

WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

March 7, 2023

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners' Meeting was held on March 7, 2023 in the Wadena City Council Chambers, 222 2nd St. SE, Wadena, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairperson Weyer and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were: Michael Weyer, Jon Kangas, Murlyn Kreklau, Ron Noon, County Coordinator Ryan Odden, Chief Deputy Joe Schoon, County Engineer Darin Fellbaum, Solid Waste Director Wade Miller, Mitchell Janson, *Review Messenger* reporter Matt Johnson, County Assessor Lee Brekke via Zoom, Transit Director Randy Jahnke via Zoom, County Recorder Tracy Borchert via Zoom, Human Services Director Jennifer Westrum via Zoom, Public Health Director Erica Keppers via Zoom, and *Independent News Herald/Verndale Sun* reporter Trinity Gruenberg.

Amend/Approve the Day's Agenda: Coordinator Odden would like add to the Agenda Item a Closed Session at 14.5 for pending litigation. Commissioner Kreklau want to talk about tax increment financing under Item 12. Moved by Commissioner Kreklau, seconded by Commissioner Noon to accept the agenda as presented with the Addition of a Closed Session at 14.5. Motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Stearns absent.

Recognition of Interested Citizens: None present today

CONSENT AGENDA:

Moved by Commissioner Kangas, seconded by Commissioner Noon to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Approve the 2-14-2023, 2-17-2023, 2-21-2023 Minutes
- Approve the Warrants from 2-17-2023 and 2-24-2023 for a total of \$624,182.89
- Approve the Humans Services Warrants from 3-7-2023 for a total of \$42,923.08
- Approve the New Hire Report. County Sheriff – Replacement PPT Patrick Vacek, Jailer Dispatcher, \$22.60 per hour, Start date 02/17/2023, Grade: 7, Step: 1, Yearly Gross Salary: \$23,504.00, Total Salary and Employer Contributions (Taxes): \$39,220.86. County Sheriff – Replacement PPT Aidan Randall-Vry, Jailer Dispatcher, \$22.60 per hour, Start date 02/22/2023, Grade: 7, Step: 1, Yearly Gross Salary: \$23,504.00, Total Salary and Employer Contributions (Taxes): \$39,220.86. Had a brief discussion to clarify a few questions Commissioner Kreklau had.
- Approve the Park Board Member Terms
- Approve the Wadena County Family Services Collaborative Board of Directors Charter

Motion carried 4-0.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Wadena County Feedlot Program Report Approval: Mitchell Janson, District Technician presented to the board the Feedlot Program Report and said they met their inspection requirement of 6 inspections in 2022. All requirements for what type of feedlots we had to inspect were met. All inspections received letters within 30 days of the inspection and were entered into Tempo. All inspection records are placed in our feedlot file folder on the shared drive. We were able to get 19 sites re-registered. Those registrations were recently submitted into the online registration system. We held a joint producer meeting with Todd SWCD in March of 2022 in Staples, where only about 10 Wadena County producers showed up. We assisted with 3 manure pit closures using local and federal funds. We still have manure testing kits available to producers upon request. Overall everything went really well in 2022. Motion by Commissioner Kreklau and seconded by Commissioner Noon to approve the Agreement for Signature. Motion carried 4-0.

Approval to purchase Articulating Wheel Loader: Solid Waste Director Wade Miller presented the Recommendation from Solid Waste Committee to purchase a 2023 Volvo L60H Loader from Nuss Equipment for \$185,130.00, following the department Equipment Replacement plan. Two more quotes were received, 2023 Caterpillar 926M from Ziegler Equipment for \$202,397.56, and 2023 Case 521G from Titan Machinery for \$167,932.00. All machines are similar in size, but differ in horsepower, lift capacity and available protection required for landfill use. The department will be trading in their 2011 Case Loader. Aside from the highest horsepower and lifting capacity, the Volvo comes with a lifetime frame, lifting arm and center pin warranty. Motion by Commissioner Kangas and seconded by Commissioner Kreklau to approve the purchase of 2023 Volvo L60H from Nuss Equipment for the amount of \$185,130.00 per State Contract #221532 with trade-in for 2011 Case Loader. Motion carried 4-0.

Approval to repost Road Grader on Minnbid: County Engineer Darin Fellbaum presented that at the 9/20/22 County Board Meeting, the Board approved the purchase of a Road Grader from the City of Menahga and approved selling Unit 33, a 2005 CAT 12H Road Grader on Minnbid.org for a minimum bid price of \$80,000. The unit was posted and ran through a Minnbid auction but did not receive minimum bid. Townships and local contractors will be notified as per request of the County Board. Commissioner Kangas wanted to know if it should be posted in a couple of the local papers and possibly put it on the County website. Motion by Commissioner Kreklau and seconded by Commissioner Kangas to approve the sale of Unit 33, a 2005 CAT 12H Road Grader for a minimum bid price of \$50,000.00 to be posted on Minnbid. Motion carried 4-0.

2025 TH 10 4 Lane Expansion Discussion: County Engineer Darin Fellbaum said that MnDOT Project Manager for the 2025 TH 10 4 Lane Expansion Eric Schiller recently reached out to me to gauge the County's thoughts on the implementation of a roundabout at the intersection of Harry Rich Drive (CSAH 54) and TH 10 on the east side of Wadena. As part of this, MnDOT is

preliminarily inquiring if the County has an intent to participate in the cooperative cost of our leg of the roundabout. Cost would be roughly around \$250,000. Darin wanted the Commissioner's input. Commissioner Kreklau wanted to know if we would see a dramatic increase in traffic on Harry Rich Drive. Fellbaum thought that yes we would. Kreklau would like to see something done with Co Rd 75 because it is dangerous. Commissioner Kangas said he is opposed to it and that county funds should not be used for it. Commissioner Noon said more discussion needs to be had about this topic and that it should be tabled for now and Kreklau would like to get more input from MnDot. Commissioner Weyer asked Fellbaum to give them their concerns and more information is needed and would like MnDot to possibly come to one of the work sessions.

Wadena County Economic Development Tax Abatement Policy: Commissioner Kangas requested the policy to be brought up so everyone could see it. Commissioner Kangas feels that if the policy is in place, we should follow it. If we are going to change the policy, he would like to see public input. Attorney Kyra Ladd said that policy changes don't necessarily have to have public input. Commissioner Kreklau said he is not sure if he is for this or not and feels it can be updated and reviewed more often possibly every year. He would prefer using tax abatements instead of Tax Increment Financing as TIF's can take 40 years to get paid back. Kangas feels any application for tax abatement should follow current policy.

A break was taken at 10:16 a.m. Meeting reconvened at 10:21 a.m.

County Coordinator Report: Odden reported that Commissioner Noon wanted to know what a billboard costs for advertising to promote Wadena County. He feels we need to do something to become more visible and show people this is a great area. The cost is \$2,000 a month and for a digital billboard it is \$3,000 a month. Kyra Ladd said that promotion of the county also comes from the commissioner meetings and what is said during them. Odden said he met with Tim Pavek, Director at Bell Hill Recover Center. Received application for Mid-Summer Music Fest, this is being reviewed by himself and the Sheriff Department. He said it was a good event last year. Met with Ditch committee. Met with a few health insurance brokers and will bring to the Insurance committee the information. Johnson controls is planning a kick-off meeting. AMC is still charging the full \$1700 for the conference that got cancelled and some of the events ended up being virtual. Ryan is going to follow up on this.

Commissioner/Committee Reports:

Commissioner Kreklau: 2-21-23 MRC Zoom meeting, 2-22-23 Legislative Conference with the Legislatures, 2-28-23 Ditch Committee meeting, 3-2-23 Council on Aging meeting. 3-6-23 MRC Zoom meeting.

Commissioner Kangas: 2-24-23 Mahube Otwa meeting, 2-27-23 Solid Waste Committee meeting, 3-1-23 Prairie Lakes Municipal Solid Waste Authority meeting via Zoom

Commissioner Noon: 2-23-23 Region V Development Commission meeting via Zoom, 3-7-23 Wadena Township meeting

Commissioner Weyer: 2-27-23 Trauma Informed Care meeting, 2-28-23 Personnel Committee meeting, 2-28-23 4H Building Committee meeting

Closed session pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.05 subd. 2(a) for pending litigation:
Meeting went into closed session pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.05 subd. 2(a) for pending litigation at 11:02 a.m. Open meeting reconvened at 11:09 a.m.

Moved by Commissioner Kangas, seconded by Commissioner Noon to adjourn the meeting at 11:09 a.m. Motion 4-0.



Ryan Odden
Wadena County Coordinator



Michael Weyer, Chairperson
Wadena County Commissioner