

CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
1:30 P.M., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 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, Assistant County Attorney Michael Leaser, HR Director/Asst. Administrator Darren Brooke, 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 Kahly, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Mr. Larson received a request from a citizen who was scheduled to come in to address the Board. With no one present at this time, the Chair moved onto the next item.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS AND VOUCHERS

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the payment of bills and vouchers totaling \$2,984,704 from 122 vendors. From that total, 80 warrants issued were under \$2,000 (\$37,802) and the following 44 were over \$2,000:

Construction Engineers, Inc.	\$1,176,230	Sabin C Store	\$6,247
Sellin Bros, Inc.	\$1,054,005	Houston Engineering, Inc.	\$5,736
Buffalo-Red River Watershed	\$ 161,313	Becker Co Public Health	\$5,477
Turner Sand & Gravel, Inc.	\$ 82,398	Sanofi Pasteur, Inc.	\$4,973
Moorhead Public Service	\$ 73,491	TrueNorth Steel	\$4,108
Advanced Correctional Healthcare	\$ 62,823	Town & Country Oil, Inc.	\$4,086
Lakeland Mental Health Ctr, Inc.	\$ 57,344	Kurita America, Inc.	\$4,005
Clay Co Public Health	\$ 50,542	WEX Bank	\$3,976
Tansem Township	\$ 20,157	Farmers Coop Oil Co.	\$3,789
Servpro of FM	\$ 18,431	Marco Technologies, LLC	\$3,681
Xcel Energy	\$ 14,992	Barnesville C-Store	\$3,572
Petro Serve USA - Hwy	\$ 14,261	ADDvantage Triton, LLC	\$3,261
Red River Glazing, Inc.	\$ 13,825	JT Lawn Service	\$3,178
A & R Roofing Co., Inc.	\$ 12,370	Powerplan	\$3,123
Delta Design & Construction, Inc.	\$ 10,757	Rob Bentz Lock & Key, LLC	\$2,852
Brock White Co, LLC	\$ 9,504	Stellar Services, LLC	\$2,618
Nitzkorski, Inc.	\$ 8,493	Sun Control, LLC	\$2,568
Election Systems & Software, Inc.	\$ 8,069	Fuchs Sanitation, Inc.	\$2,515
Otter Tail Co. Public Health	\$ 7,552	Pete's Gas & Service	\$2,392
Forum Communications Printing	\$ 6,931	Butler Machinery Co	\$2,388

Mn Dept. of Revenue	\$2,321	Wilkin Co. Public Health	\$2,237
All Season's Lawncare	\$2,240	WEX Bank (fleet)	\$2,072

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM WORKGROUP MEETING ON AUGUST 30, 2022

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes from the Workgroup Meeting on August 30, 2022.

ANNUAL REQUEST FOR FUNDS FOR CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETY

Executive Director Maureen Kelly Jonason from the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County reported to the Board. She noted that 2022 has been a good year with many visitors, generous donors, and a new exhibit that opened in July. Many school groups come to the center to learn about local history and historians make frequent visits. Their archives include letters and diaries that seem to fascinate the students the most. Staff keeps busy with artifacts, collections, writing, and storage. They are part of the MN Collections website. Clay County funds go toward staff salaries. The budget request includes a 2% increase for 2023 for a total of \$208,677. Ms. Jonason will be informed of the contribution after the budget is approved.

REQUEST TO FILL VACANCY FOR ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY

Assistant County Attorney Michael Leese filled in for Attorney Melton’s staff request. A position for another Assistant Attorney will be open following a recent resignation.

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Gross, and unanimously carried, the Board approved filling a vacancy for an Assistant County Attorney.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF ‘MAKE MOORHEAD HOME’ TWO-YEAR PROPERTY TAX REBATE PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING FOR OCTOBER 11, 2022:

Moorhead Govt Affairs Director Lisa Bode requested the extension of the property tax abatement (rebate) program for another two years. The history of the program has shown it to be a success. The City of Moorhead unanimously approved Make Moorhead Home Property Tax Rebate at their City Council meeting September 12th. The Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead also provided a letter of support for continuance of the program to build the community and the tax base.

On motion by Commissioner Gross, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the request for a two-year extension of Make Moorhead Home Two-Year Property Tax Rebate Program.

On motion by Commissioner Kahly, seconded by Commissioner Ebinger, and unanimously carried, the Board scheduled a public hearing for Clay County property tax abatements for Tuesday, October 11, 2022.

CITIZEN TO BE HEARD

Kevin “NeSe” Shores approached the Board. He noted he is of Anishinaabe ancestry and is a 100% service-connected Native American veteran. He is active with Native Americans’ rights and veterans’ rights. He is running for Mayor of Moorhead for the third time. He purchased his Moorhead home at 902 16th Street S in 2005, but noted it was never put on homestead status leading to inflated property taxes for 18 years. He added that he is also blind and needs to use adaptive equipment. He is unable to read a letter and has been trying to find a way to correspond properly. He did receive an email from Mr. Larson, proving that it can be done. He has been delinquent with property taxes but has been trying to get a waiver from the State of Mn for disabled veterans.

Veterans Service Officer Curt Cannon came to his home and helped with the paperwork. He understood that the County knew that Mr. Cannon was trying to rectify the situation but continued on with the tax delinquency. He commented that it's an absolute violation of his rights as a disabled veteran. He brought up his ADA rights to the Auditor and was informed that Mn property taxes supersede the ADA rights. He noted it is unacceptable that he has to come in and ask to repurchase his home when his rights were violated. He demanded that this situation gets rectified immediately. He added that navigating the County website is an arduous task.

The Veterans Service Officer was unable to be at the meeting today.

Chair Mongeau thanked Mr. NeSe for his service and hopes to get some clarification on the situation. She noted the homestead tax credit needs to be put in place.

County Administrator Larson stated that Mr. Cannon has worked with Mr. NeSe over several years. He recently received a verbal notification that the State of Mn will be providing funding. The requested paperwork was completed and submitted by the Auditor, and they await payment from the State. Mr. NeSe remains in his home and Mr. Cannon continues to work with him. The homestead document is needed for him to be eligible for the veterans' tax exemption.

Mr. NeSe noted frustration with the process and stated his faith in the County is not strong.

Chair Mongeau stated the Board does not have the power to rectify the past and apologized for his frustration. She added that staff has tried to be clear in explaining the process. Commissioner Campbell stated his issues are important and need to be addressed. He requested that the Board be updated as the information progresses, and that Mr. NeSe be able to stay in his home. Commissioner Kahly added that she has spoken to him and agrees with handling this swiftly.

Mr. NeSe commented that Curt Cannon did his due diligence in assisting him and should be recognized.

UPDATE ON ARPA FUNDS

County Administrator Stephen Larson provided a spreadsheet for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fund tracking. The total that Clay County received was \$12,474,372 and the total spent was \$12,267,222. The remaining funds, \$207,150, have been dedicated to Public Health needs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE/DISCUSSIONS

- Commissioner Ebinger reported on a Beyond the Yellow Ribbon meeting. He also attended the first interview for a Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility contractor.
- Commissioner Campbell reported on the Resource Recovery Facility construction update. He also attended the first interview for a Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility contractor.
- Commissioner Gross reported on meetings for Partnership4Health and Beyond the Yellow Ribbon. He attended an interview for a Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility contractor.
- Commissioner Kahly reported on meetings for Adult Mental Health Local Advisory Committee; AMC Health and Human Services pre-meeting; Early Childhood Initiative; Lakes and Prairies Community Action Partnership. She also attended the interview for a Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility contractor and met with Social Services regarding childcare facilities.
- Commissioner Mongeau reported on meetings for Board Workgroup; Resource Recovery Facility construction update; Community Action Partnership; Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility heating; and attended an interview for Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility contractor.

- Mr. Larson attended meetings for Board Workgroup; Resource Recovery Facility construction update; Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility heating; Strive for Excellence Committee; and Management. He also met with HR re: Union Negotiations; Klein McCarthy re: an energy efficiency study; Correctional Facility and Juvenile Detention re: medical team and meals; and State Audit Process; Dan Mahli re: Red River Regional Dispatch Facility; and conducted an interview for a Substance Abuse Crisis Abuse Facility contractor.

Mr. Larson informed the Commissioners that all five of them plus three additional delegates are allowed to vote at the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Annual Conference. Suggestions for the three delegates include the Planning and Zoning Director, County Administrator, Social Services Director, County Highway Engineer, Public Health Director, or Solid Waste Manager. Mr. Larson will bring this item back for action at a later date. He asked for appointments for two other committees.

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Kahly, and carried with one abstaining vote by Commissioner Ebinger, the Board appointed Commissioner Ebinger to the CAPLP Council on Aging.

On motion by Commissioner Campbell, seconded by Commissioner Gross, and carried with one abstaining vote by Commissioner Ebinger, the Board appointed Commissioners Kahly and Ebinger to the Substance Abuse Crisis Facility Committee that will be established.

CLOSED SESSION - DISCUSS UNION CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

On motion by Commissioner , seconded by Commissioner , and unanimously carried, the Board approved closing the public hearing for a closed session at 9:48 a.m.

On motion by Commissioner , seconded by Commissioner , and unanimously carried, the Board approved reopening the public hearing at 11:05 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Jenny Mongeau, Chair
County Board of Commissioners

Stephen Larson, County Administrator