



BOARD MINUTES
BOARD OF WRIGHT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OCTOBER 5, 2021

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

DATE APPROVED: OCTOBER 19, 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 9-28-21 MEETING

Husom moved to approve the minutes from 9-28-21. The motion was seconded by Vetsch and carried 5-0.

AGENDA

Daleiden informed the board that the COVID-19 update under Timed Agenda Items, will be discussed when Dr. Morris from CentraCare is able to join the meeting via Teams.

Vetsch moved to approve the Agenda with the modification to the COVID-19 update. The motion was seconded by Wetter and carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Kaczmarek requested to pull Item B2 (Administration – Finance) for further discussion.

Kaczmarek moved to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of Item B2 (Administration – Finance) for further discussion. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

* Items B2 for discussion.

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. Approve the following Grant Applications:
 - A. WC-07 Customer Flow Management System
 - B. WC-008 Emergency Paid Sick Leave for County Staff
 - C. WC-009 Replace HVAC Controls at Historical Society
2. Deny the following Program Request and Grant Application:
 - A. WCPH-002 Programmable Sign

B. *ADMINISTRATION – FINANCE

1. Acknowledge Warrants Issued between September 22, 2021 and September 28, 2021 (*See Below, Item IX. Warrants Issued*)
2. Approved Transfer of \$824,209.51 from Fund 01 (General Fund) to Fund 34 (Capital Improvement Fund). These funds are to cover the shortfall of the Wright County Sheriff's Office Training Facility
34-164-000-0000-5910 Transfer In \$824,209.51
01-100-201-0000-6910 Transfer Out \$824,209.51
3. Motion to Approve the Reimbursement of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds as follows:
County ARP funds:
Approval of County Reimbursement of \$3,152.74 from 01-099-493.6910 Transfer Out Into 01-100-493.5910 Transfer In as follows:
\$3,152.74 for Administrative Expenses-Staff Costs
Approval of Use of ARP funds from 01-099-493.6261 and 01-099-493.6801
\$6.48 5.17 Broadband-Other Projects

C. ATTORNEY

1. Approve the Developers Agreement for Hannah's Landing and Authorize Signatures
2. Replacement for the Position of Assistant County Attorney due to a retirement as of October 31, 2021

D. HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

1. Approve MDH Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) Current Contract Amendment (\$314,614) for period November 1, 2021 through October 31, 2022
 2. Position Replacement
 - A. Social Worker
- E. SHERIFF'S OFFICE
1. Position backfill:
 - A. Three Deputy FTE positions
 2. Refer to the Personnel Committee for discussion of backfilling positions during Long-Term Medical Leaves along with future hiring challenges

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

ADMINISTRATION

COVID-19 Update

Director of Public Health Sarah Grosshuesch and Health Promotion Coordinator Jacob Anson have been working on the county's COVID response, primarily planning vaccinations. However, during conversations regarding vaccination planning with the health care systems it was realized how stretched and stressed the health care systems are. Particularly in the central region due to the high case rate. Wright County is in the top 20 counties for positive cases.

Dr. Morris from CentraCare said the statewide data for COVID hospitalizations show that greater Minnesota is surpassing the numbers admitted in the seven-county metro area. CentraCare tracks what information the state puts out for county-by-county data, and it tracks its own data from the lab services, clinics and hospitals. CentraCare's test positivity rate is above 13 percent. Throughout all CentraCare health systems there are currently 84 COVID patients hospitalized, 66 of which are at the St. Cloud location. Of the 84 patients hospitalized in the CentraCare health system roughly 20 percent have been vaccinated which means about 80 percent of patients admitted to the hospital are unvaccinated.

Dr. Morris said after the first wave of vaccinations, the challenge is now seeing if the vaccinations are wearing off after about the six-month period because the immune responses are going down which is why the boosters are being promoted.

Grosshuesch explained that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID Data Tracker is where the CDC and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) school guidance for COVID comes from.

Vetsch said it is unlikely a person would be able to find a place to be tested for COVID within 24 hours at this point. Grosshuesch agreed saying you most likely would need to see your primary physician and that you need to be symptomatic. Grosshuesch said there are only one to two Urgent Care facilities open a day in Wright County.

Grosshuesch said none of the schools in Wright County are following the MDH or CDC guidelines. Some of the schools make the same recommendations, some are doing contact tracing and notifying parents. However, some of the schools in Wright County are not.

Wetter asked if the county is planning on giving the COVID vaccine along with the flu shot? Grosshuesch said there are already flu shot clinics planned through the county. Wetter asked if the health care system will be able to figure out if a person has the flu or COVID? Grosshuesch said they are two different viruses and there are different tests. Grosshuesch said the hope is that it will only be one swab for both tests

ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT AGENDA TO BE DISCUSSED

B. ADMINISTRATION – FINANCE

2. Approved Transfer of \$824,209.51 from Fund 01 (General Fund) to Fund 34 (Capital Improvement Fund). These funds are to cover the shortfall of the Wright County Sheriff's Office Training Facility

34-164-000-0000-5910 Transfer In \$824,209.51
01-100-201-0000-6910 Transfer Out \$824,209.51

Kaczmarek said under the background justification it noted that there was not enough bonded for the construction of the Sheriff's Office Training Facility. The sale of the bonds was based off an estimated cost. Kaczmarek asked what kind of impact would this have had if it had been addressed a few weeks prior? Finance & Taxpayer Services Fiscal Officer Ryan Kotila said after the budget was closed and all the vendors had been paid, the report was run to find out the cash shortfall which is why it is now being brought to the board.

Kaczmarek asked what the \$824,209.51 was spent on and what the extra expenses were for? Vetsch said the scope of the estimate was done with Contegrity Group. The county wasn't aware that this type of facility was unique in the cost structure. Contegrity Group gave an estimated cost on the building. It was realized there are aspects of a training facility with an indoor firing range that have different requirements that Contegrity Group was not aware of. Then the county contracted with RJM Construction. When RJM Construction scoped the work, it was found out that the blast walls in the back and the ventilation system that was necessary were substantially more expensive than what Contegrity Group thought it would be.

Vetsch said had the county went with RJM Construction from the beginning the \$824,209.51 would have been part of the cost estimate and it would have been on budget or under budget.

Kaczmarek asked Kotila what the total cost for the Training Facility ended up being? Kotila said the total cost for the building was \$9,593,136.05. Kaczmarek asked if the total cost was to Wright County or if this included the \$2.2 million contribution from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)? Kotila said it's the total cost of the building. Vetsch said the county bonded too low because of bad information.

Kaczmarek moved to approve Item B2 (Administration – Finance) under the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Wetter and carried 5-0.

TIMED AGENDA ITEMS

BRIAN ASLESON, ATTORNEY

Adopt Resolution Approving Supplemental Assessment Roll for Service Charges in the Charlotte/Martha Subordinate Service District

Asleson said there was a public hearing in August regarding the supplemental service charges. The purpose for the service charges is to take care of the shortfall in the dedicated fund for that sewer district.

Asleson said on the Assessment Roll, Jack and Sheri Simmer are the owners of a parcel and are being assessed \$5,400 because at some point after the project was installed the Simmer's combined a couple of tax parcels into one tax parcel. There is only one tax parcel but there is enough land that the owners were originally assessed for hooking up the house and for hooking up an additional stub for future connections. Meaning there are two connections on the property.

Asleson said on the Assessment Roll, Mark and Sandra Nelson are the owners of a parcel. They are also being assessed \$5,400 for the same situation. Asleson said both parties were sent a letter prior to the public hearing to explain why they were being assessed \$5,400. Neither party responded to Asleson regarding the assessment.

Asleson said there were a few items that came up during the public hearing which were investigated and have been resolved. Asleson reviewed those items with the board.

The residents can prepay the assessment without interest. There is a period of 30 days from the time of the resolution from the governing authority during which parties can prepay. Because this is being done under a different chapter of the statute, Asleson suggested giving parties until November 15, 2021 as a cutoff date.

Vetsch moved to adopt a Resolution Approving Supplemental Assessment Roll for Service in the Charlotte/Martha Subordinate Service District. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

MATT DETJEN, AG & DRAINAGE

Approve the 2021 Ditch Assessments for Expenses from October 2020 – September 2021

Detjen said there were five ditches that were recommended for this year; County Ditch #10, County Ditch #38, Joint Ditch #3 which the county is not the host, Joint Ditch #14, and Joint Ditch #15. Some of these are held because of redetermination of benefits and other factors such as the amount that each ditch has. Ditches are usually assessed when it reaches a certain account balance.

Wetter asked what is a normal average assessment? Detjen said the viewers would figure in a proximity ratio meaning the farther away from the ditch system, reduces the assessment on those acres.

Vetsch moved to approve the 2021 Ditch Assessments for Expenses from October 2020 – September 2021. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

Set Interest Rate and Review Payment Tiers for County Ditch #10 Assessment

Detjen said last year's interest rate was 2.5 percent. Wright County's payment tier is broken down into one, three, five, 10 and 20 years. There has been discussion about County Ditch #10 but Detjen said it would be wise to do an all-encompassing payment tier. Detjen said he has been asked if there is anything that can be done between the 10- and 20-year assessments. The 10-year assessment would be anywhere from \$10,000 to \$50,000 and the 20-year assessment would be anywhere from \$50,000 and above.

Kaczmarek said he has had many conversations with landowners on County Ditch #10 because it's a very big and expensive project. Kaczmarek said it would be more palatable if the county had the 10-year payment window for the cost of \$10,000 to \$20,000 which is \$2,000 per year, per landowner. If the landowner is assessed over \$20,000 it would go to the 20-year payment plan.

Daleiden suggested adding a 25-year plan if the assessment is over \$100,000 to give an additional five years to help landowner.

Detjen said over the last four years the county has received a total of \$560,000 from Soil and Water Conservation District.

Vetsch moved to set the Interest Rate at 2.5 percent with the modification of taking the 10-year from \$10,000 to \$20,000 and adding a 25-year plan for \$100,000 and above for 2021. The motion was seconded by Kaczmarek and carried 5-0.

Discuss Allocation Charges for Agriculture and Drainage Coordinator

Detjen said when he started with the county 50 percent of his salary including benefits was allocated. In 2019 it was changed to 25 percent, in 2020 it was reduced completely, and in 2021 it was back to 25 percent. This is currently allocated based off the length of a drainage system. Some of the ditches that the county doesn't do work on or are basically impossible to repair due to wetlands and public waters still get allocations.

Vetsch said he is in favor of doing one of two things. Either the county could charge back the 25 percent of Detjens's salary to systems that Detjen works on, or the county charges it to the General Fund. It would be easier to charge it to the General Fund because there wouldn't be so much time spent calculating which systems were worked on and how to allocate it.

Kaczmarek said on the side of accountability and transparency it would be good to have it broken down to a half hour or quarter hour, driving to a specific ditch or on the phone, that way the people that are not receiving service from the Ditch

Drainage Coordinator wouldn't have to pay. Detjen said he took over noxious weeds this year and would be interested to see how much of his time is spent on that, buffers, and ditches.

Husom said she agreed with what Vetsch was proposing because it's not a large dollar amount but would save Detjen time. Kaczmarek asked if this is revisited annually or if it's based on upcoming ditch projects? Husom said it is an evolving process.

Detjen said due to evolving job duties outside of the agricultural drainage work it would be hard to track but it would still be worth doing for a period. That way the board understands where his time is generally allocated.

Kaczmarek said it would be good to review this at the beginning of ditch season because there may have to be a change according to upcoming projects. Daleiden asked if noxious weeds are strictly townships or if it deals with cities too? Detjen said it would be countywide.

Vetsch moved to remove the 25 percent of Detjen's wage from the General Assessment across the ditch systems. The motion was seconded by Wetter and carried 5-0.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

ADMINISTRATION (CONT.)

Schedule a Deferred Compensation Committee Meeting

Vetsch moved to schedule a Deferred Compensation Committee Meeting at 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, October 13, 2021. The motion was seconded by Kaczmarek and carried 5-0.

Schedule a Broadband Committee Meeting

Vetsch moved to schedule a Broadband Committee Meeting at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, October 26, 2021. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

Topics for discussion at the October 12, 2021 Workshop: Schedule Meetings as Needed, License Center Update, Dental Clinic Update

Daleiden requested to add the Compost Facility and Wetter requested to add Waters of the United States to the Workshop Tuesday, October 12, 2021.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

BUDGET COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES (9-27-21)

Vetsch moved to approve the Budget Committee of the Whole meeting minutes and recommendations from 9-27-21. The motion was seconded by Kaczmarek and carried 5-0.

I. 2022 Budget

Commissioner Vetsch stated staff made modifications to the budget after the County Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 21, with the intent to minimize taxpayer impact while also meeting the needs of the county. There will be an increased use of fund balance. However, amount is less than what has been used in previous years. The County is still in the position to call bonds, if desired, in 2023. The proposed levy is 5.75 percent which would likely impact residents by 2 percent or less. However, it is uncertain how many homes will be homesteaded between now and the first of the year, which may change the impact on residents. The goal was to keep the increase in line with the Consumer Price Index.

Assistant Finance Director Heather Lemieux stated \$600,000 needed to be cut from the budget to meet the goal. More than \$600,000 was cut to allow a cushion for capacity changes. The proposed levy is in line with other

counties. Commissioner Husom stated the 5.75 percent levy is lower than the 6.6 percent county growth. Commissioner Daleiden stated the county needs to plan for the future to ensure the levy remains stable. Lemieux added departments do a good job of budgeting and the county has not spent the fund balance yet.

Vetsch stated there are new lines in this budget that were estimated high. Some of these lines may be able to be adjusted next year. County Administrator Lee Kelly stated preliminary health insurance numbers were received. A closed session will be set at the County Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 28 to discuss the preliminary numbers.

Commissioner Kaczmarek questioned if there will be a cost savings for insurance once the county no longer has coverage on the current Government Center and Health & Human Services buildings. Kelly stated he does not have the exact cost, but it will be less to insure the new buildings. Kaczmarek asked what the money from the sale of the buildings will be used for. Vetsch stated the Economic Development Authority (EDA) will transfer the funds from the sale to the county general fund. The funds then could be used for numerous things.

RECOMMENDATION: Update the proposed 2022 levy resolution with the numbers presented. Send the document to the commissioners and add it to the agenda packet for the County Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 28.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES (9-27-21)

Kaczmarek moved to approve the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes and recommendations from 9-27-21. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

I. Compost Facility Tour

Members present toured grounds and buildings onsite.

RECOMMENDATION: Informational only.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES (9-28-21)

Kaczmarek moved to approve the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes and recommendations from 9-28-21. The motion was seconded by Husom and carried 5-0.

Facilities Services Director Alan Wilczek asked for clarification on the recommendation regarding the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) relocation of equipment. There was discussion about key access for the site and Wilczek asked if the recommendation for the DNR to remove their equipment still stands? Kaczmarek said a Lieutenant with the DNR called him because two enforcement agents that had items at the Compost Facility tried to access the site and found the locks were changed and couldn't get in. Kaczmarek put the Lieutenant in touch with Wilczek to get a keyholder list. However, as of now the DNR has no other options and are willing to work with the county. Wilczek clarified that the DNR does not have to relocate equipment as of now.

Vetsch said he is okay with the DNR storing equipment at the Compost Facility through the winter and then reevaluating the situation in April 2022. Assistant County Attorney Greg Kryzer said the county is dealing with a lease that includes a waiver of liability which will be executed soon.

I. Compost Facility

Commissioner Kaczmarek stated improvements have been made at the site since his previous visit. Kaczmarek reviewed the job descriptions for the positions at the facility and gathered input from constituents. Kaczmarek stated he felt it would cost too much to make the needed improvements at the site for safe operation. Kaczmarek stated he would like to close the facility, as there is risk in keeping it open. The County could look at other options, which Auditor/Treasurer Bob Hiivala has already started doing.

Commissioner Vetsch stated he thinks there has to be a reset at the facility. Vetsch suggested staff should gather pricing information for scrapping the metal at the facility. Before the facility is closed, Vetsch would like to find an alternative solution to continue services. Assistant County Attorney Greg Kryzer stated he does not know if an alternative solution exists.

Commissioner Husom stated a lot of ideas were discussed during the tour of the facility and there are multiple options to relocate services at the site. Husom stated it is not feasible to keep the current three-story facility because it costs approximately \$30,000 per year to heat. The County needs to create an efficient system for recycling for the residents. Husom suggested modeling the facility after the Stearns County facility.

Facilities Director Alan Wilczek stated the County previously looked into the price of disposing equipment and it would have cost the County money because scrap prices were down. Wilczek stated it may not be worth the effort to dispose of equipment if the facility is not going to be used. However, it would be worth it to clean up if the building will be used. Vetsch questioned what the cost would be to demolish and build new versus cleaning out the building and modifying it to fit operational needs. Wilczek stated a civil engineer had offered to provide site planning services. Wilczek questioned what the long-term plan is for the use of the facility. Commissioner Daleiden stated the site should provide composting and hazardous waste services.

Risk Manager Tim Dahl stated he recently toured the Stearns County facility. Stearns County has collection sites throughout the county, expanded hours for citizens, drop-off locations, and partnerships with other counties. Dahl added Stearns County is interested in partnering with Wright County. It may be possible to ask for assistance while the Wright County facility is closed.

Kaczmarek stated he does not think the timing is right to build any new structures. Kaczmarek asked the status of the fire suppression sprinkler system. Dahl responded this is typically outsourced. The information will be gathered and distributed to the commissioners. Wilczek added water may not be the best way to extinguish a fire because of the different types of chemicals being stored at the facility.

Kaczmarek suggested temporarily closing the facility and directing citizens to contact other counties or townships for disposal needs. Kryzer stated the County should provide options to citizens if the facility is going to be closed.

Daleiden suggested issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to repurpose the facility. Kaczmarek added the County has a Solid Waste Management Plan that was approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The plan states the County should have an advisory committee to review initiatives and make recommendations. Kryzer stated the County currently does not have an Environmental Health Officer, therefore the advisory committee has not been formed. Vetsch added the Environmental Health Officer position is still on hold, but the position has been posted. Human Resources Director Schawn Johnson stated he is not aware of any applicants.

Hiivala stated the Solid Waste Management Plan was formed in collaboration with the state. If changes are made to the plan, the state needs to be notified. Hiivala contacted several haulers but none of them are interested in taking hazardous waste materials.

Commissioner Wetter asked if the County has contact information for MPCA. Kryzer stated the contact is located in Duluth. Once the Environmental Health Officer position is filled, it would be good to schedule a visit. Daleiden stated he would like to ensure the facility is as safe and efficient as possible.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. Administration will issue an RFP for future processes and uses of the site**

2. *Planning & Zoning will work on improving the Solid Waste Management Plan with assistance from the Attorney's Office*
3. *Planning & Zoning will reduce the materials on site*
4. *Wilczek and Dahl will work to minimize safety risks while keeping the facility operational*
5. *Wilczek will determine the feasibility of scrapping metal and equipment*
6. *Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will be contacted to request an alternate site for the storage of equipment*
7. *Hiivala will continue to research options of outsourcing the entire operation, focusing on hazardous waste*
8. *Wilczek and Dahl will look into forklift, baler and front-end loader opportunities*
9. *An update will be provided to Commissioners in November*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE/ADVISORY BOARD UPDATES

Historical Society. Wetter said the trees for the Historical Society contest would be put up after November 1, 2021 and the Commissioners will have all of November to decorate the trees. The trees will be taken down after January 1, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

County Board Minutes submitted by Angie Fisher, Administrative Specialist