

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
JULY 11TH, 2023 – 10:00 A.M.**

Pursuant to adjournment, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners met in the Pennington County Justice Center Board Room in Thief River Falls, MN, on Tuesday, July 11th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Dave Sorenson, Roy Sourdif, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: None.

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

The Chairman asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. The County Coordinator noted that constituent Josh Kappes has been added to the agenda. Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Board agenda with the change presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the Board minutes of June 27th, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the Auditor and Manual warrants for June totaling \$8,792,761.78 and the following Commissioner warrants, to include a \$75.00 per diem for Commissioner Peterson that was omitted in error in May 2023. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$309,605.21
Road & Bridge	\$ 89,541.62
Forfeited Tax	\$ 1,363.97

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$2,650.00 were also approved.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan discussed State Project 057-607-016, the bituminous overlay of CSAH#7. Federal funding has been increased to \$610,000 for 2024 and \$940,000 for 2025, with funds available in October of each year prior. An agreement was presented which would allow MnDOT to act as the county's agent in accepting federal aid for the project. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the agreement and the following resolution, and authorize the Chairman and Auditor-Treasurer to sign the same. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION FOR AGENCY AGREEMENT

BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to MN Statute Sec. 161.36, the Commissioner of Transportation be appointed as the Agent of Pennington County to accept as its agent, federal aid funds which may be made available for eligible transportation related projects.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Neil Peterson, Chairman and Jennifer Herzberg, Auditor/Treasurer are hereby authorized and directed for and on behalf on Pennington County to execute and enter into an agreement with the Commissioner of Transportation prescribing the terms and conditions of said federal aid participation as set forth and contained in “Minnesota Department of Transportation MnDOT Contract Number 1053573”, a copy of which said agreement was before the County Board and which is made a part hereof by reference.

Engineer Flaagan noted the boiler at the Joint Use Facility needs replacement, and per the joint agreement with MnDOT and the DNR, the county’s share of the project is 27.8% or \$175,393.35. Mr. Flaagan noted that capital improvement funds can be used for the county’s share of the project. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the use of capital improvement funds in the amount of \$175,393.35 to cover the county’s cost obligation in the boiler project at the Joint Use Facility. Discussion followed with Mr. Flaagan noting that this project is only for the boiler replacement, not the roof replacement that’s been discussed in the past. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was carried.

Mr. Flaagan noted that the retirement party for Highway Maintenance Foreman Terry Peterson will be held on July 20th, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at the highway department.

Engineer Flaagan provided an update on local projects: the CD#96 project is wrapping up and they are seeding this week; the bridge maintenance projects are expected to start next week; ditches on county paved roads have been mowed (one strip wide) and they have started mowing gravel road ditches. It was noted that prior to August 1 of each year, state statutes only allow for the mowing of ditches one strip wide due to nesting birds, etc.

Constituent Josh Kappes met with the Board regarding a Destination Pro wrestling event being planned for Thief River Falls in April 2024. They are looking for venues and are requesting to rent the gymnasium in the Old City Auditorium, noting that the building has wrestling history. The Board noted issues such as location of the bathrooms (basement) poor lighting, lack of seating, and non-ADA compliance of the building does not make it a favorable choice for such an event. Mr. Kappes then questioned use of the Huck Olson arena, to which the Board referred him to the City of TRF. The Board thanked Mr. Kappes for the consideration and took his request under advisement.

Auditor-Treasurer Items: None.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the resignation of Deputy Assessor-Appraiser Michael Frericks effective June 29th, 2023. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve readvertising for the position of Full-time Deputy Assessor-Appraiser. Motion carried.

The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION

OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR VETERANS

WHEREAS, the residents of Pennington County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served our country and this community in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of those who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Pennington County seeks to honor individuals who have made countless sacrifices for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and by functioning as County Veterans Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 20 percent increase of service members will transition to civilian life in the near future; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 44-72 percent of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

WHEREAS, Pennington County appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, Pennington County hereby declares from November 6th through Veterans Day, November 11th, 2023, a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of our men and women in uniform transitioning from active service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in observance of Operation Green Light, Pennington County encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of business or residence from November 6th through November 12th, 2023.

The County Coordinator noted the vacancy in the Assessor's office and discussed the idea of a temporary employee to help with clerical and office duties. Commissioner

Lawrence asked that the Personnel Committee review and investigate the idea and costs of a temporary worker for the Assessor's office.

County Attorney Items: None.

Committee Reports:

Commissioner Lawrence opened discussion on the Old Auditorium and the costs of maintenance, heating/cooling, lack of ADA-compliance, and the multimillion-dollar estimates received a few years ago to renovate the building. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve investigating the costs of demolition of the Old Auditorium, its registry on the historical list, etc. Motion carried.

The County Coordinator discussed the positions of County Recorder and County Auditor-Treasurer, noting that both positions became appointed as of January 1st, 2023. The current salary and salary schedules for both positions were recently reviewed by the Personnel Committee and compared with similar-sized counties. Some adjustments are being recommended.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the current salary schedule for the County Recorder and a move to wage step 4 effective July 1st, 2023. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve a new salary schedule for the County Auditor-Treasurer to match that of the County Coordinator, and a move to wage step 3 effective July 9th, 2023. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to July 25th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Neil Peterson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners