

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
AUGUST 22nd, 2023 – 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 22nd, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Neil Peterson, and Roy Sourdif. Members absent: David Sorenson.

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

The Chairman asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. The County Coordinator noted that County Assessor Carl Bruzek has been added to the agenda at 10:40 a.m. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the Board agenda as revised. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Board minutes of August 8th, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$316,741.89 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

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| County Revenue | \$58,211.34 |
| Road & Bridge | \$79,297.05 |
| Solid Waste Facility | \$ 85.84 |
| Ditch Funds | \$ 3,315.00 |

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$419.57 were also approved.

Jamie Bakken – Executive Director of Pioneer Village, presented an update to the Board. She noted that annual visitation has been 2,000+ in recent years, with visitors from almost every U.S. state and many countries. A grain bin was recently donated to the Village; Ironman Exteriors will pour concrete for the base. Successful fundraising has resulted in two new cabin roofs this year, and stucco is being fixed on the Great Northern building. Ms. Bakken recently worked with The Times to create a community calendar and it will feature area historical pictures. Calendars will be available at Hugo’s and The Times for \$5.00/each with all profits going to Pioneer Village. She noted that fall at Pioneer Village is usually busy this year many fall events are planned as well. She thanked the Board for their past support and would appreciate their continued financial support. The Board thanked Ms. Bakken for her report.

Peter Nelson – SWCD District Manager, and Ricky Peterson – SWCD Board member, presented their 2024 budget request. Mr. Nelson first discussed revenues for the upcoming year, noting a 3% requested increase to county contributions. He noted that

two engineering staff were added in 2023. Expenses were then discussed, and Mr. Nelson noted they renewed their building lease for 2024, so the rent budget is down considerably from when they were considering a new building. Septic system upgrades costs are substantially higher now, resulting in 20% increase for 2024. Also discussed were planned streambank projects and some outlet projects. They are working with EMD Erik Beitel regarding homes threatened by riverbank erosion near Hartz Park, and Mr. Beitel continues to work with FEMA on that issue. Hearing no further questions on the SWCD budget for 2024, the Board took their request under advisement.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following items from the Highway Dept.

Mr. Flaagan discussed a potential new position, Lead Highway Equipment Operator. The position has been rated by Bjorklund Compensation Consulting and would be a promotion for an internal Highway Equipment Operator. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the new position of Lead Highway Equipment Operator as proposed and authorize the Engineer to post internally for the position. Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan stated there was one internal applicant and interview conducted for the new position of Senior Technician. He is recommending the promotion of Jay Mathieu to the position. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the transfer/promotion of Jay Mathieu from Highway Technician III to Senior Technician effective August 23rd, 2023. Motion carried.

Engineer Flaagan noted that the 2023 crack sealing project is complete and he is recommending final payment be made to Northwest Asphalt and Maintenance in the amount of \$91,050.30. The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Contract No. CP57-23-04 (2023 crack-sealing) has in all things been completed, and the County Board being fully advised in the premises,

NOW THEN, BE IT RESOLVED, that we do hereby by accept said completed project for and on behalf of the Pennington County Highway Dept. and authorize final payment as specified herein.

Mr. Flaagan noted that Assistant Engineer Alex Bladow and Ag Services/SW Coordinator Grant Nelson have been researching a drone for the highway dept, which would be used for ditch and bridge inspections. He presented a quote from Maverick Drone Systems in the amount of \$6,053.04. He noted that the Assistant Engineer and the Senior Technician would be designated and trained as pilots. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the purchase of a drone system for the highway department from Maverick Drone Systems at the quoted price of \$6,053.04, with the stipulation that at least two department employees be trained as pilots. Motion carried.

Mr. Flaagan noted that Red Lake County has hired a County Engineer who is expected to start working on August 31st, 2023. The RLC Board recently voted to cancel the agreement with Pennington County for shared engineering services, and Mr. Flaagan recommends we cancel the agreement as well. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to cancel the agreement between Red Lake and Pennington County for shared engineering services, effective August 22nd, 2023. Discussion followed with Mr. Flaagan stating he will assist with onboarding of the new engineer in RLC and answer questions as needed. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Mr. Flaagan stated that the 2024 project on 6th Street in Thief River Falls includes storm sewer replacement on the north side of the road. HDR Inc. has provided a quote for the design, hydraulic report, etc. in the amount of \$46,360.00, which would be paid via State Aid funds. The quote equals roughly 10% of total estimated project costs, which is normal. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the quote by HDR, Inc. in the amount of \$46,360.00 for engineering services relating to the 2024 project planned for 6th Street. Discussion followed with Engineer Flaagan stating they chose HDR, Inc. as they did the design for the west-side drainage project and this project will be connected to that system. Project bids will be let in the spring of 2024. He noted that the City of TRF also has another 2024 project planned for 6th Street from Barzen Ave. to the railroad tracks, which is a federal project and will be separate. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Human Services Director Julie Sjostrand presented the consent agenda from the August 15th, 2023, Human Service Committee meeting. On a motion by Commissioner Sourdif and seconded by Commissioner Nelson, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Service Committee for August 15, 2023 (detailed minutes on record), are hereby adopted:

SECTION A

- I. To approve the July 18, 2023, Human Service Committee Meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the Agency's personnel action as presented.
- III.
 - A. To approve the CY 2023 Tri-Valley Transportation Business Contract between Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc. and Pennington County Human Services, as presented.
 - B. To approve policies for Pennington County Human Services Inspection 2023 Report as presented.
 - C. To approve the Child Safety and Permanency and MFIP/DWP Self-Support Index Report.

SECTION B

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

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the hire of Thonya Fogarty as Eligibility Worker effective September 5th, 2023. Motion carried.

County Assessor Carl Bruzek presented the following items:

Application for Local Option to Disaster Abatement for Parcel # R16.02226602, owned by Audrey Miller (deceased), for assessment year 2023. A fire in December 2022 destroyed the house and the owner deceased in the fire. A second fire on March 24th, 2023, destroyed a 40'x60' shop on the property. Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Application for Local Option to Disaster for Audrey Miller as described above, and to abate the 2023 tax to reflect the reduction in value for the shop loss. Motion carried.

Application for Local Option to Disaster for Parcel # R11.0410102, owned by Bradley Borowicz, for assessment year 2023. A fire on May 26, 2023, destroyed the home and significantly damaged a detached garage. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the Application for Local Option to Disaster for Bradley Borowicz as described above, and to abate the 2023 tax to reflect the reduction in value due to the fire. Motion carried.

Application for Abatement for Parcel # R19.04205140, owned by Craig and Kassie Redford. A 26' x 56' mobile home was listed to the property in error, and the 1989 mobile home was not listed to the property but does reside on the property. Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Application for Abatement as described above, and to abate taxes payable 2024 to reflect the value of the 1989 Schult mobile home, and not the double-wide mobile home. Motion carried.

Auditor-Treasurer Items:

Auditor-Treasurer Jennifer Herzberg informed the Board that the Auditor's office would be administering the absentee balloting for the ISD #561 and ISD #564 elections to be held on November 7th, 2023, and requested a resolution to establish the Absentee and UOCAVA Ballot Boards for the elections.

The following resolution was introduced by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, and upon vote was unanimously carried.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pennington County Board of Commissioners hereby appoint the following staff of the County Auditor-Treasurer's office as the Absentee Ballot Board:

Lucas Fornshell
Julie Stennes
Danielle Miller

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the foregoing Auditor-Treasurer staff also serve as the UOCAVA Absentee Ballot Board.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve issuance of a duplicate warrant to Paul Maloney in the amount of \$79.99 to replace lost warrant #197412 issued on July 13th, 2023, without issuance of an indemnifying bond. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve issuance of a duplicate warrant to MN CLE in the amount of \$101.00 to replace lost warrant #194472 issued on June 17, 2022, without issuance of an indemnifying bond. Motion carried.

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson provided an update on the Government Center 3rd floor remodel, noting that painting is about complete and ceiling grid & tile, and lighting/wiring continues. The contractor expects interior doors to be delivered on September 12, 2023. The Building Committee will be meeting soon to discuss other furniture needed for the 3rd floor.

County Attorney Items: None.

Committee Reports:

Commissioner Nelson reminded everyone that tonight is the 'Be the Voice' event in TRF, which features a 5k race at 5:30 and a speaker at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Lawrence stated that the Personnel Committee has been in discussion of the salaries of our County Attorney and County Sheriff, which are normally reviewed and revised effective July 1 of each year.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to set the salary of the County Sheriff at \$108,000 retroactive to July 1st, 2023; to be reviewed again for January 1st, 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to set the salary of the County Attorney at \$130,000 retroactive to July 1st, 2023; to be reviewed again for January 1st, 2024. Motion carried.

The Board noted that Pennington County Commissioner salaries will remain the same for 2024.

Commissioner Nelson stated that construction of the new airport hangar continues, and the roof will be installed soon; Commissioner Peterson noted that Denver Air is offering a 'buy one, get one' limited time ticket offer; Commissioner Sourdif reminded the Board

that the DWI Court picnic is being held this Thursday; it was noted that the AMC Conference is coming up in September at Arrowwood Resort; the December AMC Conference dates have been released so the Coordinator will make reservations for the Board members when available.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to adjourn the Board meeting to September 12th, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Neil Peterson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners