

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

8:30 A.M., TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2020

County Board Room, 3rd Floor, Courthouse

MINUTES

The Clay County Board of Commissioners met in regular session with the following Commissioners present: Frank Gross, Jim Haney, Kevin Campbell, Grant Weyland, and Jenny Mongeau. Others present: County Attorney Brian Melton, County Administrator Stephen Larson, and Senior Administrative Assistant Colleen Eck.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gross called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Commissioner Mongeau, seconded by Commissioner Haney, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda.

ACCEPT CENSUS GRANT AWARD FROM WEST CENTRAL INITIATIVE ON BEHALF OF THE CLAY COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE COMMITTEE

By consent, the Board accepted the Census Grant from West Central Initiative on behalf of the Early Childhood Initiative Committee.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITIONS

The following employees were recognized: John Burkel, 25 years, Sheriff’s Office, and Kirstin Wegenast, 20 years, Social Services.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens present who wished to be heard.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 18, 2020

On motion by Commissioner Weyland, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes from February 18, 2020.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Weyland, and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment for bills and vouchers totaling \$792,458 from 134 vendors. From that total, 106 warrants issued were under \$2,000 (\$39,661) and the following 28 were over \$2,000:

Lakes Country Service Co-p	\$258,195	Historical & Cultural Society	\$15,881
City of Moorhead	\$225,000	City of Barnesville	\$11,356
West Central Reg. Juvenile Center	\$80,481	City of Dilworth	\$11,317
High Point Networks, LLC	\$23,405	City of Hawley	\$10,314
Malwarebytes Cor	\$19,214	DataWorks Plus, LLC	\$9,914
Lakeland Mental Health Ctr, Inc.	\$17,000	City of Glyndon	\$6,932

Pemberton Law, P.L.L.P.	\$5,953	City of Ulen	\$3,957
Cultural Diversity Resources	\$5,779	City of Hitterdal	\$3,872
MN Life	\$5,384	Thomson Reuters - West	\$3,627
The Retrofit Companies, Inc.	\$4,743	City of Felton	\$3,416
Moorhead Public Service	\$4,414	Madison National Life	\$3,049
Furniture Mart	\$4,289	Further	\$2,823
Larry's Auto Body Shop, Inc.	\$4,030	Bob Barker (Sheriff)	\$2,391
Magic Fund	\$3,980	Rick Electric, Inc.	\$2,080

ANNUAL DEPARTMENT UPDATE - SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Solid Waste Manager Kirk Rosenberger updated the Board on the Solid Waste Department. The department operates with 7.5 full-time, 3 roster, and 4 seasonal employees; and a budget of \$6.5 million.

Mr. Rosenberger provided waste and leachate quantities/volumes and annual totals from their report to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for 2019. He noted their newest permit is an Air Quality Permit at the landfill. Following the purchase of a new compactor for the landfill three years ago, their waste compaction rate has been very good. Landfill staff also oversee and routinely test an extensive well monitoring system. The test results from the monitoring wells have been within MPCA limits. The life of the landfill is estimated to be another 50 years. Waste is also hauled to the Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste facility in Perham. In 2019, 7100 tons were hauled to the Perham, short of their commitment of 8400 tons. They also haul fines from the Perham facility back to the Clay County landfill. The fines are used as alternative daily cover for the landfill. It cuts down on the amount of daily cover needed and helps control odors as well. Commissioner Campbell calculated 57 years of landfill life with the current compaction rate and the amount that is hauled to Perham.

The Household Hazardous Waste Facility continues to take in a significant amount of product and the exchange shelves at the facility have been popular with residents. The Solid Waste Recycling Programs include opportunities and collections for pumpkins, holiday lights, tires, appliances, electronics, and household recyclables.

Mr. Rosenberger noted that MPCA may start requiring demolition landfills to have liners. The demolition landfill in Clay County is privately owned and Rosenberger is unsure of the impact that the requirement may have on the County. Another concern is Perfluoroalkyl chemicals that seem to be everywhere in the waste stream, especially in 3M products, and could get into the landfill leachate system. Mr. Rosenberger's first and foremost goal for this year is to get funding through the bonding bill for a new transfer station and resource recovery facility. Lastly, bids are out for a new landfill cell construction. The pre-construction meeting was last week, and the bid opening is next week.

DISCUSSION OF PERSONNEL MATTERS AT MUNICIPAL LANDFILL

Mr. Rosenberger stated he has two employees at the landfill missing work due to medical reasons. He is pursuing different options for coverage.

ANNUAL DEPARTMENT UPDATE - PLANNING AND ZONING

Planning Director Matt Jacobson stated that 2019 was a busy year in the Planning and Zoning Department with staff changes and transitions. He provided handouts with totals for building permits, Conditional/Interim Use Permits, Variances, and Single Lot Subdivisions that were issued in 2019. They

also dealt with two Rezoning Petitions and seven after-the-fact permits which are triple the normal fee. Mr. Jacobson noted with the addition of a Planning Tech in the office, many more building permit inspections are getting done. He added that they have not encountered many deficiencies at the building sites.

Mr. Jacobson stated a Planning Commission Subcommittee was recently formed and meets monthly to review the current Land Development Code for inconsistencies and minor adjustments that are needed. Their recommendations should be completed by April 2020. They will conduct a public meeting with the proposed changes at a Planning Commission meeting for their recommendations and will then come to the County Board for final approval. Planning staff are compiling data on the active gravel pits in the County with a goal of better tracking and timely responses related to those operations. The department is also working toward reducing the number of complaints and strengthening their relationships with contractors and landowners. They have also been reviewing the fee schedules and costs of public hearings for the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment. They are planning for a new online building permit program to be ready for use early this summer. The program should be beneficial to the residents and help make the provisions and setbacks clearer to them. The updated Buffalo River flood maps should also be finalized soon.

Mr. Mattson announced that the Planning Office recently received a SolSmart Silver Award for being a more solar-friendly community. There are five solar sites in the County and one more planned for this year.

Commissioners Mongeau and Campbell complimented the Planning staff for meeting the needs of the landowners, getting out to the sites, and taking care of business in a timely fashion. There were no complaints to the Commissioners in 2019 related to Planning and Zoning.

AMENDMENT OF 5-YEAR ROAD CONSTRUCTION PLAN FOR 2020

County Engineer David Overbo informed the Board of rapid deterioration on CSAH 8 that not only poses safety issues but has caused serious increases in maintenance costs. He suggested that they delay the mill & overlay construction on CSAH 2 until 2021; and add the surface reconstruction project on CSAH 8 from Rustad to CSAH 11. They would like to design this project as soon as possible and make that change in the five-year construction plan for 2020. The estimate for CSAH 2 was \$1.35 million and CSAH 8 is expected to be closer to \$1.75 million. Commissioner Campbell pointed out that with the increased State Aid allotment and underutilized County dollars from last year, there should not be a shortfall in funding. He added that they consider a bonding process again.

Commissioner Mongeau stated she was recusing herself from voting due to the proximity from her residence to the road project.

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Weyland, and carried with one abstaining vote from Commissioner Mongeau, the Board approved the amendment to the Five-Year Road Construction Plan for 2020 to include the full reconstruction project on CSAH 8; and delay the mill & overlay construction on CSAH 2.

ANNUAL ROAD AND BRIDGE UPDATE

Mr. Overbo updated the Board on the Highway Department's upcoming maintenance and construction projects as well as other items planned for 2020. He noted he has good operators on staff and some relatively new staff. They strive to make sure the townships and the residents are satisfied with the roads and bridges. They will be adding more gravel to some of the gravel roads this year. They are also working in cooperation with the Sheriff's office in preparations for spring flooding. Spring road restrictions will be coming sometime in mid-March. They are working on their Five-Year Construction Plan and will be taking input at a public meeting. They continue to meet annually with Cass County Highway staff to share information and issues.

In 2020, they will complete their project on Park Avenue in Glyndon. They also have 12 bridge replacements, some with box culverts; a two-mile grade project in Oakport Township; a 2.5-mile overlay project on Co. Rd. 14; a 6.5-mile mill and overlay project on Co. Rd. 33, north of Hawley; and 4.5 miles of a full reclamation on Co. Rd. 8. Their newest state aid allotment is up and if it stays consistent it will continue to help their program.

With a couple employees from the Highway Department out with medical issues, they are working hard to keep as efficient as possible. In lieu of expected retirements in the next couple years, Mr. Overbo is working on succession planning.

ANNUAL UPDATE – SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager Kevin Kassenborg presented an annual update from the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) office. He reported that three of the recent grants they applied for have been approved. One of the grants, from MN Department of Agriculture, is for \$5,000 to focus on eradicating poisonous hemlock. This plant was recently found in Highland Grove Township. Staff will also educate township officials and road operators on what to look for and where the potential problem sites are located. They also received a multi-County, two-year grant for spraying and education of noxious weeds that include leafy spurge, spotted knapweed, wild parsnip, and common tansy. Their third grant is for a grade stabilization project focusing on 30 sites along the Buffalo River. They are working with the County Planning Director and Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD) on that project.

Mr. Kassenborg and Bruce Albright (BRRWD) will be coming back to the Board next week with the final draft of One Watershed One Plan. Much planning and many hours of committee work has gone into the final draft plan of One Watershed One Plan. Funds from another program managed by SWCD, Aquatic Invasion Species, will be used for a billboard just outside of Glyndon and for other educational needs. SWCD staff are also in the process of creating a Soil Health Cover Crop Program for the area landowners. This program is to help control eroding soils and flooding. Some winter cover crops could also be planted to be used as feed over the winter. Commissioner Mongeau noted that field crops also help with drifting snow on the roads.

Mr. Kassenborg stated his staff will be meeting with the Highway Department shortly to set up the spring spraying program. He also plans to attend the Township Officers annual meeting on March 16. He touched upon SWCD's other ongoing programs including Feedlot Officer Program, Wetland Impacts, Urban Conservation Program, Buffer Program, and their low interest loans for different qualifying programs.

Three of the SWCD Board members are up for re-election this year and they will also be celebrating their 75th anniversary this year.

CENSUS UPDATE: INFORMATION SERVICES

Director Mark Sloan stated that census season is here, and post cards will be in the mail next week. There are only nine questions in the census. Folks also have an option of going online to answer the census questions. As April 1st (Census Day) approaches, Information Systems is working with the local Complete Count Committee to increase participation in the census. Following the post card mailing, reminder questionnaires will be sent to those who have not responded, then eventually someone will go directly to the residences.

Clay County has been asked to host a Census Questionnaire Assistance Center. It will be located in the Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership reception area on 1st floor of the Family Service Center. Residents can utilize the center to fill-out their 2020 Census online and receive assistance from trained staff if needed. The County will provide a computer and temporary signage. The center will operate from March 5th - April 3rd. West Central Initiative has awarded the County with a \$500 grant to cover expenses. This center should help with counting New Americans, transients, and those without a permanent address who may be in the Family Service Center for other matters.

UPDATE ON HOUSING SUPPORT AGREEMENT REGARDING 46-UNIT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Social Services Director Rhonda Porter, along with Kelly Swarthout, Dan Kroetz, and Brent Schumacher (Commonwealth Development) and Lucus Petrie (M+A Design) were present with an update on the 46-unit affordable housing development in Moorhead. Handouts were provided and Ms. Porter provided background information of the project that was approved by the Board in May 2019. The County's role in this housing development is supporting 10 units that would serve folks with disabilities and homelessness. The County will be working with the Development Corporation and with Lakes and Prairies to provide services to those within those units. They have identified a mix of one, two, and three-bedroom units that will make up the 10 units supported by the County.

The timeline for the project was provided. The project was awarded low-income housing tax credits in November 2019 by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA). MHFA and Commonwealth are reviewing investor proposals and anticipate having an investment partner for the project within the next two weeks. They plan to start construction in October 2020 and complete construction by the following October. They have a kick-off with the City of Moorhead tomorrow for the project.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE/DISCUSSIONS

- Commissioner Campbell attended the AMC Legislative Conference and meetings for FM Diversion Authority and Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste Authority.
- Commissioner Haney attended various meetings as part of the AMC Legislative Conference.
- Commissioner Mongeau had meetings with the Clay County Fair Board President; Environment Natural Resources Committee; One Watershed One Plan; Extension Committee; Cass Clay Food Systems Advisory Committee; and AMC Legislative Conference.
- Commissioner Weyland attended various meetings at the AMC Legislative Conference and MN Rural Counties.

- Commissioner Gross attended meetings at AMC Legislative Conference; Second Amendment Issue; MN Rural Counties; One Watershed One Plan; and MCIT.
- Mr. Larson attended meetings for AMC Legislative Conference; MCIT for Moorhead Clay County Joint Powers Authority; Regional Dispatch Center; and Corona Virus.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Frank Gross, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator