

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, JULY 14th, 2020 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 14th, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Darryl Tveitbakk, Don Jensen, Bruce Lawrence, Neil Peterson, and Cody Hempel. Absent: None.

Also present: Mike Flaagan, Seamus Duffy, Jennifer Herzberg, and Seth Vettleson. Present via Zoom: Erik Beitel, Bryan Malone, Kayla Jore, Julie Sjostrand, April Scheinoha, and Grant Nelson.

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

Pennington County Highway Engineer Mike Flaagan discussed re-advertising for bids on the Maintenance Building. He said no bids were received when previously advertised. Commissioner Jensen asked about a completion date for the project. Mr. Flaagan stated that if the project were to start in 2020 it would be completed by July of 2021.

Commissioner Jensen motioned to re-advertise for bids to construct the storage building. Commissioner Peterson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mike Flaagan then gave an update on the bridge project. He stated that there had been some problems which caused a delay in setting the beams across the river. He said that the beams should be set today. Seven beams needed to be set between two piers with a span of approximately 118 feet. He thanked the media for providing project updates to the public.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan then gave updates on other projects throughout the county. The Highway 32 roundabout is nearing completion with the concrete finished on the main part of the roundabout. It is scheduled to be paved next week with an estimated date of Aug 1 to be open to traffic. The Challenger roundabout will be getting concrete, curb and gutter next week with an estimated date of Sept 8th to be open to traffic.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the bids for paving the SD #564 parking lot adjacent to the Justice Center.

Agassiz Asphalt	\$95,867.75
R.J. Zavoral & Sons Inc.	\$97,083.00

The bids do not include striping. Bids will be referred to the Building Committee for discussion. No action will be taken at this time.

Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel gave an update on the increase in COVID-19 cases throughout the state. He stated testing continues throughout the state of MN. He said Pennington County cases remain fairly stable but there has been a significant increase in cases in Beltrami and Roseau counties.

Inter-County Nursing Director Kayla Jore said Pennington County has 54 positive cases, of those only 2 are active cases and 52 have recovered. She said the highest number of cases are currently in the younger age groups, but she expects that to change at some point. She stated that they have seen

another case in a long-term facility. The facility is working closely with the Dept. of Health and the Healthcare coalition.

Inter-County Nursing continues to do case investigation and contact tracing. Kayla would like to remind the public to continue to wash hands frequently, practice social distancing, and to wear a mask when in public.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Seth Vettleson discussed the promotion of Kayla Dunwoody to the position of Jail Sergeant beginning July 13th with a 6-month probation and wages per union contract.

Moved by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence to promote Kayla Dunwoody to Jail Sergeant beginning July 13, 2020. Motion unanimously carried.

Moved by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to hire two part-time Correction Officers, Brianna Marie Vosen and Christofer John Triciante, beginning July 15th, 2020 with a 12-month probation and wages per union contract. Motion unanimously carried.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Seth Vettleson then presented a bid to upgrade the buffalo backup drive with a cost for materials and labor of \$1,050. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Hempel. Motion unanimously carried.

Moved by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to post and advertise for a full-time Correction Officer. Motion unanimously carried.

Moved by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to advertise for two part-time Correction Officers. Motion unanimously carried.

Commissioner Jensen discussed the Assessor interviews. He stated four candidates were interviewed. The Personnel Committee then recommended Carl Bruzek be hired for the position of Pennington County Assessor effective July 6th, 2020. Commissioner Jensen moved, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to hire Carl Bruzek to fill the unexpired appointment term as a result of Adeline Olson's retirement effective July 6th, 2020. Motion unanimously carried.

The Personnel Committee discussed the payment of accrued overtime to Adeline Olson as a result of extra hours she had put in taking care of items that needed to be wrapped up before her retirement. The decision was made to pay Adeline for 20 hours of overtime in her final paycheck. Moved by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to pay Adeline Olson for 20 hours of overtime in her final paycheck. Motion unanimously carried.

Commissioner Jensen discussed the performance evaluations of Julie Sjostrand, Human Services Director. A self-evaluation as well as an evaluation by the Personnel Committee were done, and evaluations met or exceeded expectations. A salary adjustment to \$49.75 per hour effective July 13th, 2020 was recommended.

Moved by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to set the salary of Julie Sjostrand, Human Services Director to \$49.75 per hour effective July 13th, 2020. Motion unanimously carried.

Commissioner Jensen discussed advertising to hire a Deputy Assessor/Appraiser in the Assessor's office. Moved by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to advertise for a Deputy Assessor/Appraiser. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jensen gave an update on the Coordinator position. He stated that the position had been advertised and they are setting up interviews for July 24th, 2020. All applicants will be interviewed. Commissioner Tveitbakk presented the salary schedule for the position. The position would have a starting salary of \$91,910 with a 5th year step at \$105,040. Motioned by Commissioner Jensen, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to set the starting salary of the Pennington County Coordinator position to \$91,910. Motion unanimously carried.

The following resolution was introduced by County Auditor-Treasurer Jennifer Herzberg. Moved by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Pandemic requires additional efforts to make the election process safe, sanitary and effective; and,

WHEREAS, the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State is currently soliciting grant applications from counties for grants pursuant to Laws 2020, Chapter 77, section 4 and the federal CARES Act; and,

WHEREAS, grants will be provided to each county pursuant to a formula set forth in Section H of the grant application provided by the Office of the Secretary of State; and,
WHEREAS, the funds provided by the Office of the Secretary of State are provided for the purpose of the uses set forth in the federal CARES Act and as further restricted by Laws 2020, chapter 77, section 4, subdivision 4; and,

WHEREAS, those purposes are primarily for the protection of persons involved with the election process including voters, as well as certain other purchases set forth in law; and,
WHEREAS, the county will work with the municipalities within the county to determine a fair, equitable, and mutually agreeable allocation of the funds within the County and between municipalities, and if an agreement cannot be reached, the funds will be distributed pursuant to the OSS identified default allocation formula as determined by the Secretary and provided in Section E of the grant application; and,

WHEREAS, the grant application is to be completed by the staff of the auditor and other staff responsible for the administration of elections in this county; and,
WHEREAS, the grant application must be completed, certified by a county official, typically the chief county election official, returned to the Office of the Secretary of State and a grant agreement executed prior to the receipt of the funds to which the county is entitled pursuant to Sections E and F of the grant application; and,

WHEREAS, Laws 2020, Chapter 77, section 4 requires a 20% match for the grant, with a 25% match for electronic roster purchases; and,

WHEREAS, the grant agreement will reflect the grant application for each county; and

WHEREAS, additional assistance may be forthcoming later in this election cycle from state and federal funds, particularly those funds appropriated or these purposes by the Legislature; and,

WHEREAS, there are continuing needs throughout the election cycle for both COVID-19 and election security efforts and concomitant costs; and

WHEREAS, time is of the essence;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the grant application in the form presented to this board and to be submitted to the Office of the Secretary of State is hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board directs the spending of existing county funds in an amount equivalent to the required match indicated in the application on the purposes for which the grant is received; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chief elections officer of the County and staff are directed to submit this approved grant application at the earliest opportunity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that when the grant agreement is provided to the chief elections officer of the county, that person is delegated the authority to execute that agreement and return it to the Office of the Secretary of State without further approval by this Board; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the chief elections officer of the county is hereby authorized to apply for any additional funds made available by the state for the defrayment of costs of efforts to combat COVID-19 in the election process and for the enhancement of election security, and to execute any grant agreements required to access those funds from this date until the general election on November 3, 2020.

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Jensen, to approve the \$10,000 appropriation to the Pennington County Fair Board. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Hempel, to approve the County Board minutes of June 23rd, 2020 as written. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Jensen, to approve payment of the Human Services Warrants totaling \$90,095.03 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

WARRANTS

Revenue	\$243,986.91
Road & Bridge	\$162,395.25
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 125.00
Ditch Funds	\$ 7,550.00

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$3,025.00 were also approved.

Commissioner Hempel mentioned the recent Technology Committee meeting and discussed current staffing and potential staffing needs. The Technology Committee will continue to work on these items with County Auditor-Treasurer Jennifer Herzberg until they have feedback on what the current personnel needs will be. The Technology Committee is currently calculating IT costs so they can understand what these costs look like. They are looking at current expenditures and potential cost saving that there could be.

Commissioner Lawrence talked about a meeting that was held with Brian Byklum on asbestos issues at the Auditorium. He had done a complete review back in 2007. A walk through of the Auditorium was done and a discussion was held on what costs could be. His initial cost estimate is approximately

\$100,000. This figure would depend on different methods of removing the asbestos. He will be preparing a more accurate estimate.

Commissioner Tveitbakk discussed the Cares Act money and stated he has asked Commissioner Peterson to serve on a committee with various staff. There will be discussions on expenses that can be used for reimbursement from those funds. Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel is working on an application process to distribute money to small businesses.

Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand mentioned she has several staff telecommuting. Most are back for two days per week and are looking at a 3rd day in the future. She mentioned making sure when staff return to work in the office that social distancing can be maintained. She also mentioned she has an issue of some workers who are still in need of laptops.

Moved by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Jensen, to adjourn the Board meeting to 5:00 p.m., July 28th, 2020. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Jennifer Herzberg, Auditor-Treasurer
Pennington County

Darryl Tveitbakk, Chairman
Board of Commissioners