

September 27, 2005
Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Minutes

The Cottonwood County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 27, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. at the Cottonwood County Courthouse in Windom, MN. Present for all or portions of the meeting were: Commissioners Chuck Severson, Ron Kuecker, Norm Holmen, John Oeltjenbruns, Gary Sorenson; Administrative Assistant Kelly Thongvivong; Auditor/Treasurer Jan Johnson; Mike Hanson, Marlene Smith, Nick Anderson, John Shepard and Ron Gregg. Motion by Oeltjenbruns, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to approve the additions of the agenda. Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2005 meeting.

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Environmental Officer Mike Hanson met with the board for the adoption of the County Comprehensive Plan and to discuss a few additional items. Hanson reported that there were a few minor changes that were made to the plan as a result of the review meeting that was held on Monday evening. Otherwise, there was no opposition to the plan. Motion by Kuecker, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to approve the adoption of the County Comprehensive Plan as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Motion by Kuecker, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to approve conditional use permit for John and Pat Lenz for the construction of a residence, garage and storage building within shoreland on South String Lake based on conditions mentioned and on a recommendation of the Planning Commission.

Hanson presented quotes (on file in Commissioner's Office) for a new lawnmower. After much discussion as to whether the county should purchase a new mower or try to contract for the mowing of the county parks as was done in the past, there was a motion by Holmen, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to accept the quote off the state contract for a Groundmaster 328-D TORO lawnmower in the amount of \$17,428.73. The county plans to submit a Minnesota Common Grant Application in hopes of receiving another TORO lawnmower as well.

Discussion was held in regards to septic systems and the differences in the requirements for a new or existing system. Hanson will do some further research as to what options the county may have for the installation or replacement of such systems.

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County Engineer Ron Gregg met with the board to discuss a few miscellaneous items. Gregg requested that the county place a \$50 bounty on beavers that are causing water to back up in the road ditches and bridges. The water back up can cause road damage and possible property damage. Motion by Holmen, second by Sorenson, unanimous vote to add a line item to the

Highway Department budget in the amount of \$500 to be used for beaver control at the request and discretion of the County Engineer.

Motion by Sorenson, second by Oeltjenbruns, unanimous vote to move Tiffany Berglund, Clerk Typist II, to permanent full-time status effective September 1st as her 6-month probationary period has expired.

Brief discussion was held in regards to the CSAH 29 drainage issue and a discussion he had with one of the parties involved. Gregg will send out a letter informing the party of the board's discussion as per the agreement.

Discussion was held in regards to CSAH municipal maintenance contracts for snow removal in the city of Jeffers, Westbrook and Mt. Lake. The board decided that each city should be given the option of either having the county plow the snow to the center of the street and the city removing the rest of the snow or having the county pay the city \$1,000 per mile per year for their own snow removal. Gregg will work this out with the cities involved.

Gregg presented three bids (on file in Commissioner's Office) off the state contract for the purchase of a diesel tandem plow truck. Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to accept low bid from Astleford International Trucks.

Gregg gave the board members a copy of the landfill revenue summary from the past four years.

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Discussion was held in regards to the results of the MCIT Air Quality Report conducted at the Law Enforcement Center. Because there have also been some problems with the roof leaking at the LEC, it was suggested that the contractor that built the LEC be contacted to take a look at the roof. The company that completed the air quality testing at Family Services and Southwestern Mental Health will also be contacted to see if they can complete a preliminary air test at the LEC.

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Brief discussion was held in regards to the possibility of obtaining a county credit card, which would mostly be used for making room reservations for board members. Since a credit card policy has to be in place before implementation of a credit card, Auditor/Treasurer Johnson was instructed to put together a draft policy for county credit card use to present at a future meeting.

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Brief discussion was held in regards to the courthouse outside benches. It was reported that Sentence-to-Serve was supposed to be sanding and repainting the benches this summer but they have not been here to do this yet.

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Commissioner Holmen reported that he recently was involved with an interview in regards to County Ditch 9 with Minnesota Public Radio out of the Worthington area.

Discussion was held in regards to Windom Telecommunications project. The board agreed that they would wait a while longer before asking Dan Olsen to

come in and give a presentation to the board specifically in regards to the phone system and how it might benefit the county.

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Commissioner Sorenson reported that he had recently been asked if the County Board would be willing to send a letter of support on behalf of the local Farm Service Agency as they recently received notification that the local office may be one of several in the state that may potentially be affected by a closure of the office. The board would like to send a letter of support but they would like to see the actual notification that was received before responding with a letter.

Sorenson also reported on some information he received in regards to CREP funding.

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Commissioner Oeltjenbruns gave an update in regards to an Energy Board meeting that he recently attended.

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Auditor/Treasurer Johnson reported that he recently received information in regards to a settlement for Utilicore (formerly People's Natural Gas) for the period from 2003 – 2005. The county will be responsible for paying \$7,601 plus interest towards the settlement.

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Discussion was held in regards to the Tennesen Warning and when the appropriate times are to use this form. Motion by Sorenson, second by Kuecker, unanimous vote to inform employees that they need to begin using the Tennesen Warning and have it signed during the following instances: 1) Application for employment, which includes interview process; 2) Beginning of employment (new employee packet); 3) Disciplinary proceedings; 4) Exit interview. All applicants being interviewed should be reminded that the Tennesen Warning applies to the interview process as well.

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Chairman Severson reported that he received a letter from the Prairie Ecology Bus System in regards to a request for an appropriation for 2006. No action was taken at this time.

Severson also reported that no applicants have been received at this time for the 4-H Coordinator position.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Jan Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer

Chuck Severson, Board Chairman

Kelly Thongvivong, Bd. Adm. Assistant