum of Agreement for the 4-H Program Coordinator position and a Memorandum of Intent for Nutrition Education Program and. Motion by Severson, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to authorize Chairman to sign Memorandum of Agreement for 1-year for the 4-H Program Coordinator position. Motion by Sorenson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to authorize Chairman to sign Memorandum of Intent for Nutrition Education Program.

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Auditor/Treasurer Johnson reported that two bids were received for the demolition of four tax-forfeited properties. He reported that the original bid was not to include the cost of hauling to the landfill as the Highway Department was going to help with that. However, since the Highway Department is no longer going to be able to help out with the hauling as was originally planned, Johnson contacted the two individuals that submitted bids and asked that they submit a second bid, which included hauling as well. Only one of the individuals submitted a second bid. Two bids were as follows: Lohrenz, Inc. - \$11,500 with hauling; Therkelsen Construction - \$9,800 without hauling. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Holmen to hire Lohrenz, Inc. to demolish four properties (3 in Storden and 1 in Westbrook) for a price of \$11,500. Voting as follows: Aye: Oeltjenbruns, Holmen, Kuecker, Severson. Commissioner Sorenson abstained from voting. Motion carried. The deadline for completion is September 20th.

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Brief discussion was held regarding a request to install a baby-changing table in the restroom of the Law Enforcement Center. The board agreed to allow Pat Stewart from Cottonwood-Jackson CHS to get one ordered and to send the bill to Auditor/Treasurer Johnson for payment.

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County Recorder Mary Ann Anderson and Denise Stinson from Fidlar Software met with the board to give a presentation in regards to the need for replacement of software in the Recorder's Office that is becoming harder to support. There were two options (on file in Commissioner's Office) that were presented for the board's review. After much discussion regarding the replacement of the system, there was a motion by Sorenson, second by Holmen, unanimous vote to agree to the Life Cycle Plan and to seek competitive quotes on the hardware.

After the presentation from Fidlar, Anderson presented the 2007 proposed budget for the Recorder's Office.

Steve Durkee and Mark Vaniman met with the board representing U.S. Fish & Wildlife to inform the board that a habitat easement agreement has been secured from Gene & Wendy Petersen for a piece of land in Section 27 of Lakeside Township. This easement is a round out of the Wolf Lake Waterfowl Production Area that the Service already owns. Motion by Sorenson, second by Severson, unanimous vote to authorize Chairman Kuecker to sign the agreement certifying the acquisition.

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Auditor/Treasurer Johnson gave an update in regards to the tax-forfeiture property in Mt. Lake. He stated that he would be holding a private sale between the two adjacent landowners sometime after the public sale.

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Commissioner Severson gave a brief update in regards to the Plum Creek Library System funding request.

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Commissioner Holmen gave an update in regards to County Ditch 15 as he had recently visited the site.

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The board reviewed bills that were recently received from Southwest Crisis Center/PEACE Agency for a new door and security system for their office. They asked that the board consider paying a portion of the cost of the project. Motion by Holmen, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to pay \$1,000 out of the Building Fund to apply towards the new door and security system at Southwest Crisis Center/PEACE Agency.

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Chairman Kuecker updated the board on several miscellaneous items. He reported that he recently received a notice of desire to negotiate from the LELS union and will make contact with Jack Chambers, LELS representative in regards to this.

Update was given in regards to Red Rock Rural Water System and where they are at with their original loan.

Update was given in regards to projected monthly health care premiums according to BlueCross BlueShield and how this is affecting the insurance fund.

Discussion was held regarding recent communication received from an employee wanting to donate sick leave and vacation leave to an employee working in another department who is currently on unpaid medical leave. Because donation of hours between different departments has never been done before and because it is not a catastrophic situation, the board agreed to not allow for the donation of any hours. The commissioner liaison will let this individual know of the boards' decision.

Brief discussion was held regarding GIS committee and the meetings that have recently been held. This will be discussed more at the next board meeting.

Further research will be done in regards to background checks and how the county would like to proceed when hiring potential employees.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Ron Kuecker, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Bd. Adm. Assistant