

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM  
FEBRUARY 27, 2024 – 10:00 A.M.**

Pursuant to M.S. 375.07, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners met in the Pennington County Justice Center Board Room in Thief River Falls, MN, on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Roy Sourdif, David Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: None.

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

The Chairman asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Hearing none, there was a motion by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve County Board minutes of February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$334,847.64, the Auditor & Manual warrants for January 2024 totaling \$1,895,180.59, and the following Commissioner warrants, to include a warrant for \$1,818.75 to Dale Wiskow. Discussion followed with Commissioner Sorenson questioning the bill from Ashton's Mowing Service and Snow Removal. Coordinator Erickson noted this is the final bill for snow removal services received. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

County Revenue	\$107,375.82
Road & Bridge	\$ 65,950.64

Meal reimbursements and per diems in the amount of \$13.14 were also approved.

Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel discussed progress on the Hazard Mitigation Plan update. A first meeting was held on February 7, 2024, between the county, City of TRF, area townships, and neighboring jurisdictions. Tasks to do yet include a local mitigation survey and develop/review an action chart. There will be another team meeting, likely via Zoom, and the plan draft will be reviewed with Commissioners before submission to FEMA. He is hopeful the process will be complete by the 4th quarter of 2024.

Discussion was held on the riverbank erosion issue in the City of TRF. Mr. Beitel stated the mitigation buyout program will likely be the answer to that problem, but first the hazard mitigation plan must be completed and approved by FEMA.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following highway department items:

The new plow truck has arrived and will be out on the roads once licensing is complete.

Mr. Flaagan discussed ordering additional plow trucks and current pricing. He recommends Boyer truck chassis from Western Star at the state bid price of \$154,642.00. Quotes for a plow, plow equipment, and truck box were received from Towmaster in the amount of \$191,316.00, which includes a multi-way plow, and Bert's Truck Equipment in the amount of \$172,726.00. Mike recommended approval of the quote from Bert's Truck Equipment and noted a one-year lead time. He also recommended we order two trucks to lock in the current pricing. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to order two Boyer truck chassis from Western Star, to paid from the 2024 and 2025 budgets, and also to approve the quote from Bert's Truck Equipment in the amount of \$172,726.00. Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan stated plans are being finalized for the milling and overlay of CSAH#10 from CSAH#3 to the Marshall County line. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to set the bid opening for the CSAH#10 project for April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan discussed roadside spraying of noxious weeds, noting he'd like to advertise for bids and get on a schedule to cover 1/3 of the county each year. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to authorize the Engineer to advertise for bids for roadside weed spraying. Discussion followed with Commissioner Peterson noting that a contractor is able to spray early in the morning and/or evening when conditions are ideal. Mike noted his department will also be spraying ditches in 2024. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Mr. Flaagan noted that the Kratka bridge contractor drove the piling for the south pier last week. Work will continue pending weather conditions.

County Sheriff Seth Vettleon presented the following LEC items:

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the hire of Kylie Fay Delage as Full-Time Corrections Officer effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, pending receipt of a BCA fingerprint records check. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the hire of Adrian David Lynn Verbout as Full-Time Corrections Officer effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, pending receipt of a BCA fingerprint records check. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the hire of Sarah Jean Kotrba as Part-Time Corrections Officer effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, pending receipt of a BCA fingerprint records check. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Sarah Jean Kotrba as Part-Time Corrections Officer effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, pending receipt of a BCA fingerprint records check. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Storm Jacob Manning as Part-Time Corrections Officer effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, pending receipt of a BCA fingerprint records check. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Sebastian Ramon-Salinas as Part-Time Corrections Officer effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, pending receipt of a BCA fingerprint records check. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the hire of Dylan Gustafson as Part-Time Corrections Officer effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, pending receipt of a BCA fingerprint records check. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to accept the resignation of Full-Time Corrections Officer Ronald Kjelland effective March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and thank him for his service to Pennington County. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to accept the resignation of Part-Time Corrections Officer Chesnie Wojciechowski effective April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and thank her for her service to Pennington County. Motion carried.

At 10:30 a.m. the Board Chairman recessed the Board meeting and called the Public Hearing on ATV/XTV ordinance to order. Present for the Hearing: Commissioners Sourdif, Lawrence, Peterson, Sorenson, and Nelson, Jennifer Herzberg, Lucas Fornshell, Seamus Duffy, Seth Vettleon, Mike Flaagan, April Scheinoha (TRF Times), and Kevin Erickson.

County Sheriff Seth Vettleon discussed the proposed changes to Pennington County Ordinance #8, noting the addition of XTV (Xtreme Terrain Vehicles) language wherever 'ATV' is noted. XTVs are described as having 4-8 wheels, a maximum width of 102 inches, a maximum weight of 8000 pounds, not to exceed 25 mph, are equipped with headlights, taillights, brake lights, hazard warning lights, or slow-moving sign equipped, and are propelled by internal combustion engine.

Hearing no questions or concerns, the Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 10:33 a.m. and reopened the County Board meeting.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve changes to Pennington County Ordinance #8 regarding the management of ATV and ETV usage on certain county roads, as listed in the revised ordinance. Motion carried.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items:

Auditor-Treasurer Jennifer Herzberg asked that two Commissioners be appointed to the Canvassing Board for the 2024 Presidential Nomination Primary election and that a date and time for the Canvassing Board be set. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to appoint Commissioners Peterson and Sourdif to

the Canvassing Board that will meet on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in Meeting Room A of the Government Center. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the purchase of two add-on modules for the Tyler Technologies tax system; the first being a Marshall & Swift module for commercial properties at a cost of \$23,000, the second module is Field Mobile which allows remote field work by county assessors at a cost of \$32,200 and an annual SaaS fee of \$7,600. Motion carried.

Auditor-Treasurer Herzberg provided an update on the new tax system, noting that meetings are being held bi-weekly, Tyler Technologies is converting data over to the new system, and county users can go in and see/test data. August 19, 2024, is the expected go-live date.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the hire of John Earl Hamre as Director of Veteran's Services effective February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Motion carried.

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson presented the Human Services Committee consent agenda on behalf of Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand.

On a motion by Commissioner Sorenson and seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Service Committee for February 20, 2024 (detailed minutes on record), are hereby adopted. Motion carried.

#### SECTION A

- I. To approve the January 16, 2024, Human Service Committee Meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the agency's personnel action as presented.
- III.
  - A. To adopt and approve DHS's Merit System Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action guidelines as the Agency's EEO and AA action plan.
  - B. To approve and re-authorize the Pennington County Pre-Petition Screening Team and the list of screeners as presented.

#### SECTION B

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

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a quote by OTIS Elevator Co. in the amount of \$1,252.53 to replace an emergency light and alarm bell system in the elevator located in the Government Center. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve internal advertising for the position of Lead Custodian. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve advertising for the position of IT Technician. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve a contingent 30-day unpaid leave of absence for Deputy Assessor-Appraiser Amber Vareberg. Motion carried.

County Attorney Items: None

Committee Reports / Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Peterson noted that Northern Counties recently met with state legislatives and had great conversations about issues. He noted that membership in Northern Counties is now up to 12 or 13 MN counties, and their next meeting will be held on March 7, 2024, in Grand Rapids, MN.

Commissioner Nelson noted that MnDOT representatives met with area freight providers and producers at the REA last week as part of a transportation advisory meeting. More funding for road repairs was a major topic of discussion.

At 10:47 a.m. the Chairman recessed the County Board meeting.

The Chairman called the Board meeting back to order at 11:00 a.m.

County Attorney Seamus Duffy read aloud language recommending that the County Board move into Closed Session to discuss pending litigation.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to close the Board meeting pursuant to MN Statute 13D.05, subd. 3(b), in order to discuss pending litigation with outside counsel, Kendra Olson of Pemberton Law. Motion carried.

At 11:55 a.m. the Board Chairman called the Board meeting back to open session.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator  
Pennington County

Seth Nelson, Chairman  
Board of Commissioners