

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, JUNE 8TH, 2021, 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, June 8th, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Darryl Tveitbakk, Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, David Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. Members Absent: None.

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

Chairman Peterson asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. County Coordinator Kevin Erickson requested that Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand and Chief Deputy Sheriff Seth Vettleson be added to the agenda. Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the Board agenda with the changes requested. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the County Board minutes of May 25th, 2021 as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$120,987.78 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$133,454.59
Road & Bridge	\$118,829.15
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 1,052.53
Ditch Funds	\$ 12,688.06

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$2,903.25 were also approved.

Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand met with the Board and recommended the promotion of Elizabeth Gerhart from Social Worker to Social Services Supervisor. Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the promotion of Elizabeth Gerhart to Social Services Supervisor effective June 14th, 2021. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the resignation of Charles Lundgren as Human Services Fiscal Supervisor effective June 25th, 2021. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to authorize the Human Services Director to advertise for the position of Fiscal Supervisor. Motion carried.

Ag Services/Solid Waste Coordinator Kyle Jore met with the Board and stated that he applied for and was approved for a \$2,425.00 MPCA grant for recycling. The grant will require the county to provide an in-kind local match of \$1,155 (labor and admin by local staff) and can be used to reimburse expenditures from the recent 4-H recycling event, to educate the community on recycling, and future recycling events during the fiscal year. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to accept the MPCA recycling grant in the amount of \$2,425.00. Motion carried. The Board thanked Mr. Jore for his work on the grant.

Commissioner Nelson questioned how often the local recycling containers are emptied. Mr. Jore responded that depending on the container location it can be several times per week.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented an update on local construction projects:

- The box culvert project south of the airport is expected to be done in July or August.
- The final overlay on CSAH #8 is complete and striping will take place in the next week or two.
- Some repair is needed to the concrete sidewalk at the Mark Blvd. bridge project.
- CSAH #3 was closed as of June 7th for road and culvert work related to the Black River Impoundment; detours are setup and being used but some sideroads are being utilized also as expected.

Inter-County Nursing Services Director Kayla Jore (present via Zoom) presented a COVID-19 and vaccine update:

- Active cases have slowed dramatically in Pennington County.
- Another COVID-19 death was reported in the county; this occurred earlier in May and the person was not living in the County.
- As of June 7th, 2021 approximately 44% of the county population has been vaccinated.
 - 53% for ages 12+ years; 55% for 16+ years; 85% for 65+ years old.
- ICNS is working hard to encourage vaccinations in the community and county-wide.

Chief Deputy Seth Vettleson presented a resignation letter from Jail Sergeant Jenna Hagl. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to accept the resignation of Jail Sergeant Jenna Hagl effective June 15th, 2021. Motion carried.

Commissioner Lawrence questioned Chief Deputy Vettleson about the current status of Enbridge Line 3 protesting activity south of TRF. Mr. Vettleson stated that activity has been consistent and a few Deputy Sheriff's and one TRF Police Officer are patrolling the area. Protester numbers and activity are expected to increase as Enbridge prepares to bore under the river.

Committee Reports / Commissioner updates:

Commissioner Tveitbakk suggested that the committee that administered the CARES funding be activated soon to discuss American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding and possible uses. Mr. Tveitbakk also informed the Board that the F.A.A. has taken an interest in the TRF airport hangar project.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items: None

County Coordinator Items:

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson read aloud a resolution requesting a state legislative solution to the Enbridge Energy tax appeal and court findings. The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, and upon vote was unanimously approved.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING A STATE LEGISLATIVE FINANCIAL SOLUTION IN THE ENBRIDGE ENERGY, L.P.
TAX COURT FINDINGS**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners are requesting a State Legislative Financial Solution to all years of the final Enbridge Apportionable Market Values as ordered by Tax Court, beginning in the 2012 Assessment Year from the State Department of Revenue, with funds to be taken from the State General Fund.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners identify that this error in Assessment was caused the State of Minnesota Department of Revenue and that this payment due to Enbridge should be the responsibility of the State to rectify this issue, similarly to how the County rectifies our own local abatements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Pennington County does not have adequate reserves to pay this obligation and would need to resort to bonding and/or significantly increased taxes on all property owners in the County, subsequently causing a ripple effect in tax burden on taxpayers and affected entities.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners request that the State of Minnesota Department of Revenue publicly support this legislative solution, utilizing funds from the State General Fund.

County constituent Daniel Trontvet questioned the Board about the possibility of future appeals by Enbridge or other utilities and how they would be funded. It was stated that such appeals could result in higher taxes county-wide and/or a loss of public services.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the resignation of Brad Laidley as Custodian I effective June 17th, 2021.

County Attorney Items:

County Attorney Seamus Duffy informed the Board that face coverings will only be required in the courtrooms effective June 14th, 2021. The remainder of the Justice Center will follow the same policies as other County buildings.

The County Coordinator reminded the Board that the County Board of Appeals and Equalization will be held on June 14th, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in Meeting Room B of the Government Center.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to adjourn the Board meeting to June 22nd, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Neil Peterson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners