

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
APRIL 26TH, 2022 – 5:00 P.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, April 26th, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Darryl Tveitbakk, David Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: None.

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

Chairman Lawrence asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. County Coordinator Kevin Erickson noted that Sheriff Kuznia has been removed from the agenda and Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel has been added. Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the Board agenda with the changes presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens:

Jean Marquis reintroduced herself to the Board members and presented a handout titled 'Election Integrity'. She stated that election data dated 11/29/20 was received from the Secretary of State's office and has been queried by a group of people since the 2020 General election. She discussed items such as acceptance of absentee ballots, absentee and regular ballots not being linked to voters, and deadlines for posting voter history not being met. The County Board took the information provided under consideration.

County resident David Rist met with the Board and stated he was also present on behalf of other concerned citizens not in attendance. He discussed his property tax value and how it has increased at an alarming rate since purchasing the property in 2013. He questioned if property values will continue to rise and believes property values in this county are simply out of control. The Board acknowledged his concern and informed Mr. Rist that property values are based on recent sales, noting that properties are selling at prices often way higher than current valuation. It was noted that the County must keep values in line with recent sales or the State will step in and set the values for us.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the Board minutes of April 19th, 2022, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the March Auditor and Manual warrants totaling \$1,330,932.40, the Human Services warrants totaling \$293,132.31, and the following Commissioner warrants. Discussion was then held on the proposed payment to the U.S. Marshalls. Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel stated that bill is related to services provided by the U.S. Marshalls

in relation to the Eric Reinbold case/search. Hearing no further discussion, the motion was carried.

County Revenue	\$67,735.09
Road & Bridge	\$13,097.36
Ditch Funds	\$ 3,560.74

Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand presented the Consent Agenda from the April 19th, 2022, Human Services Committee meeting. She noted the Personnel action as the retirement of Eligibility Worker Junelle Sparby effective December 30th, 2022. On a motion by Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commissioner Peterson, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Service Committee for April 19, 2022 (detailed minutes on record) are hereby adopted:

SECTION A

- I. To approve the March 15, 2022, Human Service Committee Meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the agency's personnel action as presented.
- III. A. To approve the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA) Service Agreement between Thief River Falls Public Schools and Pennington County Human Services as presented.

SECTION B

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

Ms. Sjostrand informed the Board that a mental health awareness event is being planned for August 23rd, 2022, in Thief River Falls. The event will feature a speaker who is a suicide survivor and award-winning author. In 2021, Pennington County was a sponsor of such an event, and she is requesting that the County be a sponsor once again. The Board took the information under advisement and requested that Ms. Sjostrand forward them the event information.

Inter-County Nursing Service Director Kayla Jore presented a COVID-19 update. She noted that the 'BA.2' variant is now dominant in MN. Pennington County has recently seen an increase in cases and hospitalizations. Vaccinations/boosters are encouraged, and clinics are still being held on a regular basis. Recent studies are being done on the long-term effects of COVID-19 and show that 10% of infection cases will result in long-term health issues.

Ms. Jore stated that their Joint Powers Board is wanting to update the services agreement between Pennington and Red Lake counties, and she presented a draft agreement. Changes include the deletion of homemaking services (no longer provided) and new agreement dates. With the new agreement, they are changing their name to 'Pennington & Red Lake County Public Health & Home Care'. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the revised agreement as presented and discussed above. Discussion followed with Commissioner Lawrence noting that County

Attorney Seamus Duffy has reviewed and approved the proposed agreement. Following discussion, the motion carried.

Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel and County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented an update on county conditions following recent weather events. The heavy snow and rain resulted in overland and river flooding, with approximately 60 roads and crossings impacted. Estimated flood damages across the county and a state of emergency declaration were discussed.

The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson.

RESOLUTION DECLARING STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the storm events beginning Wednesday, April 20th, 2022, have caused a significant amount of public and private property damage, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statute 12.29, the Pennington County Director of Emergency Management, requests the Chair of the County Board of Commissioners declare Pennington County in a State of Local Emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Bruce Lawrence, Chair of the County Board of Commissioners, declares Pennington County in a State of Emergency for conditions resulting from the storm events beginning on April 20th, 2022.

Discussion was held on the state threshold for funding, which is \$27,000. It was noted that federal and State reimbursement is 100% and 75%, respectively. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Commissioner Tveitbakk questioned the flood damage in the county. Mr. Beitel and Mr. Flaagan discussed road damage ranging from complete washouts to just having the gravel washed away only. Engineer Flaagan stated some washouts were large enough to hold a vehicle.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following two quotes received for 2022 road shouldering, which is considered annual maintenance.

Thygeson Construction	\$110,437.44
Davidson Construction	\$120,278.40

The Engineer recommended approval of the quote by Thygeson Construction. Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the quote of Thygeson Construction in the amount of \$110,437.44 for road shouldering in 2022. Motion carried.

SWCD District Manager Peter Nelson joined Engineer Flaagan at this time. Mr. Flaagan informed the Board that the following bids for CP57-22-07 (CD#96 slope repair) were opened on April 18th, 2022, as dually advertised:

Davidson Construction	\$ 595,783.00
Quality Spray Foam LLC (DBA Anderson Excavating)	\$ 597,000.90

Olson Construction TRF Inc.	\$ 701,713.80
Lyle Wilkens, Inc.	\$ 952,420.00
R.J. Zavoral & Sons, Inc.	\$ 994,234.80
Sunram Construction, Inc.	\$1,146,810.00

The Engineer's estimate for the project was \$748,190.00. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the bid of Davidson Construction in the amount of \$595,783.00 for CP57-22-07 as the lowest and best bid received. Mr. Nelson noted that funding sources include the Clean Water Fund, One Watershed One Plan, a grant, and approximately \$20,000 from CD#96 funds. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve a cost-share application through the Clean Water Fund for 75% funding of the CD#96 project; County cost is estimated at \$20,000. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the resignation of Highway Mechanic Dillon Ciekliniski effective May 3rd, 2022. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to authorize the County Engineer to post/advertise for the position of Highway Mechanic. Motion carried.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items:

The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

**RESOLUTION
APPROVING PENNINGTON COUNTY'S APPLICATION FOR FUNDING
FROM THE BALLOT DROP BOX GRANT PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, Minnesota counties are responsible for administering elections, which includes the purchase and maintenance of supplies and election equipment, including accessible voting equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Legislature has expressed a desire to have minimum security requirements and standards regarding the establishment of a 24-hour ballot drop box program; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office has up to \$15,000.00 in grant funding available per drop box location, which is designed to cover the cost of purchasing the drop box and the required video monitoring equipment; installation of the drop box and equipment; and video monitoring related out-of-pocket costs; and

WHEREAS, to receive funding from the Drop Box Grant Program, counties must submit a Grant Application to the Minnesota Secretary of State by May 16th, 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Pennington County Board of Commissioners approves its application for funding from the Drop Box Grant Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County certifies that any funds awarded to the County from the Ballot Drop Box Grant Program will be used for the expenditures outlined in the Grant Application.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve renewal of a Maintenance and Technical Support agreement with Pro-West & Associates for G.I.S. services in the amount of \$3,185.00 for the period of May 1st, 2022, to April 30th, 2023. Motion carried.

County Coordinator Items: None.

County Attorney Items: None.

Committee Reports/Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Peterson noted that he and Commissioner Tveitbakk are involved in the Clearwater One Watershed One Plan proposed plan discussion. Commissioner Tveitbakk stated that will be invite a representative from Clearwater to attend a future Board meeting for discussion purposes.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to adjourn the Board meeting to May 10th, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Bruce Lawrence, Chairman
Board of Commissioners