

WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

FEBRUARY 11, 2020

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners' Meeting was held on February 11, 2020 in the Small Courtroom, Wadena County Courthouse, 415 South Jefferson Street, Wadena, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Commissioner Horsager and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present were: Commissioners Bill Stearns, Sheldon Monson, Jim Hofer, Jon Kangas, County Coordinator/Engineer Ryan Odden, County Attorney Kyra Ladd, Chief Deputy Joe Schoon, Kyle Davis, *Review Messenger* reporter Matthew Johnson, *Wadena Pioneer Journal* reporter Michael Johnson and *Independent News Herald/Verndale Sun* reporter Trinity Gruenberg.

Amend/Approve the Day's Agenda: Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Kangas to approve the day's agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Recognize Interested Citizens: None present today.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Hofer to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Approve the minutes from the 2-4-2020 meeting, with three minor wording changes.
- Approve Joel Paschka hired as Asst. County Attorney II, Yearly Gross Salary: \$96,753.00 (Year 1 of the 2020 Attorney Salary Schedule); full time, Exempt, and non-union. Start Date: March 16, 2020.

Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Members Selection to Sourcewell Representative Assembly: Sourcewell will hold its 42nd Annual Meeting of the Representative Assembly on April 15, 2020. The program for the meeting celebrates Students of Character from area school districts. Numbers of Commissioners from these areas are also requested to appear at the Annual Meeting's attendance. Commissioners Kangas and Horsager attended the event last year for Wadena County.

Commissioner Horsager asked the Board if anyone would like to appear this year if their schedule was open. Commissioner Hofer replied he would like to attend because he has not gone for a couple of years and felt that it was a rewarding experienced. Commissioner Horsager also stated he was available to make the Assembly. Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Kangas for the Wadena County Board to select Commissioner Hofer and Commissioner Horsager to attend the April 15, 2020 Sourcewell Representative Assembly. Motion carried unanimously.

Update on Wadena County Agricultural Society: Commissioners Monson and Kangas were asked to attend the Wadena County Agricultural Society meetings. After reading previous meeting minutes and the by-laws, Commissioner Kangas realized that the Ag Society were having some meetings without a quorum. As a legal board, they cannot hold a meeting without a quorum. He asked them about the number of

board members they had, and the Ag Society told him that they had some interested members in the community and the Ag Society that were willing to accept nominations to be on the Board. The Ag Society is going to have a special meeting in a few weeks to hopefully get this accomplished. Commissioner Kangas stated that his biggest concern was for them to follow proper procedures.

Commissioner Monson had attended the January Ag Society Meeting and there was only four Directors present. The Ag Society's by-law states that they are supposed to have six in attendance for a meeting. Commissioner Monson asked about this too, and the Ag Society stated that they suspended that part of their by-law back in December. Commissioner Monson voiced that a by-law can only be amended at an Annual Agricultural Society Meeting. Again at this meeting, it was brought up that the Ag Society had three resignations from the Board since the Annual Meeting and they were down to only three Directors left on the Board. Commissioner Monson questioned if they could even act as a Board that night. The Ag Society immediately chose to appoint four new members. Commissioner Monson suggested that they have a full Ag Society Meeting to officially commence business.

Commissioner Monson stated to the County Commissioners that he believes that the Ag Society currently does not have a Treasurer. He says that they are hoping that one of the new members steps up as a Treasurer. Commissioner Horsager thought the Ag Society was going to hire some professional services of an accountant to get their business in order. Commissioner Monson was with the same understanding, but mentioned that the Ag Society had even more issues. He cited that they are not current on their registration with the Secretary of States' office and he has brought it up to the group twice. Commissioner Monson also inquired if they paid their October-December sales taxes. They communicated to him that they turned everything over to their accountant and were unsure.

The Ag Society voiced that they were going to try to regroup to get their organization back together. Commissioners Monson and Kangas' goals are for the Ag Society first to be considered in good standing with the Secretary of State and the Department of Revenue, otherwise no funds will be released to the organization until they are compliant.

Approval to Request Bids for Courthouse Restroom Renovation Project: County Coordinator/Engineer Ryan Odden presented plans and information to the County Board for a new Courthouse Restroom Renovation Project. He requested to advance the project to the bidding stage. The County will act as its own General Contractor on the project. Direct bids will need to come from a Sub-Contractor. Maintenance will do some of the non-biddable items; accessories, taping off the hallway, etc.

Odden asked for permission to move this project to a bidding stage. The County can open up bids, next they can be brought back to the County Board for approval. Then they could see if it would come in with what the architect was expecting for cost. Commissioner Horsager asked if this project would be the men's and women's upper and lower levels of restrooms. Odden agreed. Moved by Commissioner Stearns, seconded by Commissioner Monson to advertise the project for bids. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Hofer: 2/4/2020 Paycom Update, 2/4/2020 IT Committee (idea of mandatory IT training), 2/10/2020 Extension – 4H Meeting, 2/10/2020 Corrections Board.

Commissioner Hofer's Kitchigami Wadena Branch Final Budget Report: Commissioner Hofer has been on the Kitchigami Board for seven years. Their original headquarters are in Pine River and is funded with an allocation of legacy money for the regional library system. There hasn't been much of an increase of these funds. For the County to participate in Kitchigami it cost \$850.00 that goes into the levy for maintaining the County's membership. This money enables Commissioner Hofer to attend ten Kitchigami Board meetings and 4-5 committee meetings a year. As well as the money covers the Board's liability insurance.

Kitchigami Outreach also provides a Bookmobile that stops in Menahga, Sebeka, Nimrod and four other counties. Beltrami currently does not participate in the Bookmobile, because unlike Wadena County that has a one branch library – Beltrami has three branches. With our one branch library, Commissioner Hofer brought up what it takes for the Wadena Library to operate. He stated that the City of Wadena provides the facility, heat, lights and janitorial services which comes in at \$153,991.00. The Wadena County total, including Outreach, is \$178,670.00. The City of Wadena is required to levy \$72,319.00, which leaves after taking money out of reserves \$99,401.00 for the County levy or the increase from last year of 1.5%.

Commissioner Hofer wanted to bring this discussion up because the City of Wadena is currently having the same conversation about the new library and he wanted everyone to know that the County does help operate the library. Basically Wadena County is paying 60% of the cost of the library, because it is a County wide library. Each community has to provide for their library and he wanted to bring it to everyone's attention that currently Wadena is having an issue with the start of the new library.

Commissioner Hofer said that he was asked how Kitchigami is funded; Wadena County provides \$850 (for meetings, insurances and other projects), but the rest of the operation is paid with state allocation. The County's membership generates around \$2 million coming in the form of legacy money which provides funds for books, staff and drivers for vehicles.

Commissioner Stearns wanted to know what the mandatory levy amount was from the state. Commissioner Hofer returned with it is based on our 2011 participation, which was around \$81,000.00. Commissioner Monson mentioned that the library usage had been up which he had seen in recent headlines. Commissioner Hofer stated that the Wadena library is one of the highest users in all of the branches for its size. They compare close to Brainerd and Bemidji for usage.

Commissioner Stearns: 2/6/2020 County Futures, 2/10/2020 Building Committee, Church Roof.

Commissioner Monson: 2/6/2020 Public Health Advisory Committee, 2/7/2020 Fair Board, 2/10/2020 Building Committee, 2/10/2020 Todd Wadena Corrections Board.

Commissioner Kangas: 2/7/2020 Fair Board, 2/10/2020 ACEs training.

Commissioner Horsager: 2/4/2020 Paycom Update, 2/6/2020 Central MN Council on Aging, 2/7/2020 Liaison Meeting, 2/10/2020 Magic Fund Meeting.

Commissioner Horsager’s Central MN Council on Aging Report: Commissioner Horsager belongs to the Central MN Council on Aging which is an organized group of 14 counties that helped almost 8,000 older adults and caregivers last year. There are Commissioners that represent each of these 14 counties on the organization with the headquarters located in St. Cloud. They provide a Senior Linkage telephone line and a stop in service for seniors that have questions or their children that may have questions about their aging parents. There was 6600 calls or stop in visits with questions last year. The offices close to Wadena County are in Brainerd and St. Cloud. They had almost 200,000 home delivered meals. They offer chore services, housekeeping, legal services and driving services for seniors to help keep them in their homes longer.

Wadena County supplies \$3,000.00-\$4,000.00 a year for their share to the Council, but they access Title III funding (Federal funding) around \$125,000.00 last year and \$156,000.00 this year. The funding is based off from the number of seniors that live in the county with 3% of seniors living in Wadena County out of the 14 counties involved in the Council. Wadena County in return receives 5% of the funding. Wadena County last year received 16,167 congregate meals, 8,860 home delivered meals, 28.5 sessions of caregiver consultations, 487 hours of respite, 1052 calls for phone assistance, 105 in-person assistance and 72 hours of legal assistance.

A break was taken at 10:00 am. The meeting reconvened at 10:10 am.

Closed Session to Develop or Consider Offers or Counteroffers for The Purchase or Sale of Real or Personal Property: The purpose of the meeting will be to meet in closed session, permitted under Minnesota State Statute 13D.05, Subd. 3, (3) to develop or consider offers or counteroffers for the purchase or sale of real or personal property of a i Parcel in Sleepers Plat in Wadena, MN 56482 at 10:10 am. Meeting reopened at 10:17 am.

Commissioner Monson moved, seconded by Commissioner Kangas to adjourn the meeting at 10:17 am. Motion carried unanimously.

Ryan Odden,
Wadena County Coordinator/Engineer

Charles Horsager, Chairperson
Wadena County Commissioners