

The Wright County Board met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Husom, Sawatzke, Daleiden, Potter and Borrell present.

**MINUTES**

Husom moved to approve the 1-12-16 County Board Minutes as presented, seconded by Potter. The motion carried 5-0.

**AGENDA**

Potter moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Daleiden. The motion carried 5-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

On a motion by Borrell, second by Daleiden, all voted to approve the Consent Agenda:

- A. AUDITOR/TREASURER
  - 1. Approve Renewal of 2016 Tobacco Licenses for:
    - A. City of Albertville: Albertville Tobacco and Vapor
    - B. City of Cokato: 4-Way Liquors, LLC.
- B. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
  - 1. Refer to Technology Committee:
    - A. Board video streaming update
    - B. Land Records Onbase Conversion
    - C. Onbase Upgrade
    - D. Potential fiber expansion to Historical Society - Project Initiation Example
    - E. Wireless upgrade status
    - F. Email archiving retention update
- C. SHERIFFS OFFICE
  - 1. Refer Sheriff Department Reorganizational Plan To Personnel Committee

**TIMED AGENDA ITEMS**

**BOB HIIVALA – AUDITOR/TREASURER**

Adopt Resolution Establishing an Absentee Ballot Board

Daleiden moved to adopt Resolution #16-04, seconded by Husom, carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Claims

On a motion by Potter, second by Daleiden, all voted to approve the claims as listed in the abstract, subject to audit, for a total of \$359,199.92 with 188 vendors and 295 transactions.

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**1-13-16 BUILDING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

On a motion by Potter, second by Daleiden, all voted to approve the Building Committee Minutes and recommendations. The Building Committee Minutes follow:

- 1. Nursing Mothers Room

An event occurred recently that brought the access and location of the current Nursing Mother's rooms to the attention of Administration. Presently as set up access needs to be provided through a card key, which allows the user to gain access into the wRight Choice area. There currently is no Nursing Mothers area available to the public.

Hatfield provided a floor plan identifying the current location of the Nursing Mother's Rooms. Presently there are two rooms used for this purpose that are located within the wRight Choice area. In order to access these rooms you need to have card key access into wRight Choice. Hatfield noted that there is another door that allows access

**1-13-16 Building Committee Minutes (cont.):**

to the first Nursing Mother's room which is located before the card key access door, this door is currently set in a lock mode.

Recommendation: Direct Staff to set the locked door into unlock mode, move existing signage to new access area; provide additional directional signage; and provide a suggestion box for occupants to provide feedback to assist in accommodating the needs of those that utilize the room.

**2. Annex Custodial Closet**

Hatfield stated that that he would like to look at providing handicap accessibility into the public restrooms located on the first floor of the annex. This could be accomplished by converting the current custodial closet adjacent to the men's restroom. Preference would be to demo both restrooms along with the closet to create two handicap accessible restrooms. Discussed the option of having the closet become a family ADA complaint restroom and leaving the other two as is. The Committee then visited the area.

Recommendation: Direct Staff to gather information on options and costs and then bring those back to the Committee.

**3. Lakeview Apartment Parking**

Mr. Belsaas, a tenant of Lakeview Apartments, had contacted Administration and Commissioner Sawatzke with his concerns regarding parking for the Lakeview Apartment residents. Mr. Belsaas was informed this matter would be directed to the building committee and that he was invited to attend if he desired. The City of Buffalo had also been contacted and advised of the meeting. Neither were present. The concern raised by Mr. Belsaas, is the lack of designated parking for Lakeview Apartments. The Committee reviewed the layout of the parking areas surrounding both the library and government center; the ownership of those areas; and the history of the parking situation.

Recommendation: Direct Staff to send notification to the tenants and owner of Lakeview Apartments that there is public parking available to them located within the City of Buffalo's public parking lot, southeast of the library.  
(End of 1-13-16 Building Committee Minutes)

**TIMED ITEMS****BRIAN ASLESON, CHIEF DEPUTY ATTORNEY****Approve of Retaining Paul Bakken and Dwight Dahlen to Perform Appraisals for Purposes of Tax Court.**

Asleson explained the process for scheduling tax court cases has changed. An earlier deadline includes notifying parties of any expert witnesses, so the County is finding it necessary to hire professionals earlier in the process. Funding is from the Professional Services line item. Daleiden moved to approve the request to retain Paul Bakken and Dwight Dahlen to perform appraisals for tax court. The motion was seconded by Potter and carried 5-0.

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION****1-13-16 PERSONNEL MINUTES**

Husom moved to approve the Minutes, seconded by Daleiden, and carried 5-0. The Personnel Committee Minutes follow:

**1. Personnel Policy 506 Business Related Expense Reimbursement**

Propose revisions to Policy 506 to provide clarification regarding calculating eligible mileage for reimbursement including deducting normal commute miles. Revised policy will be effective March 1, 2016 to allow time to train supervisors.

Recommendation: Recommend proposed revisions to Policy 506 Business Related Expense Reimbursement to the County Board for approval on January 19, 2016 (effective March 1, 2016).

**2. Motor Pool Vehicle Usage Procedures**

Propose consolidating HHS and County operating procedures. Proposed revisions provide clarification regarding motor pool vehicle usage and combine language of both procedures to create one procedure for all County employees. Revised procedures will be effective upon board approval (January 19, 2016)

**1-13-16 Personnel Committee Minutes (cont.):**

Recommendation: Recommend proposed revisions to Motor Pool procedures to the County Board for approval on January 19, 2016.

(End of 1-13-16 Personnel Committee Minutes)

**SEAN RILEY, PLANNING & ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**Address FEMA Mapping Project To Proceed With The Revised Preliminary Study Or To Move Forward With The County-Wide Appeal Period.

Correspondence was received from FEMA relating to Preliminary copies which FEMA provided in 2011 of the Flood Insurance Rate Map and Flood Insurance Study for Wright County and Incorporated Areas. The letter reflects that in 2011, the project was placed on hold due to the expiration of FEMA's Map Modernization Program. The project resumed under FEMA's Risk MAP Program in 2013. At meetings held, County officials and three communities expressed desire to have FEMA study identified lakes that were not mapped during the preliminary study. These Lakes include Anne, Beebe, Carrigan, Emma, Fish, Foster, French, Indian, Mary, Pleasant, Rice, Rock, Schmidt, Sylvia (East & West), and Twin (North and South). A hydraulic analysis was performed and draft work maps mailed in 2014. The intent of the draft work map mailing is to provide the impacted communities the opportunity to review the updated flood risk not included in the original preliminary study. Since the mailing, County officials have engaged FEMA with comments on the delineation of some lakes and expressed second thoughts on whether to proceed with the revised preliminary study. FEMA said that in 2015, Commissioners were to decide on whether to proceed with the revised Preliminary Study or enter into the County-wide appeal period without the map updates. The letter requests the County reply with a decision to proceed with the Revised Preliminary Study or move forward with the County-wide appeal period by 1-22-16. If no response is received, FEMA will initiate the statutory 90-day appeal period without including the revisions.

At today's County Board Meeting, Riley distributed a map reflecting the current flood plain, flood insurance claims, and revised preliminary lakes. He stated the Board should make a decision on whether to include the referenced Lakes on the map and have the maps redone. FEMA has indicated a willingness to provide additional time to the County. Riley stated the appeal process is a part of the overall Map Modernization Project. Once a decision is made to move forward, the appeals process is done. If the County wants to include additional lakes, then the preliminary maps must be updated before moving forward with the appeals process.

Borrell made a motion to request a 30-day extension from FEMA. If the extension is not granted, then to proceed without revisions. If an extension is granted by FEMA, Riley should immediately contact lake associations, cities, and townships one final time for input, giving them a deadline of 21 days from now. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

Accept the findings and recommendation of the Planning Commission to accept the zoning amendments as follows:

ADD THE FOLLOWING TO SECTION 762.2 Solar Energy Farms Requirements and Standards:

Solar Energy Farms and Systems will be considered by the Planning Commission on restricted parcels of land zoned General Agricultural (AG).

ADD THE FOLLOWING TO SECTION 762.3 Solar Energy Systems Requirements and Standards

Solar Energy Systems will be considered by the Planning Commission on restricted parcels of land zoned General Agricultural (AG).

This item was laid over from the last County Board Meeting, allowing staff to compile information as requested by the Board. Riley distributed material relating to an eight-section area of Buffalo Township and Rockford Township. The sampling included information on entitlements and restrictions. Also distributed was information on the number of entitlements remaining by township. Discussion involved what the maps reflected and various scenarios.

Daleiden questioned whether cities and townships (that are in charge of their Planning & Zoning) can be more restrictive than the County. Riley said cities stand on their own. Townships can elect to do their own Planning &

Zoning and can then be more restrictive by adopting land use regulations. It involves a process and there must be a basis for it.

Don Schmidt, Buffalo Township Supervisor, said Buffalo Township is opposed to solar projects being allowed on restricted parcels. He plans to pursue the option of Buffalo Township implementing a moratorium on solar energy farms. He referenced discussion at the Planning Commission level on restricted parcels (restricted due to a portion of the land being mortgaged) and said those situations are rare. Schmidt served on the Planning Commission and could only recall two times with that situation. Schmidt said this is a farming community. Solar farms have other opportunities through the CUP process. Schmidt referenced comments made at the Planning Commission on commodity farming prices, and said it is not the County's obligation to add Ordinance amendments because of hard times. He asked whether the County will cater to every enterprise. Schmidt said residents in Buffalo Township spoke loudly that they are opposed. If this comes to fruition, he did not feel there would be much agricultural land remaining. He asked the County Board to look at the short and long term ramifications while making their decision.

Tom Kleist, Buffalo Township, asked that the County Board take their time reviewing the ordinance amendments and do it correctly. Farmers are concerned with the possibility of solar farms being allowed on restricted land. He said farmers are having a hard time finding land to farm. Land is being purchased at a higher price than what it typically sells for. Kleist said the Aurora project does not provide benefit to Buffalo Township. He asked the County Board how much land they are prepared to take out of agriculture for this purpose.

Sawatzke responded that solar would generate more tax benefit compared to agriculture. Both provide a good tax base as they require very little services. He stated the topic of solar farms came up quickly and the County Board has not had the discussion relative to land being taken out of agricultural production.

Gordy Simonson, Solar Stone, reiterated statements made at the last County Board Meeting regarding Xcel Energy's footprint along Highway 12 and I-94 (about 10% of the County from a geographic standpoint). He said that substations have limited capacity and upgrades are expensive. Those upgrades would be the responsibility of the developer, which he stated is not financially feasible. Simonson said that with regard to capacity, negotiations with Xcel Energy resulted in a cap of 1 megawatt (approximately 5 acres) for any solar farm project applications effective 9-25-15. It was also negotiated that projects with 5 megawatts or less would be accepted for any project applications submitted prior to 9-25-15. Simonson mentioned the other solar garden projects that Solar Stone is working on in Minnesota. In Sartell, Big Lake, and Scandia, 5 megawatt projects have been approved using non-prime agricultural land. In Chisago City, a 3 megawatt project is proposed on a new jail site. Simonson said the project in Kokato can be 5 megawatts but setbacks will need to be met because of the land (lake, slough, and wetland).

Simonson said the best way to predict the future is to look at the past. He referenced the onset of wireless technology and cell towers, and the process to get that permitted with cities. Since that time, digital has been implemented. With regard to the solar industry, he said solar panels are currently 20% effective. Efficiencies will need to catch up with this technology over time as well. Simonson said there is a fundamental decentralization on how power is produced and delivered, moving from oil based to a renewable economy. The City of Waverly recently approved a bi-megawatt site, and that site will service 80% residential. He viewed this as residents being given an opportunity and making the right decision.

Sawatzke referenced the Xcel Energy footprint, which Simonson estimated at about 10% of the County. With 18 townships in the County, that would equate to about 2-3 townships being impacted. He supports giving more weight to the input of those townships impacted. Sawatzke responded to Simonson's comments on cell phone towers. Sawatzke said he was serving on the County Board at that time. The County Board took action to require cell phone towers to provide common usage (co-location). The Board also reviewed proposed locations and took action to protect itself. Cell phone towers are not allowed on restricted parcels.

Daleiden made a motion to table the issue for 30 days to provide the townships an opportunity to put in more restrictive language if that is their preference. Daleiden then withdrew his motion.

Discussion followed on the ability of townships to implement a moratorium. The moratorium could be imposed for one year, which would provide a township time for further review. Greg Kryzer, Assistant County Attorney, said a codification to the Ordinance requires a 10-day public notice.

Borrell made a motion to pass the Zoning Ordinance Amendments. The Amendments would not be effective for 60 days. This would allow a township time to implement a moratorium if desired. He said the townships in his District are supportive of solar gardens. Approval allows solar companies the advantage to move forward with planning. Borrell amended the motion to be effective for 60 days from 2-08-16. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Husom made a motion to table this issue for 60 days, seconded by Potter, and carried 5-0. This will allow Buffalo Township an opportunity to implement a moratorium if so desired. County staff was asked to provide assistance to the Township in this process where feasible. This issue will come back to the first County Board Meeting following 60 days from 1-19-16. The motion carried 5-0.

#### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

##### **1-13-16 WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Husom moved to approve the Minutes, seconded by Daleiden, and carried 5-0. The Ways & Means Committee Minutes follow:

1. Motor Pool Year End Recap (Laid over from 11/18/15)

Vergin provided updated information through the end of 2015, as requested from the meeting of November 18, 2015. Discussion included the comparison of the cost to operate the motor pool versus the IRS mileage rate, and the rate of reimbursement by the County. Discussed if at this time it would be appropriate to consider the addition of vehicles to the motor pool.

Recommendation:

Direct Staff to seek additional information on the costs incurred by other departments within the County that have their own vehicles. Costs should include all operating costs, including depreciation and insurance. Compare those costs to the costs of operating the motor pool. Bring the findings back to Committee in late February.

(End of 1-13-16 Ways & Means Committee Minutes)

##### **STATE OF THE CITIES LUNCHEON**

Potter moved to authorize attendance on 1-26-16 at 11:30 A.M., City of St. Michael City Center. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

##### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE / ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES**

None.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 A.M.