

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
OCTOBER 24TH, 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, October 24th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Neil Peterson, David Sorenson, and Roy Sourdif. 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 Sheriff Vettleson can be removed from the agenda. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, 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 Human Services warrants totaling \$238,450.55 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$159,013.28
Road & Bridge	\$ 34,793.62
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 160.68
Ditch Funds	\$ 225.00

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$25.75 were also approved.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Board minutes of October 10th, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand presented the consent agenda from the October 2023 Human Service Committee Meeting. On a motion by Commissioner Lawrence and seconded by Commissioner Nelson, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Service Committee for October 17, 2023 (detailed minutes on record) are hereby adopted:

SECTION A

- I. To approve the September 19, 2023, Human Service Committee Meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the Agency's personnel action as presented.
- III. A. To approve the CY 2024 Pennington County Family Services/Children's Menal Health Collaborative Supportive Services Agreement with Alluma, Inc. as presented.

- B. To approve the CY 2024-2025 County and Tribal Childcare Fund Plan as presented.
- C. To call for bids for snow removal of the PCHS parking lot.

SECTION B

- I. To approve payment of the Agency's bills.

Ms. Sjostrand noted that two quotes were received for snow plowing/removal at the Human Services parking lot, which were read aloud by the Chairman:

E&A Services	\$2,750
A.M.S. and Snow Removal	\$65.00 (plowing); \$50.00 (removal)

It was noted that the E&A Services quote is for the entire 2023-2024 winter season and includes all plowing and removal for the location as needed; Ashton's Mowing Service and Snow Removal quote was per occurrence. Engineer Flaagan stated his department could remove the snow piles. The Board tabled the issue and no action was taken at this time.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve and authorize signature of a Children's Mental Health Screening Grant in the amount of \$2,060. Motion carried.

County Assessor Carl Bruzek presented an Application for Abatement for Robert and Debra Holmgren, parcel #R25.00616370. Ms. Holmgren was medically unable to complete the Special Homestead classification application and provide substantiation prior to the October 1st, 2023, deadline; it was completed on October 12, 2023. Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve abating the tax to reflect the Special Homestead classification for 2023 assessment – tax payable 2024. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following Highway Dept. items:

Mr. Flaagan presented a quote from RDO Financial for a 6-year lease of a new 2024 John Deere 772G all-wheel drive motor grader. Option 1 features an annual payment of \$69,447.02 (payment based on current interest rate); Option 2 features an annual payment of \$71,875.65 (maximum payment should interest rates rise). The estimated delivery date of the grader if ordered today is April 2024. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve a 6-year lease agreement with RDO Financial, with payment Option 1, for a 2024 John Deere 772G motor grader. Discussion was held with the Engineer further explaining the two payment options. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Engineer Flaagan noted that bids for the Kratka Bridge construction project were opened online on October 16, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. as duly advertised. The following two bids were received:

Redstone Construction, LLC	\$2,783,327.90
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Swingen Construction Co. \$3,883,762.00

It was noted that the engineer's estimate was \$2,296,401.50. Mr. Flaagan discussed the items likely causing the overage, such as common embankment, removal of the existing bridge, mobilization, and the pre-stress concrete beams. He noted that approximately \$150,000 is available from bridge bonding, and the remaining difference of \$350,000 would come from State Aid funding. He is expecting a \$200,000 increase in our State Aid funding for 2024. Mr. Flaagan and Houston Engineering both recommend approval of the low bid. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the bid of Redstone Construction, LLC in the amount of \$2,783,327.90 as the lowest and best bid received for the Kratka bridge project. Discussion followed with the Engineer noting the current volatility of bids on bridge projects. Commissioner Lawrence stated that as part of this project he would like the DNR to consider improvements to the public river access near the Kratka bridge. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

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

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 162.08, Subd. 4 (3d), provides that accumulated balances in excess of two years of municipal account apportionments may be spent on projects located outside of municipalities under 5000 population when approved solely by resolution of the County Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commissioner of Transportation transfer \$83,514 in excess of two years apportionment into the Regular Construction Account.

Engineer Flaagan discussed department tractor leases for 2024, noting he would like to replace the older Puma and New Holland tractors. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to authorize the County Engineer to obtain quotes for the lease of tractors for the highway department. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan discussed posting internally for a current Highway Equipment Operator to work an early shift for the winter season. The position would work 12:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m., receive a \$2.00 per hour differential, and would be responsible for plowing the roundabouts we're responsible for, cleaning/monitoring major county roads prior to major travel, etc. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to authorize the Engineer to advertise internally for one Highway Equipment Operator to work an early shift for winter 2023-2024 as discussed above. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to authorize the County Engineer to advertise for the vacant position of Technician III once union negotiations are complete and 2024 wages are known. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan noted that the CSAH #7 project is near completion with paving and striping done and shouldering near completion. He noted there will likely need to be some road grinding to smoothen the ride. The work on CSAH #3 west of the Seven Clans has been completed.

Mr. Flaagan discussed prior approval to purchase a pickup truck from Thief River Ford. The pickup still has not been produced and no lead time is available, so he would like to cancel the order and seek other options. Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to cancel the pickup truck order with Thief River Ford and seek other options. Motion carried.

Auditor-Treasurer Items: None

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the new county position of IT Technician and authorize the County Coordinator to advertise for the full-time position. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to accept the letter of resignation/retirement of Dale Wiskow as Building & Grounds Supervisor effective December 31, 2023, and to thank him for his excellent service to Pennington County. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve advertising for the position of Full-Time Building & Grounds Supervisor once the Building Committee has discussed the position, licensures required, etc. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a lease renewal with the State of MN/DOC for office space in the Pennington County Justice Center for a five-year term beginning November 1, 2023. Discussion followed with it noted that the lease features annual increases of 4% and an increase in space leased for the District Supervisor. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve Pennington County's participation in the Human Resource Technical Assistance Program at an annual cost of \$4,900 for 2024 and \$1,000 for the remainder of 2023. Motion carried.

The County Coordinator provided an update on the Charles Beck mural removed from the Government Center 3rd floor. It is currently located at the Minneapolis Institute of Art and will go through a restoration process beginning in January 2024. The final display of the mural will be in the Ottertail County Historical Society.

Coordinator Erickson noted the Assessor Clerk position was advertised but not filled. The County Assessor will begin advertising for the vacant position of Full-Time Deputy Assessor-Appraiser until it is filled. Prior Board approval to advertise was received.

The Coordinator provided an update on the Government Center 3rd floor project: carpet has been installed on the west side of the floor and cabinetry is being installed in the meeting rooms. He noted a windowpane was broken on the east side of the floor and will need to be replaced. A walk-through will be scheduled with the architect and Building Committee once the flooring is complete.

On behalf of Sheriff Vettleson, the County Coordinator presented to the Board a letter recommendation to hire a Part-Time Corrections Officer. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Sadie Anderson as Part-Time Corrections Officer effective October 24, 2023, contingent upon a successful BCA background check and fingerprinting. Motion carried.

The Coordinator reminded the Board and other staff present that open enrollment insurance meetings are being held onsite October 25, 2023.

Mr. Erickson reminded the Board that Government Data Training will be conducted by Pemberton Law on October 25, 2023, from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. in the Justice Center Board Room. Commissioners, supervisors, and dept heads will attend the live training, which will be recorded and provided to all staff.

Mr. Erickson provided an update on the EAW regarding the Old Auditorium. It has been published by the Environmental Quality Board and the 30-day comment period ends November 16, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. The County Board, acting as the RGU for the project, will have to respond to all EAW comments and then determine if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is needed for the project.

Committee Reports:

Commissioner Nelson reported that Commissioner Peterson, Coordinator Erickson, and himself attended the AMC District 3 meeting last week in Middle River. Major topics of discussion included cyber security, the HR Technical Assistance Program, county levies for 2024, legislative changes passed and their impacts, and legislative changes that are forthcoming.

County Attorney Items: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to November 14th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator

Neil Peterson, Chairman

Pennington County

Board of Commissioners