

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, MARCH 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, 5:00 P.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, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Members Present: Darryl Tveitbakk, Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Neil Peterson, David Sorenson. Members Absent: None.

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

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

Recognition of Citizens: None present.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the County Board minutes of March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021 as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$179,317.64, the Auditor and Manual warrants for February totaling \$2,134,487.20 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

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|----------------|-------------|
| County Revenue | \$69,399.79 |
| Road & Bridge  | \$ 4,198.75 |
| Ditch Funds    | \$ 8,540.97 |

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$998.60 were also approved.

Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand presented the consent agenda from the March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Human Services Committee meeting. On a motion by Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Services Committee for March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (detailed minutes on record) are hereby adopted:

SECTION A

- I. To approve the February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Human Services Committee meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the agency's personnel action as presented.
- III.
  - A. To approve the Dakota Mailing contract as presented.
  - B. To approve the CY 2021 Northwest Continuum of Care membership renewal
  - C. Letter from Jodi Harpstead, Commissioner, MN Dept. of Human Services regarding perfect performance for calendar year 2020 financial reporting.

SECTION B

- I. To approve payment of the Agency's bills.

Ms. Sjostrand stated that on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. the Human Services building will re-open to the public but they still strongly encourage the public to make appointments.

Inter-County Nursing Director Kayla Jore presented a COVID-19 update. She stated that it has been a year since the pandemic started and they recently turned case investigations back over to the MN Dept. of Health for Pennington and Red Lake counties. She presented graphs showing the positive cases by age group and the fluctuation from March 2020 to February 2021. There was a large uptick in cases in November 2020 and again in February 2021.

Ms. Jore discussed the COVID-19 vaccine and stated that they will be administering 200 doses this week. They are working closely with Digi-Key Corp. and Arctic Cat, who have been designated as manufacturers, to get vaccine for their employees. The nursing service is still administering the Moderna vaccine and they haven't heard if they will be receiving the Johnson and Johnson vaccine. County Engineer Mike Flaagan questioned when the highway department employees will receive their vaccinations. She believes that 'Tier 3' most likely will include such employees but she will follow up with a more definite timeline. The Board thanked her for her report.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan met with the Board regarding the Highway Dept. items.

Mr. Flaagan announced that a Public Hearing for the partial abandonment of JD#25-3 was held today at 4:30 p.m. following a petition by Curtis and Marilyn Swanson.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the petition for partial abandonment of JD#25-3. Discussion followed with Mr. Flaagan stating that it will be the responsibility of the watershed to maintain the abandoned portion and deal with any affected buffer areas. Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan discussed the Black River Impoundment project and said that work will start on the ditches in April and the box culvert in early May. Work on the outlet is in progress and is near completion. He stated there will be a detour off CSAH #3 that will last approximately two weeks and he will encourage the contractor to promote the detour with the media in advance.

Sheriff Ray Kuznia presented the following personnel items.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the hire of Theodore Edward Rodridgo III as Part-Time Corrections Officer. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Wade Cota as Full-Time STS Coordinator. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the hire of Austyn Bourman as Part-Time Dispatcher/Jailer. Motion carried.

Sheriff Kuznia stated that he still has to fill the positions of one Full-Time Corrections Officer and two Part-Time Corrections Officer. He noted that one Full-Time Corrections Officer, Jordin Gunderson, will be starting as Part-Time Deputy Sheriff once the newest Deputy has completed his field training.

Sheriff Kuznia stated that State STS Crew Leader Wade Sundberg has informed him he will be retiring in less than two months. Pennington County currently funds his position at 75% with the State of MN funding the remaining 25%. Ray stated that based on crew numbers he believes the County can function well with the county Crew Leader and STS Coordinator. He would like to put the funding used

for the State position to help fund a new Assistant Jail Administrator position. Commissioner Tveitbakk questioned if there is an agreement regarding the state crew leader position and if so, can we terminate the agreement with the State of MN early. Mr. Kuznia stated that he has done the research and we are able to terminate the agreement. Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to terminate the contract between Pennington County and the State of Minnesota regarding the STS program. Discussion followed. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to authorize the County Sheriff to advertise for a Full-Time Assistant Jail Administrator. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to authorize the County Sheriff to advertise for a Part-Time Dispatcher/Jailer. Motion carried.

Mr. Kuznia stated that following transfer of Jill Kolstoe to the attorney's office, he would like to hire a Full-Time Record's Clerk to work in Records and as a Sheriff's Clerk. Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to authorize the County Sheriff to advertise for a Full-Time Records Clerk. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson to authorize the County Sheriff to advertise for a Full-Time Deputy Sheriff. Motion carried.

#### Committee Reports / Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Peterson stated that the NW Juvenile Training Center is doing a great job working with the juveniles, the kids are being schooled and it is not just a holding facility.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to enter into a contract with Sand Creek Group, LTD to provide consulting services with the Human Services Dept. Motion carried.

Commissioner Tveitbakk stated that the County is expected to receive \$2.7 million as part of the American Rescue Plan. While the spending rules are still forthcoming, it appears that half of the funds will be coming soon and the remainder one year later. He noted that prior CARES Act county allocations amounted to \$1.784 million for the County (\$1.9 million following some township's surrendering funds) and a second round totaling \$283,000. A small percentage of the funds was withheld for administration costs, COVID-19 prevention, etc. but otherwise a large majority was distributed to local businesses.

Commissioner Nelson stated that the Pennington County Historical Society met on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 and they are requesting to open according to the state guidelines. They normally open Memorial Day weekend. The Board approved the request contingent on them following all state guidelines.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items: None

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve issuance of a duplicate warrant to Wyatt Olson in the amount of \$257.18 to replace lost warrant #190923 dated February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 without issuance of an indemnifying bond. Motion carried.

County Attorney Items: None

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to adjourn the Board meeting to April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator  
Pennington County

Neil Peterson, Chairman  
Board of Commissioners