

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
PENNINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JUSTICE CENTER BOARD ROOM
APRIL 22, 2025 – 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, April 22, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. Members present: Seth Nelson, Bruce Lawrence, Roy Sourdif, David Sorenson, and Neil Peterson. Members absent: None.

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

The Chairman asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Hearing none, there was a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Recognition of Citizens: None.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve the County Board minutes of April 8, 2025, as written. Motion carried.

Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the Human Services warrants totaling \$265,532.76 and the following Commissioner warrants. Motion carried.

County Revenue	\$159,922.80
Road & Bridge	\$ 36,681.20
Solid Waste Facility	\$ 4,432.50

Meal reimbursements and per diems in the amount of \$1,389.50 were also approved.

Julie Sjostrand – Human Services Director

Ms. Sjostrand presented the consent agenda from the Human Services Committee meeting recently held at the NW MN Juvenile Training Center in Bemidji, MN. On a motion by Commissioner Peterson and seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, the following recommendations of the Pennington County Human Service Committee for April 15, 2025 (detailed minutes on record) are hereby adopted:

SECTION A

- I. To approve March 18, 2025, 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.

B. The Director presented information on the Determination of need application for an Adult Day Facility Potential in Thief River Falls as presented.

SECTION B

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

Commissioner Peterson noted that a survey from the Association of MN Counties has been forwarded to select department heads regarding proposed state budget cuts and the cost shifts that would result. Ms. Sjostrand stating that a 5% county share for disability waivers would cost the county about \$788,000, changes to the exception rate for waivers would cost \$292,645, and changes to the sex offender program would cost \$420,000. Sheriff Vettleson stated that law enforcement training funds would be cut and shifted to the counties, and Engineer Flaagan discussed a proposed 4% reduction in CSAH funding. Commissioner Peterson noted there is no way MN counties can afford or sustain such cost shifts. Ms. Sjostrand stated that proposed cost shifts to PCHS alone totals about \$1.5 million.

Mike Flaagan – County Engineer, Alex Bladow – Assistant County Engineer

Mr. Bladow informed the Board that he recently viewed Darwin Boutain's property regarding his buffer strip violation. The strip doesn't appear to have been seeded last year as required; only weeds appear to be growing in the strip. He was informed by Mr. Boutain that he plans to mow the strip this summer but says he did seed it last fall and doesn't plan to pay any related fines. Mr. Bladow told the Board that fines are now accruing at the rate of \$500 per month and currently total over \$2,000. He questioned the Board if the fines should continue to accrue or stop. After discussion, the Board agreed that the fines should continue to accrue.

Seth Vettleson – County Sheriff

Mr. Vettleson presented a letter of resignation from Deputy David Olson. Motioned by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to accept the resignation of Full-Time Deputy Sheriff David Olson effective May 1, 2025, and express appreciation of his 14+ years of service to the county. Motion carried.

Pennington County Extension / 4-H – Cindi Kilén, Grant Nelson, Abby Linstad

Extension staff presented their first quarter report for 2025. Ms. Kilén noted that the Cloverbuds program starts up tomorrow at Challenger Elementary, Goodridge, and St. Bernards schools. She discussed youth camps planned for this spring and summer, and project bowls. Twelve local youth will begin the dog training program tomorrow and can compete in the dog show at the county fair. Community clubs continue to meet each month and her office is currently planning the annual county fair. Amy Halverson will be the office summer assistant again and they will also have a summer intern. The Master Gardener program held an event recently at the Legacy Center with about 100 attendees.

The program's Garden Tour is set for June 26, 2025. The Home Council program, led by Glenice Johnson, is comprised of six, area Learning Circles groups. Their annual Spring Fling was held on April 10, 2025, in Holt, MN.

Abby Linstad introduced herself to the Board as the new Pennington County 4-H Educator. She is from Michigan, ND and most recently worked in housing at the UMC - Crookston. She is excited to be in her new position, the community has been very welcoming, and she is looking forward to working with the local youth. The Board welcomed her to the new position.

Grant Nelson noted that the SCORE recycling report has been submitted to the MPCA. The NWRDC is drafting a ten-year, regional solid waste plan for Pennington and five area counties. The MPCA wants to see the county's recycling rate increase from 25% to 35%. The new Extended Producer responsibility was detailed, which begins in 2029 and mandates that container producers must pay 50% of recycling costs and up to 90% over time. Grant stated that beginning in 2026, private pesticide testing will be offered in-person only and will be a proctored test. He has been fielding daily calls on spring conditions of trees, grass, etc. Commissioner Lawrence questioned the future of SCORE funds and potential increases. Grant replied that the county is allocated 3% of solid waste management tax, and counties with a certified SW inspector, such as himself, do get some extra funding. The county spring clean-up day will be held on May 3, 2025, at Les's Sanitation from 8:00 – 12:00 p.m., and several county and city employees will be on hand to help. The Board thanked the Extension staff for their report.

County Auditor-Treasurer Items: None.

County Coordinator Items:

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve issuance of a duplicate warrant to Modern Imaging Solutions in the amount of \$604.75 to replace lost warrant #201631 dated December 27, 2024, without issuance of an indemnifying bond. Motion carried.

Mr. Erickson introduced a maintenance agreement from SVL. Building & Grounds Supervisor Morgan Bernier detailed the agreement, noting it will cover the boilers, rooftop units, mini split units, MAU system, and hot water heaters located at the Justice Center. Motioned by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to approve a three-year agreement with SVL for maintenance at the Justice Center as discussed above at an annual cost of \$6,980.00. Motion carried.

Mr. Erickson discussed MN Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML), which takes effect in 2026 and will require a payroll tax by employers and employees. Entities can be on the State plan or may use a State-approved private plan. He stated that Integrity Employee Benefits is conducting an RFP with MN cities and counties for private PFML to check on feasibility and costs versus the State plan. There is no obligation with the RFP and roughly 110 entities will participate. Motioned by Commissioner Sorenson, seconded by

Commissioner Peterson, to authorize the inclusion of Pennington County in the Integrity Employee Benefits RFP for Paid family Medical Leave. Motion carried.

The Coordinator noted that bids were opened and reviewed today at 9:00 a.m. in the Justice Center Board Room for the sale of the former Human Services building/parking lot and for roof replacement at the Law Enforcement Center. There were no bids received for the sale of the former Human Services building and parking lot. Building and Grounds Supervisor Morgan Bernier presented the following roofing bids, noting that the bid specifications need to be reviewed before a recommendation can be made. Following discussion, there was a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to refer the LEC roofing bids to the Building Committee for review and recommendation to the Board. Motion carried.

Northwest Roofing Inc.	\$274,058.75
APR	\$298,429.42
Classic Construction	\$273,547.31
North Central Insulation	\$266,961.00 (new ISO sheeting)
	\$227,559.00 (reuse ISO sheeting)
Gabriel Roofing, LLC	\$146,900.00
All Elements Inc.	\$239,198.00
	\$188,713.00 (PVC roof)

County Attorney Items:

Interim County Attorney Nathan Haase informed the Board they have a new server in the office and they are working to get all office computers on the system. He noted the new Assistant County Attorney, Ashley Nelson, will be starting on May 5, 2025. He discussed the desire to purchase new Surface Pro tablets in the future, which if approve would be paid for with forfeiture funds.

Committee Reports / Commissioner Updates:

Commissioner Lawrence noted that additional volunteers are needed for the spring cleanup day being held on May 3, 2025, at Les's Sanitation.

Motioned by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Sorenson, to adjourn the Board meeting to May 13, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kevin Erickson, County Coordinator
Pennington County

Roy Sourdif, Chairman
Board of Commissioners