

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

8:30 A.M., TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022

Rooms A/B, 3rd Floor, Courthouse

MINUTES

The Clay County Board of Commissioners met in regular session with the following Commissioners present: Jenna Kahly, Frank Gross, Jenny Mongeau, Kevin Campbell, and David Ebinger. Others present: County Administrator Stephen Larson, County Attorney Brian Melton, and Sr. Admin. Asst. Colleen Eck.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mongeau called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens to be heard.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

On motion by Commissioner Kahly, seconded by Commissioner Gross, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the payment of bills and vouchers totaling \$684,739 from 94 vendors. From that total, 68 were under \$2,000 (\$31,656) and the following 26 were over \$2,000:

BCBS of MN	\$276,950	Lakes Country Service Co-op	\$5,445
Clay Soil & Water Conservation	\$ 57,391	Sign Pro, Inc.	\$5,180
Moorhead Public Service	\$ 50,454	TrueNorth Steel	\$4,707
Turner Sand & Gravel, Inc.	\$ 43,072	Fargo Glass & Paint	\$4,644
Trinity Services Group, Inc.	\$ 32,006	Delta Design & Construction, Inc.	\$4,507
Clay Co Public Health	\$ 30,518	Election Systems & Software, Inc.	\$4,200
Otter Tail Co Public Health	\$ 27,044	Colonial Life	\$3,196
Cardmember Service	\$ 23,877	Stellar Services, LLC	\$2,916
Sources of Strength, Inc.	\$ 18,750	Concordance Healthcare Solutions	\$2,766
MN Counties Computer Co-op	\$ 16,700	Clay Co Sheriff's Office	\$2,500
Becker Co Public Health	\$ 13,331	Office of MN IT Services	\$2,332
City of Fargo	\$ 10,143	The Carpet Garage	\$2,267
Xcel Energy	\$ 6,104	Green View, Inc.	\$2,083

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 2022 BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION

On motion by Commissioner Ebinger, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Board of Appeal and Equalization Minutes from June 14, 2022.

UPDATES FROM DIVERSITY & ETHNIC COMMUNITY COORDINATOR AND PUBLIC HEALTH DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION NAVIGATOR

Azad Berwari, Diversity & Ethnic Community Coordinator, presented an update from the first few months of this position. He stated that diversity and equity are possible when others are accepted for the way they look, dress, live, think, and express themselves as long as they work hard and play by the rules. He noted that the current labor shortage highlights the need for inclusion. He has visited with many minority group leaders and organizations. The issues he has heard about include a lack of presentation in local government and services and lack of opportunities. Leaders have expressed confusion, frustration, and pointed to what they view as disparities. With his position as a community coordinator, they have felt they can express their needs and challenges. Lutheran Social Services has assisted in moving New Americans to the F-M area, but many needs still remain. There is a lack of cultural understanding and language barriers. Some folks need assistance to transfer their skills to fit the job market in this community. When COVID-19 caused a lockdown, minoritized groups lost jobs at higher rate than the average person. Mr. Berwari made the following recommendations:

Cultural:

1. Community Center where minoritized groups like mainstream groups and individuals can have activities and events, and
2. Where minoritized youth can have activities with the mainstream youth.
3. Celebrating a day as Diversity Day in our county schools.
4. Adopting Diversity and Equity policy at worksites.
5. Support minoritized individuals who would like to start businesses.

Structural:

1. Provide assistantship to the members of minoritized groups to authenticate their degrees from back home.
2. Support minoritized individuals with teaching degree and skills to obtain teaching licensure to work as teachers of color in our county schools.
3. Encouraging and incentivizing minorities students to join police academy.
4. Incentivizing minoritized students to major in fields that enable them to work for services like public health, social services, and other services.
5. Provide Adult Basic Education with more resources, especially to retain its daycare program for minoritized students with young children.
6. Increase opportunities for learning conversational English language, so New Americans can more efficiently seek and find employment and retain it.
7. Provide more training opportunities for minoritized groups as the job market require certain skills.
8. Discuss social service benefit package and incentivize cash recipients who work instead of the current way by de-incentivizing them when started working.
9. Making mental health resources more easily available to minoritized groups, especially many New Americans came from war-torn areas and experienced trauma.

Commissioner Kahly commented that she would like to have one specific committee working on these issues. Commissioner Gross noted that many of the items are school-related and other items could be addressed by one or more of the current committees. Commissioner Campbell commented that there are a lot of educational items. He suggested maybe starting with the Intergovernmental Committee that was formerly Joint Powers.

Sarah Dixon-Hackey, Public Health Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Navigator, provided several handouts. The first page consists of the number of KN95 masks and Covid test kits that were distributed to various organizations. She has teamed with Rory Beil and Karen Nitzorski in Public Health. Their areas of focus currently include Mental

Health and New American Communities; Re-building Bridges Community Conference; and Inclusive Workplace Employer. They partner with Ethnic Self-Help Alliance for Refugee Assistance, Cultural Diversity Resources, and New American Consortium. There are many mental health issues especially with the youth and elders. She commented on the importance of being respectful of different traditions and religious beliefs. The team helps to empower New American residents with information about their community.

Commissioner Mongeau thanked them for their reports and their continued communication. Commissioner Campbell commented that mental health is a significant issue for the whole state and country.

UPDATE ON ARPA FUNDS

County Administrator Stephen Larson provided an update on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds as requested. The ARPA Committee meets routinely to evaluate requests for funds. The committee also helps identify the potential funding plan for discussions. Clay County became eligible for \$12,474,372 and received half of those dollars last May and the second half last month. The U.S. Treasury provided a list of items for which Counties could spend the funds. This Board approved using up to \$10 million on revenue replacement. All ARPA funding sources need to be identified by December 31, 2024; and spent by December 31, 2026. Mr. Larson provided a spread sheet of Board-approved expenditures, categorized with descriptions and dates of approval. Invoices need to be provided for all expenditures and reports on the work being done with ARPA funding.

The second portion of the discussion was on allocating the funds on areas that provide the largest impact for all citizens. An additional \$500,000 was reserved for future Public Health response and for the potential of extending some positions that were hired for one year for an additional year. The other two items that have been discussed are the new detox facility and new regional dispatch facility. The first estimate on the detox project came in and the Board talked about spending \$6 million to \$6.5 million toward that project and the Finance Committee discussed increasing it to \$7.5 million. The need for a new regional dispatch facility has also come before the Board. That committee which includes Clay County has been meeting regularly and is close to having a proposed plan. The estimate is in the range of \$1 million to \$1.5 million toward that project. The remaining funds, after the maximum pending funds are factored in, are \$344,816.

Commissioner Campbell noted that the County is focused on investing for everyone's benefit. There will always be a need for 911 operations and a detox facility. These two projects could be accomplished without additional taxes needed to pay for them. Commissioner Gross extended his thanks to the committee and found the summary to be helpful. Chair Mongeau conveyed that she is pleased that they have been able to invest in areas that make a difference and help with the burden associated with COVID. Commissioner Ebinger commented that these items are prudent and are our responsibility to the community. He added that the collaboration in this community has been great. Attorney Melton serves on the ARPA Committee and noted that the County is also much more pandemic- ready for the future.

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Kahly, and unanimously carried, the Board approved allocating \$6.5 to \$7.5 million from ARPA funds toward a new regional detox facility, \$1 to \$1.5 million toward a new regional dispatch facility, and reserving \$500,000 for future Public Health response needs.

REQUEST APPROVAL TO AUTHORIZE CREATION AND APPOINT MEMBERS TO JOINT AIRPORT ZONING BOARD - RESOLUTION 2022-21

Mr. Larson referred to the City of Hawley's update to the Hawley Municipal Airport Zoning Ordinance. The City of Hawley has invited multiple government entities, including Clay County, to be a part of the Joint Airport Zoning Board. This participation would require a resolution and appointment of two non-Commissioner members to the Zoning Board. Resolution 2022-21 would authorize the creation of the Joint Airport Zoning Board and appointments of Matthew Jacobson, County Planning and Zoning Director, and Everett Nelson, Hawley Township Official, as the County representatives.

On motion by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and unanimously carried, the Board executed the following Resolution:

**RESOLUTION 2022-21
CLAY COUNTY
AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF A JOINT AIRPORT ZONING BOARD**

WHEREAS, the City of Hawley, hereinafter called the Municipality, owns and controls the Hawley Municipal Airport; and

WHEREAS, portions of the airport hazard area adjacent to the airport are located outside the territorial limits of said Municipality but within the territorial limits of this County and

WHEREAS, the above Municipality has requested in writing that we join with them in the creation of a Joint Airport Zoning Board; and

WHEREAS, this County deems it necessary and expedient to create a Joint Airport Zoning Board in cooperation with the above Municipality pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 360.063, Subdivision 3, and other applicable laws for the purpose of establishing, administering and enforcing zoning laws for the areas surrounding the airport and for the protection of the airport and the public; and

WHEREAS, the above statute provides that this County has the right to appoint two (2) persons to said Board (said persons should not be members of this Board); and

WHEREAS, Subdivision. 3 of Section 32 of the Appropriations Bill passed by the Minnesota Legislature effective July 1, 1973, provides that no moneys shall be expended by the Commissioner of Transportation of the State of Minnesota to improve and maintain an airport unless the governmental unit owning the airport has or is establishing a zoning authority for the airport.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED By the undersigned County as follows:

- 1. That there is hereby created in cooperation with the above Municipality a Joint Airport Zoning Board to be composed of representatives of the undersigned County and representatives of the above Municipality pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 360.063, Subdivision 3.**
- 2. That the undersigned County hereby appoints (said persons should not be members of this Board) Matt Jacobson and Everett Nelson to be its representatives on said Board, said persons to serve for an indefinite term until they resign or are replaced by the undersigned County.**

On motion by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Kahly, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the two appointees, Matt Jacobson and Everett Nelson, to the Joint Airport Zoning Board.

APPOINTMENT OF HIGHWAY ENGINEER

Mr. Larson commented that on May 10th, the Board appointed Justin Sorum Interim County Engineer and requested the search begin for a permanent engineer begin. Following the interview process, the hiring committee recommended the Board appoint Justin Sorum as Clay County Engineer. Minnesota Statute 163.07, Subd. 2. allows for the initial appointment to be one year which would end in May of 2023. Subsequent appointments would be four-year terms.

On motion by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Justin Sorum to the County Highway Engineer position for one year, with backfill of the Assistant Engineer position.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE/DISCUSSIONS

- Commissioner Kahly reported on meetings for Historical and Cultural Society; Greater F-M Economic Development Corp.; and Early Childhood Initiative.
- Commissioner Gross reported on meetings for AMC District 4 and Keene Township.
- Commissioner Campbell reported on meetings for AMC District 4; Finance Committee; County Engineer Interviews; Resource Recovery Contingencies; and Landfill Project Review.
- Commissioner Ebinger reported on meetings for AMC District 4; Greater F-M Economic Development Corp.; Lake Agassiz Regional Library Board; and Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging.
- Commissioner Mongeau reported on meetings for AMC District 4; MetroCOG; and Resource Recovery Facility Contingencies.
- Mr. Larson reported on meetings for AMC District 4; Finance Committee; County Engineer Interviews; Resource Recovery Facility Construction; and Landfill Project Review; MCCJPA re: hunting policies; MCCJPA meeting preparation; Opioid Settlement; and conducted an annual department head evaluation.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Jenny Mongeau, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator