

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
AUGUST 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, August 27th, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Members Present: Seth Nelson, Roy Sourdif, David Sorenson, and Bruce Lawrence. Members absent: Neil Peterson.

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. The County Coordinator stated that Ms. Sjostrand is unable to attend the meeting so he will present on her behalf. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the agenda with the change presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the County Board minutes of August 13, 2024, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$231,429.14 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$104,088.86
Road & Bridge	\$ 66,138.60
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 253.95
Ditch Funds	\$ 8,062.00

Per diems and meal reimbursements in the amount of \$39.25 were also approved.

NW Regional Library Interim Director Megan Lysford presented their 2025 budget request. She cited a 3% increase from the 2024 levy and noted changes including a 2% COLA for staff and an increase in e-materials, which are steadily gaining in popularity. the Board thanked her for the report and took the budget request under advisement.

County Engineer Mike Flaagan presented the following highway department items:

Mr. Flaagan stated that the county's surveying project started in Rocksbury Township and the crew is now working in North Township. The survey team is receiving landowner requests for private survey work and are willing to provide services if the county approves. Commissioner Lawrence stated that the Highway Committee has discussed this request and as long as the private work doesn't interfere or delay the county's surveying project they thought it fine. The County Board agreed.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to accept the resignation of Highway Equipment Operator Bryan Pierson effective September 3rd, 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to authorize the County Engineer to advertise for the position of Highway Equipment Operator, internally first per the CBA and externally after if necessary. Motion carried.

The Engineer reminded the Board of the Joint Ditch hearings scheduled for September 3, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. in the Justice Center Board Room.

Inter-County Community Council Employment and Training Director John Preuss met with the Board regarding a Joint Powers Agreement where the county and six others in NW MN agree to allow the NWRDC Executive Board (acting as a Local Elected Official Board) to govern funds received from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. In the past the NWPIC acted as grant recipient and administrator, with the new JPA that would change to ICCC. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a Joint Powers Agreement with the ICCC whereas the NWRDC will serve as the Local Elected Official Board regarding the WIOA and the related funding. Motion carried.

County Coordinator Kevin Erickson presented for Human Services on behalf of 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 August 20, 2024, (detailed minutes on record) are hereby adopted:

SECTION A

- I. To approve the July 16, 2024, Human Service Committee Meeting minutes.
- II. To approve the agency's personnel action as presented.
- III.
 - A. To approve the CY 2025 Tri-Valley Transportation Business Contract between Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc., and Pennington County Human Services, as presented.
 - B. 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.

The Chairman asked that the County Coordinator present until the SWCD was in attendance.

Auditor-Treasurer Items:

The County Coordinator presented the Auditor-Treasurer items on behalf of Jennifer Herzberg.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve a Professional Services Agreement between TriMin Systems, Inc. and the MN Counties Computer Cooperative for maintenance and support of IFS (county financial system) for the period of January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2027. Motion carried.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to authorize the Personnel Committee to interview and conduct initial hire activities for the position of Assistant County Attorney prior to the next Board meeting. Motion carried. It was noted that interviews for the position will be held on August 28, 2024.

Mr. Erickson noted that the Board recently approved the NWRDC drafting a new, ten-year regional solid waste plan, however, cost-sharing has yet to be approved. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the six-county, cost share plan regarding the new, ten-year regional solid waste plan, with 50% of total to be split equally among the counties and the remaining 50% to be split by population. Pennington County's total cost is expected to be \$11,089.43. Motion carried. It was also noted that Marshall County has agreed to be the fiscal agent for the plan.

The County Coordinator discussed the current health insurance plans for county employees and noted that there are no changes to plan premiums for 2025. One HSA/VEBA plan deductible is being indexed by the IRS, which is dictated by the plan features. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve renewal of the five current health plans for county employees for 2025 and authorize the Chairman to sign the renewal. Motion carried.

Mr. Erickson stated that the county's Personnel Committee has held meetings with two area law firms regarding assistance with the County Attorney's office. Ihle, Sparby, & Haase, PA submitted a proposal and Nathan Haase and Delray Sparby then met with the Board and reviewed their proposal. Nathan Haase would serve as Interim County Attorney and Delray Sparby would be appointed an Assistant County Attorney. They anticipate providing a combined 40 hours per week to the office at a total cost of \$15,000 per month. They intend to serve out the current term of the County Attorney but there is an option to terminate with 45 days' notice by either party. Discussion followed with the county noting their intent to hire at least one more Assistant County Attorney. Mr. Haase stated that the agreement terms could be renegotiated if their work needs change over time. Following discussion, there was a motion by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the proposal by Ihle, Sparby, & Haase, PA to service as Interim County Attorney and Assistant County Attorney at a cost of \$15,000

per month effective August 28th, 2024. Motion carried. The Board thanked Mr. Haase and Sparby for their proposal and willingness to assist the attorney's office.

Peter Nelson and Ricky Peterson of the Pennington County SWCD presented their 2025 budget request. Mr. Nelson discussed the expected revenues and expenditures and explained any significant changes. They are requesting a 4% increase in the county's appropriation for a total of \$135,580. The Board thanked them for their presentation and took their request under advisement.

The County Coordinator continued to present his items:

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to accept the resignation of Assistant County Attorney Scott Collins effective September 10th, 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to retitle the position of Assistant County Attorney to Assistant County Attorney – I with no change to the 2024 pay scale; to approve addition of the position of Assistant County Attorney – II with a 2024 pay range of \$91,666 - \$122,841, and approve addition of the position of Assistant County Attorney – Senior with a 2024 pay range of \$111,426 - \$149,321. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the transfer of Kristin Hanson from Assistant County Attorney – I to Assistant County Attorney – Senior, at the 2024 step 5 salary of \$135,439 effective September 2, 2024. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sourdif, to approve the transfer of Scott Collins from Assistant County Attorney – I to Assistant County Attorney – Senior, at the 2024 step 5 salary of \$135,439 effective September 2, 2024. Motion carried.

The Coordinator discussed a request by the Crime Victim Services department for a 10-hour per week, temporary Crime Victim Advocate position. He noted that the department is funded by a grant, which will support the requested position through September 2025. The department is working to secure new grants as well. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the addition of one Part-Time, Temporary Crime Victim Services Advocate position through September 2025 and authorize advertising for the position. Motion carried.

County Attorney Items: N/A

Committee Reports / Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Lawrence discussed a quote from Garden Valley Technologies for six computers for the Highway Department, with three totaling \$2,946.54 and three others

totaling \$7,419.23. The quote is recommended for approval by the Technology Committee. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the quote by Garden Valley Technologies for the purchase of six computers for the Highway Department at a total cost of \$10,365.77. Motion carried.

Commissioner Lawrence noted that the maintenance contract for our network firewall has expired. The firewall itself is approaching its end of life and Garden Valley Technologies has quoted an upgraded firewall with a 3-year maintenance agreement at a total cost of \$6,233.00. The Tech Committee is recommending approval of the quote. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a quote by Garden Valley Technologies in the amount of \$6,233.00 for the purchase and installation of a new NSA2700 firewall and 3-year maintenance agreement. Motion carried.

Commissioner Lawrence stated that the new Tyler Technologies tax system needs to be able to interface with the county's GIS system in order to show property tax information. ProWest & Associates has provided a quote for this interface process in the amount of \$4,222.04, and the Technology Committee has recommended its approval. Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a quote by ProWest & Associates in the amount of \$4,222.04 to interface the county's Tyler Technology tax data with the county's GIS system. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sourdif, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to September 10, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Seth Nelson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners