

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
DECEMBER 27, 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 Friday, December 27, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Roy Sourdif, David Sorenson, Neil Peterson. Members absent: Bruce Lawrence, Seth Nelson.

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

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

Commissioner Peterson stated that former County Commissioner Oliver ‘Skip’ Swanson passed away on December 22, 2024. He served as a Commissioner for 32 years and asked that the Board and others present observe a moment of silence in his remembrance.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the County Board minutes of December 12, 2024, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$259,513.15 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$170,026.94
Road & Bridge	\$390,570.79
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 6,076.13
Ditch Funds	\$ 55,568.96

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$3,075.00 were also approved.

Human Service Director Julie Sjostrand presented the consent agenda from the December 17, 2024, Human Service Committee meeting. On a motion by Commissioner Peterson and seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Service Committee for December 17, 2024 (detailed minutes on record) are hereby adopted:

SECTION A

- I. To approve November 15, 2024, Human Service Committee meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the agency’s personnel action as presented.
- III. A. To approve the CY 2025 Behavioral Health (Temporary Confinement/Community Based Services/Residential) Purchase of Service

Agreements Between Sanford Behavioral Health and Pennington County Human Services as presented.

B. To approve the CY 2025 Rural Transportation Collaborative Access Transportation Services Contract with Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc. as presented.

C. To approve the CY 2025 Whole-of-State Service Agreement and Work Order Contract Between the State of Minnesota (MNIT) and Pennington County Human Services as presented.

SECTION B

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

Crystelle Philipp of the firm Hoffman, Philipp & Martell, PLLC met with the Board to present and review the 2023 Pennington County audit. Of note was the Management's Discussion and Analysis section and the county's net worth of \$81M+, of which approximately 78% is capital assets. Total debt was \$14,349,521 which includes long-term debt owed out to 2037. Unassigned funds in the General fund were larger than necessary and could be earmarked in the future. The Auditor-Treasurer noted that remaining American Rescue Plan Act funds will be allocated to salaries if approved at today's meeting. The Solid Waste Fund and Highway Capital Improvement funds were also discussed. The Board thanked Ms. Philipp for the report.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan:

Mr. Flaagan presented a resolution to sponsor a grant application by ISD#564 to the MnDOT Safe Routes to School program. The following resolution was motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION TO SPONSOR APPLICATION TO MNDOT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Safe Routes to School Program assists schools and communities create safer walking and biking routes for children; and

WHEREAS, MnDOT Safe Routes to School Program solicits application to enable schools and communities to implement Safe Routes to School infrastructure.

WHEREAS, Thief River Falls Public Schools ISD #564 have identified safety concerns related to traffic at Challenger Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, the Safe Routes to School program requires a state-aid city or county sponsor for application submission; and

WHEREAS, all funding for non-eligible work items including engineering, and costs exceeding the grant award, have been secured for this project.

WHEREAS, Pennington County has reviewed and approved the project and agreed to sponsor the grant application.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Pennington County Board of Commissioners supports the submittal of an application for the Safe Routes to School Program for Challenger Elementary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Pennington County agrees to act as the sponsoring agent for Thief River Falls Public Schools #564 and shall ensure the project complies with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

County Sheriff Seth Vettleon:

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Caleb Allan Gowan for the position of Part-Time Corrections Officer, contingent upon successful completion of fingerprinting and background checks. Motion carried.

Auditor-Treasurer Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to transfer \$63,950.72 from various ditch maintenance funds to the Road & Bridge Fund for work done by the Highway Department in 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to authorize the County Auditor-Treasurer to make temporary transfers, as outlined by the Auditor-Treasurer, to bring ditch balances to a positive balance at the end of 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to schedule an Economic Development Tax Abatement Hearing for January 28th, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. in the Justice Center Board Room regarding the following properties. Motion carried.

<u>Parcel Number:</u>	<u>Property owner:</u>
25.052.087.00	Richard Merrill
25.121.019.10	Davis J Mills

Ms. Herzberg discussed ARPA funds and noted that approximately \$230k remains and must be spent by the end of December 2024. The following resolution was motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

**RESOLUTION
AMERICAN RESUCE PLAN ACT FUNDING
PENNINGTON COUNTY, MN**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners approves the following in relation to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act Funding for Pennington County:

1. The remaining balance of ARPA funds shall be used for eligible Revenue Fund Salaries in the year 2024, beginning with Sheriff Office Salaries as primary,

Auditor/Treasurer Salaries as secondary, and all other eligible Revenue Salaries as needed thereafter.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve an annual hardware training/replacement warranty plan with SeaChange Print Innovations, LLC for the county's OmniBallot election machines at a cost of \$100 per unit. Motion carried.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a three-year agreement with the University of Minnesota for County Extension services and one FT Extension Educator/4-H position effective January 1, 2025 (detailed agreement on file). Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve and submit a letter of support for ISD#564 in their grant application to the MnDOT Safe Routes to School program. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a Memorandum of Understanding to the 2024-2026 Teamsters Local #320 CBA (Dispatcher, Corrections Officer, Jail Program Director, Sergeants, STS) whereas the County shall have the option to hire a new employee at a wage no higher than wage step four. Motion carried. It was noted that Teamsters has approved the MOU so it will be effective upon the county's approval and signature.

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson presented an updated employee personnel policy that has been reviewed and approved by a department head group and the Personnel Committee. Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the updated Pennington County Personnel Policy as presented, with an effective date of January 1st, 2025. Motion carried.

County Attorney Items:

Mr. Haase commented on the new Pennington County Personnel Policy, noting that he reviewed it as well and saw no issues.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the transfer of \$125,000 from the Highway Building Improvements account to the Highway Capital Improvement account. Motion carried.

Committee Reports / Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Peterson spoke in regard to 2025 elected official salaries for Pennington County. He noted no change to the County Commissioners salary for 2025, and after a comparison of area and comparable counties is recommending a 2025 salary of \$128,402

for the Pennington County Sheriff. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to set the salary of the Pennington County Sheriff at \$128,402 for 2025. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to adjourn the Board meeting to January 7, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Roy Sourdif, Vice-Chairman
Board of Commissioners