

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
MAY 10TH, 2022 – 10:00 A.M.**

Pursuant to adjournment, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners met in the Pennington County Justice Center Board Room in Thief River Falls, MN, on Tuesday, May 10th, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Darryl Tveitbakk, David Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: None.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lawrence and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Lawrence asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Hearing none, Commissioner Peterson motioned, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the Board agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens:

Thief River Falls resident Bruce Williams met with the Board regarding his property value, citing increases of 13% in 2021 and 17% in 2022. He also questioned the values and taxes of local commercial properties, namely Digi-Key Corporation with their recent large addition. Chairman Lawrence explained that home values are related to current sales, and by law the County must keep values in line with the market. The Chairman stated that there are no comparable buildings to Digi-Key in this area, so the Assessor has to determine value based on buildings outside the area, such as Amazon in Fargo, ND or Marvin Windows in Warroad, MN.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the Board minutes of April 26th, 2022, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the April Auditor and Manual warrants totaling \$1,295,664.13 and the following Commissioner warrants, including a recent bill not listed from SEH, Inc., in the amount of \$2,740.00. Discussion followed with Commissioner Sorenson questioning the bill from Tri-Steel, does it include culverts? Engineer Flaagan responded that it is for culverts for upcoming county projects and also for resident purchases. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

County Revenue	\$ 69,631.26
Road & Bridge	\$157,350.83
Justice Center Jail Bond	\$ 3,100.00
Justice Center Capital Imp.	\$ 3,100.00
Ditch Funds	\$ 350.00

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$1,690.54 were also approved.

Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand met with the Board regarding provided health care services for 2023 and provided two resolutions for their consideration.

The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Tveitbakk and was seconded by Commissioner Sorenson. Discussion followed with Commissioner Peterson questioning PrimeWest's services. Ms. Sjostrand responded that PrimeWest Health doesn't offer services here, but they do in the Region 2 area, so they are compared to in the RFP process. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was carried.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has published a Request for Proposals (RFPs) to provide health care services to recipients of Seniors MCO in eighty (80) Minnesota counties including Pennington County; and,

WHEREAS, DHS has requested County evaluations and recommendations regarding the RFP proposals from each respective county; and

WHEREAS, Blue Plus, PrimeWest Health, Medica, UCare and UnitedHealthcare submitted proposals to provide managed health care services in Pennington County; and,

WHEREAS, Pennington County Human Services has reviewed and evaluated the proposals; and,

WHEREAS, Blue Plus, UCare and Medica have submitted proposals suitable to meet our needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners supports the recommendation of Pennington County Human Services approving Blue Plus, UCare and Medica as Managed Care Organization(s) (MCO(s)) providing managed health care services in Pennington County.

The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has published a Request for Proposals (RFPs) to provide health care services to recipients of SNBC MCO in eighty (80) Minnesota counties including Pennington County; and,

WHEREAS, DHS has requested County evaluations and recommendations regarding the RFP proposals from each respective county; and,

WHEREAS, PrimeWest, UCare, Medica and UnitedHealthcare submitted proposals to provide managed health care services in Pennington County; and,

WHEREAS, Pennington County Human Services has reviewed and evaluated the proposals; and,

WHEREAS, UCare has submitted proposals suitable to meet our needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners supports the recommendation of Pennington County Human Services

approving UCare as Managed Care Organization (MCO) providing managed health care services in Pennington County

Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel and County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented an update on recent flooding and stated that preliminary damage assessments from flooding and riverside erosion are between \$1.2 million and \$2 million, with some homes very threatened due to riverbank erosion.

Engineer Flaagan reported that almost all roads in the county that were closed due to flood damage have been reopened, with the exception of one in Wyandotte township where a culvert and crossing were completely washed out.

Mr. Beitel has contacted the townships about damage reimbursements available and to begin their processes asap. It was noted that some affected culverts may have been county-installed and may be the county's responsibility to repair. Securing contractors for such repair will be difficult due to 2022 contracted work.

Mr. Beitel discussed the state and federal thresholds for emergency declaration and assistance. He recommended that the Board talk to our legislators regarding area damages. He noted that damages to agricultural areas have yet to be assessed, and that could have a large affect to our overall damage assessment.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following items:

The Highway Department Annual Report is ready and will be on the county website soon, and he plans to present it at the next Board meeting.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve an agreement with Houston Engineering, Inc. to survey approximately 6 miles of J.D. #30 via drone at a cost of \$3,893.48, to be funded by the Thief River One Watershed, One Plan. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a Master Partnership Contract with MnDOT effective July 1st, 2022, to June 30th, 2027, and the following, related resolution. Motion carried.

Master Partnership Contract Resolution

WHEREAS, The Minnesota Dept. of Transportation wishes to cooperate closely with local units of government to coordinate the delivery of transportation services and maximize the efficient delivery of such services at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, MnDOT and local governments are authorized by Minnesota Statutes, Sections 471.59, 174.02, and 161.20, to undertake collaborative efforts for the design, construction, maintenance and operation of state and local roads; and,

WHEREAS, the parties wish to be able to respond quickly and efficiently to such opportunities for collaboration, and have determined that having the ability to write

“work orders” against a master contract would provide the greatest speed and flexibility in responding to identified needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the County of Pennington enter in a Master Partnership Contract with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, a copy of which was before the Pennington County Board.
2. That the proper County officers are authorized to execute such contract, and any amendments thereto.
3. That the County Engineer is authorized to negotiate work order contracts pursuant to the Master Contract, which work order contracts may provide for payment to or from MnDOT, and that the County Engineer may execute such work order contracts on behalf of the County of Pennington without further approval by this Board.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve an FMLA request for an employee of the Pennington County Highway Department. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the Pennington County Five-Year Road & Bridge Plan for years 2022-2026 as presented at the Public Hearing held at 8:30 a.m. today, with the addition of one item to year 2026: regrading of CSAH#22 from CSAH #3 to the Red Lake County line. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a contract with the Pennington County SWCD regarding cost-share funding for CD#96 (CP57-22-07) through the Red Lake River 1W1P in the amount of \$20,306.88. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan said the highway dept. is receiving some complaints regarding gravel road conditions this spring. He stated they are working on them as the weather and conditions allow for it. He asks that the public be careful on the gravel roads as they are soft and rough due to the spring and weather events.

County Sheriff Ray Kuznia presented the following LEC items:

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve a Contract Agreement between the Pennington County Sheriff's Office and Negen's Investigative Services for P.R.E.A. Auditing Services at a cost of \$75.00/hour, not to exceed \$4,000 in total. Discussion followed with the Sheriff noting this audit is federally mandated. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve a subscription agreement for Peace Officer Accredited Training Online (PATROL) at a cost of \$90.00/officer/year; to be paid from the Sheriff's training budget. Motion carried. The Sheriff noted that all licensed officers must do annual training to remain licensed, and this is a very affordable option for our Deputies.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the transfer of Patricia Braaten from Full-Time Corrections Officer to Jail Sergeant effective May 11th, 2022. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the transfer of Heather Borgen from Full-Time Corrections Officer to Jail Sergeant effective May 11th, 2022. Motion carried.

Sheriff Kuznia noted that Deputy Sheriff David Lovly has accepted a position at NCTC, but if possible, he would like to remain on the force as a Part-Time Deputy Sheriff. A current Deputy Sheriff will be moved into the Drug Task Force officer position, creating a Deputy vacancy. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to authorize the Sheriff Kuznia to advertise/post for a Full-Time Deputy Sheriff. Motion carried.

Sheriff Kuznia informed the Board that he will not be seeking re-election and presented his letter of resignation effective January 3rd, 2023. He is proud of the status of the Law Enforcement Center and his current staff, and he feels confident of it moving into the future. He has enjoyed his 35-year career, which was spent in entirety with Pennington County. Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to accept the letter of resignation of County Sheriff Raymond Kuznia effective January 3rd, 2023. Motion carried. The Board thanked Mr. Kuznia for his service to the county as both a Deputy and County Sheriff and wishes him well in his retirement to come.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a 2022-2026 Tax Abatement Program for residential homes in the City of Thief River Falls (see 04/12/22 Board minutes for detail) as discussed in a Public Hearing held at 9:30 a.m. today in the Justice Center Board Room. Motion carried.

County Coordinator Items:

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson opened discussion on a 'Community Strong Task Force Committee'. Commissioner Nelson stated that local entities created the task force to improve communication and systems for the mental health and well-being of our people, especially our youth. He would like to serve on the committee and requested an appointment retroactive to January 2022. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to add the Community Strong Task Force to the list of approved committees and to appoint Commissioner Nelson to the Community Strong Task Force Committee effective January 2022. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to re-approve termination of the Professional Service Agreement between Pennington County and Todd & Diane Sundby, DBA Sundby Cleaning, effective June 30th, 2022. It was noted that a termination notice effective April 30th, 2022 was sent prior but was never

received by Sundby Cleaning. The County Attorney advised that the new notice should be officially served by the County. With no further discussion, the motion was carried.

Mr. Erickson provided an update on a supervisor training held May 9th, 2022. Counties participating included Pennington, Roseau, and Kittson, and the focus was on employee engagement. The training was very educational and interactive, and on behalf of Pennington's attendees he thanked the Board for the training opportunity.

Mr. Erickson noted that asbestos test samples were taken last week from the 1st and 3rd floors of the Government Center and results should be available soon. Quotes will then be sought for asbestos abatement on those floors in preparation of the Human Services remodel project.

County Attorney Items: None.

Committee Reports/Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Peterson recently attended an M.R.C. meeting where discussions were held on local road replacement, wetlands, and the PILT program. It was noted that the proposed changes to the PILT program are in the current House bill but not in the Senate bill.

Commissioner Tveitbakk stated the House and Senate are discussing the state budget surplus but are a long way from agreeing on solutions. The Clearwater River plan is waiting on public comment, then it will have to go before the Board of Water and Soil Resources and other Boards as well. The opioid settlement has been approved by both the House and Senate and is awaiting the Governor's signature. Pennington County is expected to receive over \$800,000 over the life of the settlement. It was noted that 75% of the settlement will go to local governments and 25% to the state.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to adjourn the Board meeting to May 24th, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Bruce Lawrence, Chairman
Board of Commissioners