

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 10TH, 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, August 10th, 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 informed the Board that the Red Lake Watershed District will not be in attendance and that both Engineer Flaagan and M.A.K. Construction will be present via Zoom. Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the Board agenda with the changes discussed. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the County Board minutes of July 27th, 2021, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

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| County Revenue | \$51,593.29 |
| Road & Bridge | \$ 25,902.95 |
| Ditch Funds | \$ 557.26 |

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$2,317.97 were also approved.

The following members of the NW MN Multi-County Housing and Redevelopment Authority met with the Board: Charity Brault – Executive Director, Heather Harbott – Finance Director, Kermit Genereux – Board member. Ms. Brault presented a summary and update of H.R.A. activities in the last year. They purchased two homes in Goodridge, remodeled and sold them as single family, three-bedroom homes. She noted that they own the Summerfield housing units in TRF. They recognize the great need for housing in TRF and are doing the best they can to help the situation, they offer loans for down payment assistance and a rental assistance program. Ms. Brault thanked the Board for their support of the HRA and their work. The County Board thanked Ms. Brault and her staff for their report.

County constituent Dean Philipp met with the Board and questioned programs such as the H.R.A. that was just discussed and also H.U.D. The Board stated that H.U.D. is a federal program and the H.R.A. is different and not a part of H.U.D. Mr. Philipp said that Human Services has some of their clients in his homes and some were forced out, which resulted in lost rent for him and that the county owes him \$9,000. The Board said this will be researched by Human Services. Mr. Philipp also asked about M.A.K. Construction and their proposed project, stating that hinging the project on the PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Tax) is poor business. He commented on the ISD#564 referendum and said if approved it will result in \$430+ of additional tax on a 200k home, he said owns a few homes of that value and asked if being taxed to that extent is fair. He also asked that the ditches along his properties be sprayed by the county, to which the Board replied that the highway department is out spraying and that he needs to provide a property list to Engineer Flaagan. Mr. Philipp also asked about the wheelage tax, he is against it and questioned how that is fair to a guy that own many vehicles like himself.

Mark Kuhn of M.A.K. Construction met with the Board via Zoom regarding their proposed 'Angle Project'. Chairman Peterson noted that he spoke to the County Assessor about the values and tax estimates provided earlier by Mr. Kuhn, and due to hectic times in the County the Board needs more time to review this project and that a joint city/county meeting will be scheduled soon. Mr. Kuhn stated he recognizes the needs of the community and are trying to help and stimulate the local economy as soon as possible. Commissioner Nelson questioned the daycare portion of the project, with Mr. Kuhn responding that it will most likely be a \$1.5M, 10,000 sq. ft. building, and that an appointed Board will operate the facility. Commissioner Tveitbakk questioned the profile of M.A.K. Construction, so Mr. Kuhn presented his history in construction and stated he is the owner of M.A.K. Construction and also M.A.K. Capital. At the request of the Board, he will send his last presentation to the County Coordinator to be forwarded along.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan stated he would like to purchase a belly-dump trailer and a pup trailer before year-end and defined a pup as a gravel trailer that is pulled behind a tandem truck. The belly dump trailer will replace an old one that was sold this spring, and he noted that our pup trailers are all 20+ years old and we need to start replacing them on an as-needed basis. The purchases requested aren't budgeted for 2021 but funds available since we did not purchase a new sign truck that was budgeted for in 2021. He has received quotes from I-29 Trailer Sales for a Midland belly dump trailer in the amount of \$49,655 and \$39,005 for a Midland pup trailer. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the quotes and purchase of a belly dump trailer for \$49,655 and a pup trailer for \$39,005 from I-29 Trailer Sales. Motion carried.

Chairman Peterson asked that Mr. Flaagan contact Dean Philipp regarding the ditches he would like sprayed.

Enbridge Community Affairs Representative Julie Huber met with the Board and expressed Enbridge's appreciation for the county's support with the Line 3 project. She noted the project is about 85% complete and they hope it will be in service by the 4th quarter, 2021. She noted that there will be an open house on August 25th, 2021, and that the company's tax personnel will be in the area in a few weeks and can answer any questions the Board may have. Commissioner Tveitbakk and Peterson thanked Enbridge for their work behind the scenes and said the businesses are thankful for all the support they've received during the Line 3 construction in the area. The Board thanked Ms. Huber for her report.

County Sheriff Ray Kuznia stated that due to low water levels in the river, blue-green algae has become a problem and safety issue to the public. He would like to move forward with the process for a no-wake ordinance. Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to schedule a public hearing regarding a no-wake ordinance on September 14th, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. Motion carried.

Sheriff Kuznia said his staff will start submitting for reimbursements on costs of the Enbridge Line 3 protests and related activity. He noted that the Line 3 installation should be complete in our county in one or two weeks. Mr. Kuznia also stated that the investigation continues regarding the recent homicide case; the suspect has been captured but the work is far from done. He said all outside agencies that assisted were instrumental in the capture of the suspect and he is very thankful for their assistance. Commissioner Peterson commended Sheriff Kuznia and all law enforcement staff on handling of the Line 3 protest and homicide activities. Mr. Kuznia replied that his staff has put in a lot of effort and overtime on these issues in the past few months.

Julie Sjostrand, Melissah Lundeen, and Stacy Anderson presented the 2022 proposed Human Services budget. Ms. Lundeen, Interim Fiscal Supervisor, stated she doesn't see much change in the budget for 2022, but health insurance premiums will most likely increase but the final numbers aren't available yet. Ms. Sjostrand, HS Director, said that Family Services will be new for 2022 and we should know projected revenues and expenses by August 24th, 2021. County Coordinator Kevin Erickson noted that the 2022 health insurance premiums should be known within a week.

Ms. Sjostrand noted that on August 16th, 2021, members from Pennington County will visit Polk County to tour their Human Services remodel project. It was noted that H.S. management and three or more Commissioners will be in attendance for the tour, which will start in Crookston and finish at the facility in East Grand Forks.

Committee/Commissioner updates: None.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items: None.

County Coordinator Items:

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson presented a resolution request from the Inter-County Community Council to administer the MN Housing Finance Agency's Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program in Pennington County for the period of 2021-2023. The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, State of Minnesota, has been authorized to undertake a program to provide funds for Family Homeless Prevention & Assistance projects; and,

WHEREAS, Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc. in the nine-county region of NW MN has developed an application for the MN Housing Finance Agency Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program; and,

WHEREAS, Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc. have demonstrated the ability to perform the required activities of the MN Housing Finance Agency Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc. is hereby authorized as an entity to be charged with the administration of funds made available through the MN Housing Finance Agency Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program in the County of Pennington, in Minnesota.

County Attorney items:

County Attorney Seamus Duffy noted that due to the homicide case there will be an increase in expenses for travel, outside assistance from the state, etc.

Mr. Duffy noted that the contracts for the law library for access and west law contracts are expiring:

The current agreement for services provided to the law library by Thomson Reuters is \$1,041.82/mo. and it will be increasing to \$1,073.05/month. Discussion was held on the amount of space needed for the Law Library and that was referred on to the Building Committee. Motioned by Commissioner

Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve renewing the agreement with Thomson Reuters for services to the Law Library at a cost of \$1,073.05/month for a 36-month period effective 12/01/21 (subject to 3% annual increases). Motion carried.

Mr. Duffy noted that the fees for the current platform of the West Law program are increasing from \$690.70 to \$712.45 per month effective 12/01/21. He noted that a new platform of the services is available, and it offers additional search functions that would be very beneficial to his office. The new platform cost would be \$794.00 per month, and he is requesting its approval. Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve renewing the agreement for West Law with the new platform of services at a rate of \$794.00 per month for a 36-month period effective 12/01/21 (subject to 3% annual increases). Motion carried.

Mr. Duffy noted that the courts have been monitoring the CDC website regarding COVID-19 and due to an uptick in cases and the Delta variant, Judge Yon has ordered that face coverings will be required in the Courtroom (only) beginning next week.

On behalf of the Pennington County Board, Chairman Peterson thanked Sheriff Kuznia and the entire Law Enforcement staff for all their efforts and hard work regarding the Line 3 protest activities and the recent homicide case.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to adjourn the Board meeting to August 24th, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Neil Peterson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners