

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
MARCH 12TH, 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, March 12th, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Roy Sourdif, David Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. 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 Sorenson, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve County Board minutes of February 27th, 2024, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Auditor & Manual warrants for February 2024 totaling \$1,643,956.75, and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$89,032.60
Road & Bridge	\$26,357.97
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 256.82
Ditch Funds	\$ 5,814.00

Meal reimbursements and per diems in the amount of \$2,960.94 were also approved.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following highway department items:

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to hold a Five-year Road & Bridge Plan Hearing on April 23, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Justice Center Board Room. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan discussed holding a spring tour of local roads and projects. The date was set for April 2, 2024, and the tour will leave the highway department at 8:00 a.m.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to authorize the County Engineer to advertise for bids for 2024 road shouldering and striping. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan provided an update on the Kratka Bridge project, noting that the contractor has pulled the forms for the south pier and is planning to pour the north pier

this Thursday. The project is moving along well due to the unseasonably nice weather we are experiencing.

Mr. Flaagan noted a public open house being held at the Joint Use Facility on March 14th, 2024, from 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm regarding a Highway 59 Corridor Study. The public is encouraged to attend to learn about the study and give their thoughts and opinions on Highway 59 in this area.

Engineer Flaagan noted that Lincoln High School is holding a teen TZD (Towards Zero Deaths) Conference on April 10th, 2024, at the Evangelical Free Church. The conference will also incorporate mental health.

Engineer Flaagan discussed the Highway Equipment Operator vacancy at the highway department, noting interviews will be held soon and he would like to hire asap. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to authorize the Highway Committee to approve the hire for the Highway Department. Motion carried. Mr. Flaagan noted there were 16 applicants for HEO vacancy and they are going to interview five.

Engineer Flaagan noted that interviews for Highway Technician III were held but the position was not offered to either applicant. He is not seeking to readvertise the position at this time.

Engineer Flaagan and the Board discussed a recent incident at the TH #59/CSAH #3 roundabout where a semitruck was unable to negotiate the roundabout and went off the road, destroying a pole in the process. He noted that additional signage is planned for this roundabout, especially for southbound traffic.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve a request for up to 80 hours of overtime for the months of March and April for hourly staff in the County Assessor's office. Motion carried. It was noted that the office is preparing property valuations and getting ready for open book meetings for board of appeals.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a quote by Bergstrom Electric in the amount of \$1,340.00 for the purchase and installation of an alarm light for the lift station at the waste management facility. The alarm will warn of a pump failure. Motion carried.

County Attorney Items: None

At 10:14 a.m. the Chairman recessed the County Board meeting.

The Chairman called the Board meeting back to order at 10:30 a.m.

County Attorney Seamus Duffy read aloud language recommending that the County Board move into closed session pursuant to MN Statute 13D.05, Subd. 3(b) to discuss pending litigation.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to close the County Board meeting at 10:31 a.m. pursuant to MN Statute 13D.05, Subd. 3(b) to discuss pending litigation with outside counsel, Kendra Olson of Pemberton Law. Motion carried.

At 11:07 a.m. the Board Chairman called the Board meeting back to open session.

Committee Reports / Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Peterson recently attended a MN Rural Counties meeting held via Zoom. Discussion topics included drainage and Minnesota potentially becoming a sanctuary state. He also noted that a recent Northern Counties meeting was cancelled as they didn't have a quorum.

Commissioner Lawrence noted that he recently met with the new Director of Veteran's Services, John Hamre. Mr. Hamre has been in training with VSO Steve Stone and they both attended a regional conference in Bemidji last week. Mr. Lawrence encouraged the Board members to stop in to the Veteran's Service office and meet Mr. Hamre.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to March 26th, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Seth Nelson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners