

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM  
FEBRUARY 8<sup>th</sup>, 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, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Darryl Tveitbakk, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: David Sorenson.

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. Hearing none, Commissioner Peterson motioned, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the Board agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens – None present.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the County Board minutes of January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022, as written. Motion carried.

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

County Revenue	\$96,836.32
Road & Bridge	\$28,426.18

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$1,649.34 were also approved.

Mark Borseth from the City of Thief River Falls presented a five-year tax abatement program the City approved effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The program provides for the abatement of property taxes for a three-year period for single-family residential construction, with no limit on the cost of the home. He noted that the last tax abatement program expired at the end of 2020, and to meet demand a housing study has recommended the addition of 90 new homes in each of the next 10 years. The Board posed several questions, including why the cost limit on homes was eliminated, if the City has considered other types of incentives, and what else is needed to draw more people to the area. Mr. Borseth responded that high inflation and construction costs makes it hard to set a cost limit like in past years. He said land availability is a factor for residential construction, but developers are buying land and planning to build more homes. Sanford Health has 200+ acres at their location south of town that will most likely be developed for residential homes. Commissioner Tveitbakk stated that tax abatements are personally tough for him to accept as they push the tax burden onto other taxpayers. The Board thanked Mr. Borseth for his presentation and took it under advisement.

County Sheriff Ray Kuznia presented the following LEC items:

Motioned by Commissioner Tveitbakk, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the resignation of Part-Time Corrections Officer Alex Peterson effective February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Tveitbakk, to approve the resignation of Full-Time Corrections Officer Tara Pfeiffer effective February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Motion carried.

Sheriff Kuznia stated that the County Attorney lobby area and the Deputy parking area off Main Ave. currently do not have security cameras, and the camera monitoring the west parking lot should be replaced. He received a quote for 3 Bosch security cameras from Accurate Controls, Inc. in the amount of \$3,677.94. Mr. Kuznia noted that the current system does have the capability to add three more cameras. He plans to research the issue further before making a recommendation to the Board. Commissioner Tveitbakk questioned if the Justice Center construction plans included a camera for the County Attorney's office but was overlooked. Sheriff Kuznia that should be researched as well. Following discussion, Commissioner Peterson motioned, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to authorize up to \$5,000 for the purchase, installation, and programming of security cameras at the Justice Center as discussed above. Motion carried.

Commissioner Tveitbakk left the Board meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Inter-County Nursing Director Kayla Jore presented a county COVID-19 update. She noted that the county vaccination rate is at 59% and ICNS is primarily administering booster shots at their Friday clinics. Modera and Pfizer are now both fully FDA-approved and in the next couple weeks she anticipates that the under 5 age group will be approved for vaccination. She noted that positive case counts include only lab-confirmed positives and don't include those testing at home, so numbers are likely higher than published. Omicron is most prevalent in our area but Delta is still circulating. ICNS has distributed 180 test kits to local partners for those that can't afford to buy test kits, and they do have saliva test kits available as well.

Ms. Jore also informed the Board that the MN Dept. of Health has approved Inter-County Nursing Service as a breastfeeding-friendly workplace. She noted that the breastfeeding area is located in the Pennington County Government Center adjacent to Meeting Room A.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following items:

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to authorize the Engineer to advertise for bids on fuel, equipment rental, and culverts for 2022, with bids to be opened March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in the Justice Center Board room. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to authorize the County Engineer to advertise for bids for SAP 057-606-006, consisting of the milling and overlay of CSAH #6 between CSAH #22 and CSAH #24. Mr. Flaagan noted that he would like to advertise for bids as soon as the design phase of the project is done. Following discussion, the motion was carried.

Committee Reports / Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Peterson stated that Minnesota Rural Counties (MRC) is currently looking at legislative priorities, with transportation and nursing homes being the focus at this time. He also noted that the Northern Counties Land Use Board (NCLUB) is reviewing their PILT payment process and have hired a consultant.

Commissioner Nelson noted that the Technology Committee is near finalization of the new county logo. It will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items: None.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve a quote by Brodin Comfort Systems for the purchase and installation of a new Bryant rooftop heating and cooling unit for Human Services in the amount of \$13,115, and a verbal quote by Bergstrom Electric in the amount \$1,500 to wire the unit to code. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to approve the hire of Alexa Grindeland as Deputy Assessor-Appraiser effective February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the hire of Taylor Engelstad as Deputy Auditor-Treasurer/Recorder effective February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022. Motion carried.

County Attorney Items:

Commissioner Lawrence questioned the County Attorney if he is considering advertising again for a PT Legal Secretary. Mr. Duffy stated he is not interested at this time.

Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to adjourn the Board meeting to February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator  
Pennington County

Bruce Lawrence, Chairman  
Board of Commissioners