

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
JUNE 14TH, 2022 – 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 14th, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, and Neil Peterson. Members present via Zoom: David Sorenson. Members absent: Darryl Tveitbakk.

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

Chairman Lawrence announced that Commissioner Sorenson is attending the meeting via Zoom and will not participate in voting during the meeting.

Chairman Lawrence asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. The County Coordinator noted that Sheriff Kuznia can be removed from the agenda. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the Board agenda with the change presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens:

Terry Anderson and Wyatt Anderson discussed concerns of a beaver dam in Reiner Township that has been causing drainage issues on Wyatt's farm for the past two weeks. Terry noted the dam is adjacent to State land and they have fought with beaver dams there for many years. They are requesting that the county remove the beaver dam. Engineer Flaagan said that beavers were recently trapped and evicted from there, and his department is planning to remove the dam today. Wyatt Anderson questioned if the ditch could be moved across the road from the State land, which may help the on-going problem. Mr. Flaagan noted that moving the ditch may make it a watershed ditch. Chairman Lawrence asked that the County Engineer's office work on a solution to the issue.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the Board minutes of May 24th, 2022, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$ 85,241.34
Road & Bridge	\$260,602.90
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 3,342.08
Ditch Funds	\$ 125.00

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$3,341.65 were also approved.

Inter-County Nursing Service Director Kayla Jore presented a COVID-19 update. Case numbers are steady and similar to the past two weeks, and there are no COVID-19 related hospitalizations in the last month or two. The county vaccination rate remains at about 60%; 36% are vaccinated and boosted. She noted that the 5+ age group is recommended to be boosted 5 months after the initial vaccinations. The FDA has submitted emergency authorization for the under-5 age group and will be meeting with CDC requesting their approval. If approved, ICNS will not vaccinate this age group, that will be done by medical providers. She noted they will hold vaccination clinics monthly during the summer and a registration link is located on their website.

Emergency Management Director Erik Beitel provided the Board an update. The hazard mitigation plan update has been delayed due to the flooding and weather events. FEMA recently finished their initial 20-county damage assessment and will be forwarding a federal emergency declaration to the President. Memorial weekend weather events may result in another emergency declaration. He noted that the \$300,000+ in damages for this area have been reported and submitted and do not include riverside erosion damages. More damage will be revealed as the water recedes and we can continue to submit those for reimbursement. He has notified our townships to get repair work done as needed and to document for reimbursement. Townships can combine as a FEMA applicant to meet the thresholds for reimbursement. The Board thanked Mr. Beitel for his report.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan informed the Board that paving is complete on the 4-mile project on CSAH #6. The rumble strips are being worked on and striping will follow. He expects the project to be complete by the end of the week.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve a quote by Read-Tech IT Solutions in the amount of \$2,437.00 for a new Surface Pro computer for the Highway Dept. Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan provided an update on repairs due to spring flooding, noting that work on roads, culverts, etc. will continue through the summer. He estimates a 50% completion rate at this time and noted that a lot of culverts still need to be replaced.

Engineer Flaagan noted that the pre-construction meeting for the County Ditch #96 project is taking place today at 11:00 a.m.

Discussion was held on the future use, rules, implications, and costs of using drones for the viewing of projects, ditches, etc.

Auditor-Treasurer Items:

Auditor-Treasurer Jennifer Herzberg provided an update on election voting devices. A state grant and some assistance from townships was used to purchase 18 Omni Ballot assistive-voting ballot marking devices. These replace the former Automark machines and will be used beginning with the August Primary election. The Omni-Ballot meets all handicap requirements.

County Coordinator Items:

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson opened discussion on the Federal holiday “Juneteenth”, which commemorates the emancipation of slavery in the U.S. He noted that a few MN counties are observing the holiday, but the State has yet to declare Juneteenth as an official state holiday. The Board tabled the issue until such time that the State of MN takes further legislative action.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the County Auditor-Treasurer and County Recorder advertising for the position of Full-Time Deputy Auditor-Treasurer/Recorder. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the transfer of David Lovly from Full-Time Deputy Sheriff to Part-Time Deputy Sheriff effective June 27th, 2022. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the transfer of a current, Full-Time Deputy Sheriff to the position of Drug Task Force Officer effective June 27th, 2022. Discussion followed with it being noted that the employee is unnamed due to the nature of the position. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

County Attorney Items: None.

Committee Reports/Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Nelson recently attended an annual Chamber of Commerce Policy meeting. Representative John Burkel was in attendance and local issues were discussed. Commissioner Nelson also attended a recent Transportation Advisory Committee meeting and noted there has been an increase in MN traffic deaths over the last two years. The committee would like to see more counties involved in the Towards Zero Deaths program to help lower traffic fatalities.

Commissioner Peterson requested that the County Coordinator add Chester Paul to the July 12th, 2022, County Board Agenda to give an update on the Clearwater One Watershed One Plan.

County Attorney Seamus Duffy stated that the drug treatment court is going to hold a picnic at Oakland Park on July 7th, 2022, for the 27 current graduates and past graduates as well. The County Board donated \$250 for the picnic in 2021 and he asked if the Board would consider donating for 2022. Mr. Duffy noted that the treatment program has been successful, and the picnic recognizes graduates for their achievement. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to donate \$250 to the Pennington County Drug Treatment Court for the July 7th, 2022, picnic event. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to adjourn the Board meeting to June 28th, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Bruce Lawrence, Chairman
Board of Commissioners