

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
OCTOBER 8, 2024 – 10:00 A.M.**

Pursuant to M.S. 375.07, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners met in the Pennington County Justice Center Board Room in Thief River Falls, MN, on Tuesday, October 8th, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Roy Sourdif, David Sorenson, Neil Peterson, and Bruce Lawrence. Members absent: None.

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

The Chairman asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Hearing none, there was a motion by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the County Board minutes of September 24, 2024, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Auditor & Manual warrants for September 2024 totaling \$1,464,943.01, the Human Services warrants totaling \$250,835.24, and the following Commissioner warrants, with the addition of bills to MnCCC for election software maintenance, conference registrations, etc. totaling \$91,885.00. Motion carried.

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| County Revenue | \$81,443.08 |
| Road & Bridge | \$47,815.08 |
| Solid Waste Facility | \$ 5,500.00 |
| Ditch Funds | \$16,234.10 |

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$3,448.33 were also approved.

Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel presented an update on the Pennington County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Various meetings have been held regarding the draft plan and the document will be up for public review and feedback for a period of 15 days through November 4, 2024. The plan will then move on to the State of Minnesota and FEMA for their review. He is hoping the plan will be approved by FEMA sometime this December.

Mr. Beitel noted that in early February 2022 he applied for basic eligibility for a property buyout program in Pennington County relating to the homes and properties threatened by riverbank erosion near Hartz Park. The application is now being reviewed and they are seeking more information from the watershed. At the Board's request he will reach out to affected landowners with the update, but he noted that the initial review is the first step in a process that can take years, and a buyout is not guaranteed.

Mr. Beitel stated that earlier this year he assisted the County Sheriff's office with their application for a \$300k grant for improvements and repairs to the ARMER radio system. They were recently notified that the grant was approved in the amount of \$120k and it requires a local match of 5%, or approximately \$6k. He wished to thank the departments for their work in the grant process, including determining our current ARMER equipment inventory. Sheriff Vettleson wished to thank Mr. Beitel and Deputy Sheriff David Olson for their work and assistance with the grant. Discussion was held regarding the radio replacements, the future of our used inventory, etc. The Board thanked Mr. Beitel and the Sheriff's office for their work on the grant.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following items:

Mr. Flaagan stated that he applied for and was awarded a \$30,000 technical assistance grant through the State of MN for Federal IIJA funding related to SAP 057-589-001, the planned milling and overlay of CSAH 3 from TH 59 to CSAH 27. He presented a grant agreement and resolution needed from the Board. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a State of MN, Federal Transportation Grants Technical Assistance and IIJA Discretionary Match Grant Agreement and the following resolution. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION
STATE FUNDED PROGRAM FOR IIJA DISCRETIONARY GRANT
ASSISTANCE**

WHEREAS, Pennington County has applied to the Commissioner of Transportation for a grant from the State Program for IIJA Assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Transportation has given notice that funding for this project is available; and

WHEREAS, the amount of the grant has been determined to be \$30,000 by reason of the lowest bid;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Pennington County does hereby agree to the terms and conditions of the grant consistent with Minnesota Laws 2023, Chapter 68, Article 1, Section 2, Subd. 5(a), and will pay any additional amount by which the cost exceeds the estimate and will return any amount appropriated for the project but not required. The property county officers are authorized to execute a grant agreement and any amendments thereto with the Commissioner of Transportation concerning the above-referenced grant.

Engineer Flaagan noted that the CSAH 10 project has been completed and he is requesting final payment to Agassiz Asphalt, LLC. Final cost of the project is \$1,496,809.30. He is very satisfied with how the project turned out and he plans to submit it for an award. The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, SAP 057-610-011 has in all things been completed, and the County Board being fully advised in the premises,

NOW THEN, BE IT RESOLVED, that we do hereby accept said completed project for and on behalf of the Pennington County Highway Dept. and authorize final payment as specified herein.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the hire of Larry James Hoaglund as Highway Equipment Operator with an effective start date of October 15, 2024. Discussion followed with the Engineer noting there were six applicants for the position. He suggested that in the future we consider hiring employees without a CDL and putting them through the training as part of an employment agreement. He will check with the union on the possibilities and costs. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Engineer Flaagan proposed an informational meeting with the residents living on CSAH 11, formerly known as County Road 62, to discuss the upcoming road project, answer public questions, discuss annexation, etc. A meeting date of November 7, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Highway Department conference room was discussed and tentatively agreed upon.

The Engineer presented two quotes received from Hubert's Outdoor Power for a side-by-side utility vehicle:

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| 2023 Polaris | \$16,500 (inc. \$2k rebate) |
| 2024 Arctic Cat | \$16,799 |

Mr. Flaagan noted that the Polaris features 82 horsepower and a top but no winch. The Arctic Cat features 50 horsepower, a winch, and a top. Following discussion, there was a motion by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the quote for and purchase of a 2023 Polaris UTV from Hubert's Outdoor Power at a cost of \$16,500, which includes a \$2,000 rebate. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan noted that CD#96 surveying related to the ditch cleaning petitions has been completed. The cleaning will take about one month to complete with two contractors and will cover approximately 12 miles of ditch. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the ditch cleaning petitions received for CD#96 totaling approximately 12 miles. Motion carried.

County Sheriff Seth Vettleison presented the following items:

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to accept the resignation of Briana Vosen as Full-Time Corrections Officer effective October 21, 2024, and to wish her well in her new position. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to authorize the County Sheriff to advertise for the position of Full-Time Corrections Officer. Motion carried.

RSVP Director Jennifer Manole provided the Board an update on the RSVP program. She serves 7 area counties and works with 700 active volunteers, noting there are about 100 in this community alone. She discussed several programs including Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL; formerly Bone Builders), and Grocery to Go. She meets locally with volunteers in locations such as the library, churches, and the Heritage Center. The program is primarily funded by AmeriCorps Seniors. Their advisory board meets quarterly and consists of two board members per county. The Board thanked her for her report.

Auditor-Treasurer Items:

The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Revenue must confirm the appointments of all County Assessors in the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the State appointments of all Minnesota County Assessors are for four-year terms, and those terms expire December 31st, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Commissioner of Revenue must confirm the reappointment of County Assessors before becoming effective on January 1st, 2025, and in advance must receive a resolution from each County approving the reappointment of their County Assessor for a four-year term.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners does hereby approve the reappointment of Carl Bruzek as Pennington County Assessor for a four-year term beginning on January 1st, 2025, and ending December 31st, 2028.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to accept a letter of resignation from Director of Veteran's Services John Hamre effective November 1, 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to authorize the County Coordinator to advertise for the position of Full-Time Director of Veteran's Services. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve issuance of a duplicate warrant to Ronin Cloud in the amount of \$576.66 to replace lost warrant #113950 dated July 13, 2023, without issuance of an indemnifying bond. Motion carried. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Emily Marie Barth as Part-Time, Temporary Crime Victim Services Advocate with an effective starting date of October 17, 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve an agreement with USI Consulting Group, Inc. (formerly Hildi Inc.) for consulting and actuarial services for fiscal year 2025 at a cost of \$3,200 and fiscal year 2026 at a cost of \$1,000. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to change the date and time of the December 10, 2024, County Board meeting to December 12, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to change the date of the December 24, 2024, County Board meeting to December 27, 2024, to be held at its regular time of 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

The Board discussed a county cannabis ordinance, which is in the early stages of discussion but would require a public hearing. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to schedule a Public Hearing regarding a proposed Pennington County Cannabis Ordinance for December 12, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in the Justice Center Board Room. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve and adopt the findings and order of the July 9, 2024, Public Hearing and petition by the City of TRF and the RLWD to outlet municipal stormwater to CD#70. Motion carried.

County Attorney Items: None.

Committee Reports / Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Peterson stated that MN Rural Counties held their annual meeting in Alexandria yesterday. Nine priorities were put before the board and the top three were better solid waste policies, \$200M bonding funds for local bridge replacement, and mental health for youth/adults. MRC also renewed their contract with Capitol Hill Associates to be their lobbyist, and he was voted in as the new Chair of MRC.

Commissioner Peterson reminded the Board of the AMC District 3 meeting being held in East Grand Forks on October 17th. He believes that solid waste needs to be a priority for our county, including SCORE funding and e-waste. Discussion followed with it noted that the county's solid waste currently all goes to the Mar-Kit landfill.

Interim County Attorney Nathan Haase discussed a new, one-year agreement with Waste Masters, LLC, formerly Les's Sanitation, for recycling services. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a new operating and facility space agreement between Pennington County and Waste Masters,

LLC for recycling services for the period of September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025, with processing fees to be set at a flat monthly rate of \$5,500. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to October 22, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Seth Nelson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners