

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

8:30 P.M., TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 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, and Jenny Mongeau. Commissioner Weyland was absent. Others present or joining remotely: 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 Haney, seconded by Commissioner Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda.

REQUEST TO FILL VACANCIES FOR TWO (2) CORRECTIONS OFFICERS

By consent, the Board approved the request to fill vacancies for two (2) Correction Officers.

RENEWAL OF LEASES FOR FAMILY HEALTHCARE DENTAL CLINIC

By consent, the Board approved the renewal of leases for the Family HealthCare Dental Clinic 106b, 2,117 SF @ \$10.25/SF and #103SE, 325 SF @\$13.25/SF, 7/1/2020 - 6/30/2021.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

During this pandemic, citizens continue to have the opportunity to share feedback at Board meetings via website link. Mr. Larson noted there were no requests submitted for this meeting.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Haney, and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment for bills and vouchers totaling \$460,985 from 84 vendors. From that total, 59 warrants issued were under \$2,000 (\$20,324) and the following 25 were over \$2,000:

Clay Co. Public Health	\$83,747	Ehlers & Associates	\$5,000
Otter Tail Co. Public Health	\$70,168	Lakes Country Service Co-op	\$3,384
Clay Soil & Water Conservation	\$54,782	Larry's Auto Body Shop, Inc.	\$3,282
Moorhead Public Service	\$49,858	Rick Electric, Inc.	\$3,226
Turner Sand & Gravel, Inc.	\$43,263	Sanford Health	\$3,030
Becker Co. Public Health	\$43,086	H & H Transport, LLC	\$2,656
Trinity Services Group, Inc.	\$13,944	Dacotah Paper	\$2,641
Lycox Enterprises, Inc.	\$11,775	Code 4 Services, Inc.	\$2,420
Wilkin Co. Public Health	\$9,137	Reliance Telephone	\$2,393
Xcel Energy	\$8,917	Ramsey County Med Exam	\$2,348
Wenck Associates, Inc.	\$6,262	MN IT Services	\$2,100
Key Contracting, Inc.	\$5,750	Grandbois/Samuel	\$2,065
Lloyd's Auto Body, Inc.	\$5,429		

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 9, 2020

On motion by Commissioner Haney, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes from June 9, 2020.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM BOARD OF APPEAL AND EQUALIZATION FROM JUNE 16, 2020

On motion by Commissioner Haney, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes from Board of Appeal and Equalization on June 16, 2020.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Public Health Director Kathy McKay provided handouts showing the trends, confirmed cases and deaths related to COVID-19 in Clay County. As of June 22, there were 528 confirmed cases but only 17 active cases at this time. The number of deaths has not increased in the past week. From the total of 37 deaths in Clay County, 15 of them were over 90 years old. The median age for positive cases in Clay County is at 46. Individuals in their 20s, 30s and 40s have largely been able to recover at home from the virus. There is a very wide range of symptoms and the seriousness of the illness depends on other health conditions.

Several states in the SW have recently experienced a large increase in cases. The virus is still around and is still highly infectious. The Commissioner of Health anticipates a ramp up in the fall, along with influenza, with students coming back to the campuses. Flu vaccinations are on order and there will be a big push to get flu shots this fall. A vaccine for COVID-19 expected in 2021. ND will require COVID-19 testing of every student this fall, but MN has not decided yet on student testing. They are still watching the numbers and planning for the fall. Clay County Public Health has five individuals trained in contact tracing and may all be needed in the fall. The Red River Valley Task Force will continue to hold meetings. Ms. McKay does not have an estimate on the cost for addressing the virus in Clay County but noted they have received some funding from the MN Department of Health.

REQUEST TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-20 FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION & ASSISTANCE AND HOMEWORK STARTS WITH HOME PROGRAM

Housing Director Emma Schmit from Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership asked for support of a resolution for the Homelessness Prevention & Assistance and Homework Starts with Home Programs. She noted she is very pleased to have received additional funding for this program. HRA was the lead applicant for the funding. They have 45 partners and 14 schools in the program. Five of the schools are in Clay County with the fifth school just joining this year. HRA administers the rental assistance for the program. Two new staff people will be hired for the homeless prevention program with this additional round of funding. Commissioner Mongeau stated she is on the Board and believes it is very important to have the Homework Starts with Home Program in Clay County and noted that interaction with families has really increased.

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Mongeau, and unanimously carried, the Board adopted Resolution 2020-20:

Resolution 2020-20
Resolution Supporting the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program Funds,
Homework Starts with Home Grant

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, State of Minnesota, has been authorized to undertake a program to provide funds for Family Homeless Prevention & Assistance Project as a part of the Homework Starts with Home Program; and,

WHEREAS, Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, Inc. has a commitment to establish a collaborative and comprehensive system for addressing the housing needs of families and youth who are homeless, and to continue to provide homelessness prevention and assistance services to residents of Clay County through the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program, Homework Starts with Home Program; and

WHEREAS, has demonstrated the ability to perform the required activities of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership, Inc. is hereby authorized as an entity to be charged with the administration of funds made available through the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program as a part of the Homework Starts with Home Program in the County of Clay, Minnesota for August 1, 2020 - September 30, 2023.

Executive Director Dara Lee from Clay County HRA thanked Clay County for their partnership in the Homework Starts at Home Program. She noted they are not asking for a tax levy this year. The grant cycle is every two years. They do not want families to lose their housing and there are a lot of needs right now with households that have been affected by COVID-19. Commissioner Campbell stated there needs to be cooperation to get the funds that are needed. He added he is grateful to her staff who have gone into areas where they know there are active COVID-19 cases.

REQUEST TO EXECUTE FORMS FOR FIELDCREST TOWNHOMES APPLICATION TO MN HOUSING

Executive Director Dara Lee, Clay County HRA, provided background information and a request for support to apply to MN housing for renovation of the Fieldcrest Townhomes. They are located at 18th Street and 34th Avenue in Moorhead. They are next to Queens Park which is being upgraded. HRA chose to apply for \$5 million in Housing Infrastructure Bonds, contingent on legislative approval of bonding. The property has been occupied by low-income families since 1980. The contract has been in place for 40 years old and they want to renew the contract with current market levels. The HRA purchased the townhomes in 2017 and has managed the property since that time. Many of the occupants have disabling conditions and/or have experienced homelessness.

They plan to add offices and an improved security system. The units would be completely renovated to improve the neighborhood and the living environments. There are significant deferred maintenance needs. All these families have children and none of the units have washers, dryers, or dishwashers. There are 20 small garages for 40 units. They plan to add eight additional garage stalls to help with storage and keeping the property neat.

HRA is working in collaboration with Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership. They will reserve four units for High Priority Homeless households; eight units for households with a disabled family member; and four units for folks who have experienced homelessness but are not high barrier. The remaining twenty-four units will be available to any low-income family. There are 98 households on the wait list for the townhouses. If they don't get the funds, they would start with the most critical safety items or they would let the property go market-rate.

Commissioner Mongeau commented that it is important to upgrade that area. The City of Moorhead is still discussing an allocation of funding for this project as well. HRA has a policy to make sure reserves are kept for basic repairs after the property is renovated.

Social Services Director Rhonda Porter referred to the application documents in the handouts. She noted the County does not need to provide any funds, but they are asking the Board to acknowledge and support the need for improvements for this supportive housing project in the community.

On motion by Commissioner Mongeau, seconded by Commissioner Haney, and unanimously carried, the Board approved HRA applying for \$5 million in Housing Infrastructure Bonds for the Fieldcrest Townhomes in Moorhead.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE/DISCUSSIONS

Many of the following committee reports are from virtual or remote meetings.

- Commissioner Mongeau reported on meetings from Lakes and Prairies Community Action; MetroCOG; Race Relations; Lakeland Mental Health; and Buffalo Red River Watershed District Board.
- Commissioner Campbell reported on meetings from Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste Facility; and FM Diversion Authority Recap of Hearing and Timeline. He also virtually attended eight days of the contested case hearing for the diversion project.
- Commissioner Haney reported on meetings from NW Emergency Communications Board and AMC District 4.
- Commissioner Gross reported on meetings from the Historical and Cultural Society and a concern from a Cromwell Township resident.
- Stephen Larson attended meetings with Sheriff Empting; Kathy McKay; AMC County Administrators; Darren Brooke and Georgia Beaudry; and Tim Dent. He also had a property closing; and prepared for Department Head Evaluations. He relayed information on advertising and interviewing for BRRWD Managers. He sent a letter to the City of Georgetown Clerk encouraging them to work with AE2S for the property agreement needed. There is no board meeting scheduled for next week.

The meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

Frank Gross, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator