



BOARD MINUTES
BOARD OF WRIGHT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Christine Husom	District 1
Darek Vetsch	District 2
Mark Daleiden	District 3
Mary Wetter	District 4
Michael Kaczmarek	District 5

DATE APPROVED: MARCH 2, 2021

The Wright County Board met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Husom, Vetsch, Daleiden, Wetter, and Kaczmarek present.

COUNTY BOARD MINUTES 2-16-21 MEETING

Husom moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Vetsch and carried 5-0.

AGENDA

Daleiden requested to add, Board Retreat to the Agenda under Administration B.

Vetsch moved to approve the Agenda adding Board Retreat under Administration B. The motion was seconded by Wetter and carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Daleiden requested to remove item C1, (accept the 2019 Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting) for further discussion.

Vetsch moved to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of item C1. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. Reappoint Virgil Hawkins as Highway Engineer, four-year term, effective 5/01/2021 to 4/30/2025

B. HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Approval to fill a vacant Human Resources Representative position

C. FINANCE

2. Approve the Budget Amendments as attached. The appointed Auditor/Treasurer moves to a newly setup department (01-043). The Land Records staff moves to the Recorder's Budget under a new program code (01-101-044).
3. Informational: Monthly Finance Report for January 2021
4. Acknowledge Warrants issued between February 10, 2021 and February 16, 2021 (See below, Item X. Warrants)

ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA TO BE DISCUSSED

C. FINANCE

1. Accept the 2019 Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. This is the fifth year in a row in which Wright County has received this award for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

Daleiden said not every County achieves this goal. He congratulated the Auditor/Treasurer's Office and Financial Department for doing such a great job with what needs to be done to achieve this certificate for the last five years.

Vetsch moved to accept the 2019 Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

TIMED AGENDA ITEMS

Sean Deringer, Sheriff's Office

Recognition of Captain Dan Anselment's upcoming retirement at the end of February

Deringer said he was there to celebrate the upcoming retirement of Captain Anselment. He said the number one asset of any business organization is personnel. Deringer stated Anselment has been with Wright County for 33 years and it's a testament to Anselment to have former Sheriff's, former command staff, family, and friends in the room to celebrate with him. Deringer said Anselment is one of two remaining staff of the Sheriff's Office hired by Sheriff Darrell Wolff. The preceding Sheriffs all saw the value in Anselment and what he was able to accomplish. Sheriff Don Hozempa promoted him to Sergeant, Sheriff Gary Miller promoted him to Lieutenant, and Sheriff Joe Hagerty promoted him to Captain. Deringer said there are very few people with the ability to make everyone around them feel important and Anselment is one. Deringer said some of the younger people in the department refer to him as "Uncle Dan".

Anselment thanked Deringer for the nice send-off. He said living and growing up in the county that he has been able to serve for 33 years has been amazing. He thanked the citizens, board members and the community for letting him work in Wright County. Anselment said he loves Wright County and always will, and this has been his dream job.

The board members thanked Anselment for his years of service to Wright County.

Former Sheriff, Hozempa came to wish him well and stated he was loyal to all five sheriffs he worked with and someday he's going to ask Anselment, "who's your favorite?" Hozempa congratulated Anselment on his retirement.

Virgil Hawkins, Highway Department

Approve a Resolution of Support and Sponsorship for Silver Creek Township's Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) application. Silver Creek Township has prepared an LRIP Application for Improvements to 91st St. NW & Bishop Ave NW

Hawkins explained to the Board, when the board met Tuesday, February 16, 2021, and approved the LRIP resolution, for nine of the County Townships, Silver Creek Township was not included, but since then it has been submitted. Therefore, this resolution is for Silver Creek Township to have the Support and Sponsorship for the Local Road Improvement Program.

Vetsch moved to approve a resolution of Support and Sponsorship for Silver Creek Township's LRIP application. The motion was seconded by Kaczmarek and carried 5-0 on a roll call.

Matthew Detjen, AG & Drainage

Approve the low bid of \$315,361.28 from Molnau Trucking, LLC. for the Wright County culverts along County Ditch #10

Detjen went over the low bid that Molnau Trucking, LLC. submitted for the culverts along County Ditch #10. Detjen said the bid recommendation from ISG Inc. shows Molnau Trucking, LLC. is by far the lowest bid out of the seven bids received. He said references were checked for Molnau Trucking, LLC. and the cost would be paid for by the Road Authority and not the landowner. Detjen said this bid includes lowering two culverts and replacing one.

Hawkins said there was \$500,000 in the local levy that was budgeted for this year and the bid provides significant savings.

Vetsch moved to approve the low bid of \$315,361.28 from Molnau Trucking, LLC. for the culverts along County Ditch #10. The motion was seconded by Wetter and carried 5-0.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

Administration

Board Retreat

Daleiden said he would like to schedule a Board Retreat for the board members. He suggested having a facilitator come to the retreat to help the board work through different items. Daleiden said one of his goals for the retreat is to go over the plan for the upcoming years with the new commissioners. He also said he would like to go over the strategic planning and what came out of those sessions, so all the board members are on the same page. It will also give the new commissioners the chance to add or change things.

Husom said it would be nice to have a facilitator unless there is someone in-house that could direct the board through the process. Vetsch proposed 50 percent of the time during the retreat with a facilitator and 50 percent of the time without a facilitator. County Administrator Lee Kelly went over the facilitators from past retreats. Vetsch said at the last retreat the commissioners discussed workflow, expectations, and understanding the dynamic of how the board works with administration. Daleiden suggested the board have the same facilitator as last time, so the commissioners can go over goals that have been accomplished and what still needs to be worked on. Possible dates for the retreat were discussed, Daleiden suggested to find out what the facilitator has for availability at the end of March. Kaczmarek asked for a copy of the minutes from the last retreat for those who were not there.

TIMED AGENDA ITEMS CONTINUED

Obstruction Hearing on County Ditch #10

Assistant County Attorney Greg Kryzer explained the obstruction hearing is pursuant to Minnesota Statute §103E.075. The Ditch Coordinator was notified by a contractor removing trees that there were some obstructions on the Gilmer Lateral, specifically between Station 1 and Station 15. After being informed of the obstruction, a public hearing was immediately scheduled for the February 23, 2021 board meeting. The property owners on both sides of the ditch have been notified via certified mail as required by state statute.

Daleiden asked for information regarding the obstructions. Detjen said there were obstructions on both sides of the Gilmer Lateral. He explained on the south side, the Klammer property, there was an outhouse, concrete chunks, wire, trailers, and other debris. Detjen said he spoke with the property owner and was informed that all the obstructions had been removed. However, Detjen has not been out for inspection. Detjen said on the north side, the Gruenhagen property, there was a large pile of fencing, and metal scraps.

Vetsch asked who would have to take care of the cost to remove the obstructions? Kryzer explained that the purpose of the hearing is to give the persons who put the obstructions there an opportunity to remove it in a reasonable amount of time. If the property owners don't remove it and the Ditch Authority must, then the cost would be assessed back to the property owners.

Wetter asked how long the property owners had to remove the obstructions. Kryzer explained the property owners were given at least 10 days in the certified mailing. When Detjen discussed it with the property owners, the owners thought the obstructions could be removed relatively quickly. The property owners have until this Sunday, February 28, 2021 to have the obstructions removed.

Daleiden opened the public hearing. No one from the public came forward to speak.

Kryzer recommended approval of the proposed order that was given to the board for the removal of obstructions pursuant to MN §103E.075.

Vetsch moved to approve the obstruction order in accordance with MN §103E.075. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION CONTINUED

Rescind reclassification of Sheriff's Office Administrator position

Daleiden stated according to Robert's Rules of Order, there must be a motion and a second to be able to have discussion on this item.

Kaczmarek moved to discuss rescinding the classification of Sheriff's Office Administrator position. The motion was seconded by Wetter.

Kaczmarek said he was appointed as an alternate to the Personnel Committee and was in attendance for the January 27, 2021 meeting where he heard, a proposal from Health and Human Services regarding the reclassification of three to five positions. The committee listened to the proposal and then denied the request to reclassify those positions. It was

ultimately decided to have a moratorium on reclassifying positions in the county.

Kaczmarek stated, that, in April 2018, the board voted to have a job classification study done for all the jobs in Wright County which cost \$60,400. There was a questionnaire sent to all employees to fill out about their position if the employee wished to do so. Kaczmarek said there was a deadline of June 2018 that went along with this study if someone wanted to appeal the process. He said there was a point system which was used for grading the positions. Kaczmarek went over the “was” (previous), the Business Manager job description, and the “is” (current), the Sheriff’s Office Administrator job description. Kaczmarek said in talking with Wright County employees, constituents, and business owners in the county, he hasn’t found anyone who supports or defends the Sheriff’s Office Administrator position. Kaczmarek said for those reasons that were explained, he asked for the motion to rescind this reclassification of Sheriff’s Office Administrator.

Vetsch stated if you rescind this position it could open the county up to potential litigation risk and cost the county further funds by doing so. Vetsch asked Kaczmarek if he did his due diligence by speaking with the Sheriff or the Sheriff’s Office Administrator regarding what the job entails. Kaczmarek said he hadn’t spoke with either. Vetsch said before rescinding a position it would be important to talk with those involved before making a decision of this magnitude to understand the scope of what this position entails. Vetsch explained that, due to the Sheriff being an elected official, there are different freedoms and autonomy that other departments don’t have. Vetsch said this position has saved the county money because it has taken on different roles and aspects have been automated to create infrastructure, so there isn’t a need for a person to do certain roles.

Schawn Johnson, Human Resources Director, stated Deringer made it abundantly clear that the Sheriff’s Office Administrator is number three in the command structure. Also, due to additional supervisory responsibilities, the decision was made to move this position from a Grade 18 to a Grade 19 on the employee grading system. He said grading of positions is also predicated on hierarchy. Vetsch asked Johnson to clarify, if a person is working in a specific position that is out of classification and job scope which is presented to the board with merit, and the board doesn’t take action on it, the county opens itself up to possible litigation? Johnson agreed. Kaczmarek said he is not afraid of litigation because he’s doing the right thing for taxpayers.

Daleiden called the question and the motion failed 4-1 with Kaczmarek casting the only vote in favor of the motion.

TIMED AGENDA ITEMS CONTINUED

Employee(s) & Group of the year recognition

Kelly explained this year’s Employee Recognition Ceremony had to be done differently than years past, due to COVID. He said there was a large number of nominations this year. The winners for Employee of the Year were Alan Wilczek and Heather Lemieux. Group of the Year went to the COVID-19 Incident Response Team. A video was made for the Employee(s) & Group of the Year recognition which included the nominators and the recipients, accepting their awards.

After the video, the Board named all the other nominees and thanked them for their hard work and dedication to Wright County.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION CONTINUED

Review department budget

Kaczmarek said in January the board was given a 132-page budget report from 2020 which included revenues and expenditures to review and approve. He said there were some numbers on a few pages that caught his attention. Kaczmarek stated on Page 3 of the board’s budget report, there is a line item listed as “Court Appointed Counsel”. Kaczmarek said for 2020 it was budgeted for \$218,000 and \$311,000 was spent, making it 43 percent over budget. Kaczmarek said in 2020 there were less arrests and less court hearings and would like some clarification.

Court Administrator Monica Tschumper said she reviewed the last six months of 2020. Tschumper said because she

technically works for the state, she doesn't have access to the county system can only get paper copies. She explained the budget doesn't have anything to do with arrests declining because that's not where Court Appointed Counsel comes into play it's more for mandatory appointments, not criminal cases. Court Appointed Counsel is for probate cases, guardianships, commitments, child protection cases, and family contempt cases. Tschumper said the majority were probate cases. The most common cases of probate are the guardianship/conservator cases which can go on for years.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE/ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

Kaczmarek attended the Great River Regional Library Board meeting, the budget was reviewed. He also attended the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) education training 101 for new commissioners.

Husom was on KRWC radio last week. She is newly appointed on the General Government Committee of AMC and there was a great discussion regarding solar energy. Stearns County brought up having issues with the one-megawatt limitations on solar farms and said it is not collecting any taxes therefore there is no revenue. The Transportation Alliance met, and the Highway 55 Coalition identified some projects. The Transportation Alliance is trying to get funding from the state for Highway 55 improvements and there has been ongoing discussion about making Highway 55 four-lanes.

Daleiden attended the Wellness Committee meeting. There was discussion regarding the budget. The group decided to work with Wright County Parks & Recreation to create events for employees. Home Harmony and Healthy Bingo are currently being offered. The committee discussed tobacco-free grounds. There will be a survey sent to Wright County employees to see what activities they would like to see. The Parks & Recreation Department purchased some tents with a grant, to give people the opportunity to try camping. The Bloodmobile will be Thursday, May 6, 2021 and the Poker Walk will be in June.

Vetsch met with Flaherty & Hood and State Representative Marion O'Neill regarding Department of Vehicle Services (DVS), road testing issues and a variety of other subjects. A letter from the County Board and the Legislative Delegation is being put together to send to DVS requesting direction and what is planned for the Buffalo road testing center. Vetsch attended Wright County Economic Development Partnership meeting, which recapped this past year. He also attended Region 7W Development Commission meeting. It was a contentious meeting due to the scoring mechanism in grading road projects. There was discussion regarding the scoring for equity and it was brought up that it's not necessarily "fair". Therefore, there will be discussion at an upcoming meeting regarding what the scoring should look like.

Wetter attended the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) meeting, along with Husom. The Soil and Water Conservation District wanted input concerning AIS as to who would oversee ramp and decontamination units. Bishop AIS Services was selected as the contractor that would oversee the ramp and decontamination units because it had a low bid and had been used in the county already. Discussion took place dealing with high-priority lakes, which include Buffalo Lake on the north and south ramp, Howard Lake, Lake Pulaski and Waverly Lake. The Historical Society met and discussed its website. On the website it has "Ask the Librarian", and there have been a lot of questions regarding specific houses which they are not able to answer. There are changes being made in the front gallery. The AMC met and the afternoon session was regarding environment and natural resource policy. There was discussion on Zero Emission Vehicle Standards (ZEVS).

Kelly provided some follow up from the Transportation Committee of the Whole. There was discussion with the Highway Department on how to put together information regarding the Local Option Sales Tax. There was follow-up with the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and related activities, getting the accounts set up, and working on insurance/bonding. Project Administrator Elizabeth Karels started this week. She will attend the board meeting March 2, 2021 to introduce herself.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

County Board Minutes submitted by Angie Fisher, Administrative Specialist