The Wadena County Board of Commissioners’ Meeting was held on March 19, 2019 in the Small Courtroom, Wadena County Courthouse, 415 South Jefferson Street, Wadena, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am by Commissioner Stearns and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.


Amend/Approve the Day’s Agenda: Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Hofer to add to the consent agenda; approve postage to the meter and report on the law suit pending against Wadena County.  Motion carried unanimously.

Recognition of Interested Citizens: Naomi Van Batavia, a citizen of the County and an employee of the Human Service Department of 17 years, presented a letter from 29 current employees of the Human Services Department in support of the Director Tanya Leskey and Mike Willie and their leadership. This letter stated that, “it is unclear what the current concerns are that prompted law enforcement to express their belief the Mr. Willie and Ms. Leskey should no longer be employed at Human Services.” and “We believe the criticism cited in the article is not warranted.” Commissioner Kangas asked who wrote the letter and how the employees were approached about signing it. He stated that he received phone calls while the letter was circulating and had some concerns about who presented the letter to the employees for signatures. He asked if some of the employees that signed the letter were on probation at this time. He wanted to know if the employees that were in attendance were on the clock or their own time right now. He was assured that the employees in attendance were on their own time. It was noted that there are 58 employees at Human Services currently.

Wadena City Police Chief, Naomi Plautz, was present to once again declare that the law enforcement community feel that the issues of concern are with the Director Tanya Leskey and Supervisor Mike Willie and not with other human service employees. The law enforcement community present believe that the above presented letter by the Human Service employees should not be considered because it was not collected in confidentiality. They feel that employees were under duress when asked to sign the letter. She then read another letter from the foster
parents of a Wadena County child that have been trying to adopt the girl for well over a year and feel that Wadena County is holding up this adoption because of lack of documentation that must be completed at the Wadena County human service office. This child has been assigned to 4 different case workers in only 10 months. It was pointed out that this letter was written in response to the news release concerning problems within Wadena County Human Services.

**Postage Machine additional funds:** Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Horsager to add to the postage machine $5,000.00. Motion carried unanimously.

**Update on the Lawsuit against the County on the Clay Dusters Shooting Range:** Deana Malone updated that the Appellate Court has made a decision on the lawsuit and upheld the conditional use permit for The Park Rapids Clay Dusters, Inc.

**Minutes from 3-5-19:** Pulled from the consent agenda. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Monson to make the following corrections to these minutes; on page 1 under those present to Michael Johnson from *Wadena Pioneer Journal*, correct word on Update on Payroll overpayment to say “split” not “spilt” position. On page 3, change Sourcewell representative to Commissioner Horsager not Hofer. Motion carried unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

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

- Approve Warrants from 2-22-19, 3-1-19, 3-1-19, 3-18-19, US Bank 3-11-19, 3-15-19 for a total of $1,125,048.64.
- Approve Human Service Warrants for 2-22-19, 3-8-19, 3-15-19 for a total of $201,035.36.
- Approve the Interlocal Cooperative Agreement for Region V Adult Foster Care licensing specialist services at a cost of $12,900.
- Approve the Productive Alternatives Purchase of Service Agreement for 2019 at a cost of $5,000.00.
- Approve the per diems for citizens appointed to the named citizen appointed board to $60.00.
- Approve adding $5,000.00 to the postage meter.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Appointing a Deputy Auditor/Treasurer:** Heather Olson brought forth the appointment of Deputy Auditor/Treasurer of Tammy Lupkes. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Monson to approve the change in grade for Tammy Lupkes to a non-union Grade 54, step 7 ($26.78 per hour) position. She will move to Step 8 on her anniversary of June 5, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Purchase of Overheads:** Deputy Bryan Savaloja was present to request the purchase of some overhead storage compartments for the downstairs remodel area. He would like to purchase 7 cabinets and 7 wall tracking units for the sheriff’s area of the remodel. Moved by Commissioner Kangas, seconded by Commissioner Hofer to approve the purchase of these cabinets and hangers for $2,568.00. Motion carried unanimously.
Emergency Disaster Declaration: Sheriff Mike Carr and Sergeant Bryan Savaloja was present to ask for funds and declare an emergency disaster for the potential flooding of this spring. We would like to be ahead of the flood so that we are prepared in case of flooding. They would like to purchase 24,000 sand bags at $.15 a piece for usage throughout the county. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Monson to pass the following: Wadena County Disaster Declaration for the next 60 days. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Kangas to approve the purchase of 2 pallets of sand bags for the county. Motion carried unanimously. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Monson to rescind the previous motion. Motion carried unanimously. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Kangas to allocate $5,000.00 from general fund reserve for emergency services needs of potential flooding. Motion carried unanimously.

Jail Bunk Replacement: Bryan Savaloja presented two quotes for the jail bunks that need replacing. There was a big difference between the dollar amounts so the Sheriff’s Department will look into whether the beds are the same or not. This will be brought back to another meeting.

A break was taken at 9:55 am. The meeting reconvened at 10:04 am.

Human Service Statistical Reports: Amie Gendron presented the reports. The total MAXIS and MNsure Cases were 2,724 so far this year. Tanya Leskey presented that all 32 reports required to the Minnesota Department of Human Services where submitted on time. The monthly balance on hand is at $2,841,901.00. The budget is at 17% so far for the year, so it is on track.

Recognition of Jordana Pearson Certification of Appreciation: Mike Willie was present to recognize that Jordana Pearson has received the Certification of Appreciation from the Minnesota Department of Human Services. She was one of 43 who received this recognition state wide. We are happy to see her get recognition for this award. Human Service Director Tanya Leskey and Mike Willie gave Jordana Pearson her award.

Comprehensive Re-Entry Project Position Request: Tanya Leskey presented the request of the Comprehensive Re-entry Project position. The request is to make the position permanent as it has been difficult to find qualified applicants for a less than one year position. Mike Willie spoke about the potential funding stream for this position carrying over into subsequent years. Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Horsager to remove the temporary and one year label from the position and making it a permanent position for comprehensive re-entry providing that quarterly reports on the position are brought to the board. Motion carried unanimously.

Human Services Paralegal: Tanya Leskey presented the request to have a Paralegal put in Human Service Department to complete legal documents for CHIPS petitions, commitments, guardianships, and juvenile delinquency. This person will also serve as a liaison between Human Services and the County Attorney’s office. County Attorney, Kyra Ladd, spoke to the fact that she does not have time right now to be training another new employee. They would need to hire someone with experience in order for this to work. Commissioner Kangas says that there are other issues within the county that need to be addressed first. Commissioner Horsager thinks that this is not the right timing for this. Commissioner Stearns brought up this idea and feels this could be the bridge between the Human Service and County Attorney’s offices. He wants to advertise the position and look for a qualified person. If no one applies that will fill the qualifications, then the job can be put on hold. Commissioner Hofer stated that in order to make a bridge between the two departments, it will cost the county some money. He supports moving ahead with
posting for the job. Commissioner Monson is wanting this position put under the direct supervision of the County Attorney and have the employee located in the County Attorney’s office not a Human Services. Moved by Commissioner Horsager, seconded by Commissioner Hofer to table this Paralegal position discussion to the April 9, 2019 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**Human Services Update:** Tanya Leskey recognized that today is WORLDWIDE SOCIAL WORK DAY. She wanted to recognize those that work within this area and thank them. She explained that the State of Minnesota is the overseer of the Wadena County Human Services. She presented a power point that showed the thresholds that Human Services are required to maintain by the state. It explained that in 2013, the state Legislature authorized the DHS commissioner to implement a Human Services Performance Management System for essential human services as described in Minnesota State Statute. This system includes performance outcomes, measures and thresholds consistent with the recommendations of the Steering Committee on Performance and Outcome Reforms in its December 2012 report to the Legislature. She then sited data collected by DHS as to the area of child protection for Wadena County. She explained that Wadena County is meeting all of the state standards in all areas and shared some statistics according to the reports put out by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

**Certificate of Support for Tri-County Hospital Inc. for USDA Application:** The letter was not attached to this so they did not act on this. Commissioner Monson supported a motion to sign the form if it needs to be sent before the next meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Horsager, motion carried unanimously.

**Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (MinnPACE):** Katie Heppner presented Peter Lindstrom and Melissa Birch who work for MinnPACE. Peter explained the program to help business convert to more efficient, clean energy. MinnPACE assists businesses, farms, multi-unit housing, non-profits and faith communities to update to become more energy efficient. The cost is then assessed to the property taxes with a 5% interest added for 10 years. The Port Authority of the City of St. Paul becomes the fiscal agent for these projects. Once collected from the business the assessment is sent to the Port Authority of the City of St. Paul. Commissioner Monson would like to have the County Attorney review this before approving it. Tabled until the April 9, 2019 meeting.

**County Program Aid:** Commissioner Horsager wanted to bring to the attention of the other commissioners the proposed county program aid. He wanted them to make them aware of what the figures show right now so they could get once again contact the representatives for the county at the state level.

**Wadena County Resolution Approving Payment of Additional Capital to South County Health Alliance:** Commissioner Stearns gave an update on the cash call. We have already chosen to withdraw from the Alliance. He believes that the county will be forced to pay the cash call. There is a possibility that at the end of the year some money could come back to the county. The cash call at this date is estimated to be beneath $1,112,360.00. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Horsager to pass the following resolution with the funds coming from 50% General Revenue and 50% Human Services up to $1,112,360.00 to be paid before March 28, 2019:

**WADENA COUNTY RESOLUTION\nAPPROVING PAYMENT OF\nADDITIONAL CAPITAL TO SOUTH\NCOUNTRY HEALTH ALLIANCE**
The following Resolution was offered by Commissioner Hofer and moved for adoption:

WHEREAS, the Counties of Brown, Dodge, Goodhue, Kanabec, Morrison, Sibley, Steele, Todd, Wabasha, Wadena, and Waseca have formed a Joint Powers Board to implement and administer County-Based Purchasing for certain state and federal programs, which Joint Powers Board operates under the name "South Country Health Alliance" ("SCHA"); and

WHEREAS, this County has entered into a Guarantee Agreement by which it obligated itself to make additional contributions in order to meet solvency requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Amended Joint Powers Agreement obligates counties to make additional capital contributions if requested by the Joint Powers Board; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Powers Board has decided to make an additional capital call at a meeting of the Board of Directors of SCHA on January 3, 2019, in an amount to be determined to enable SCHA to attain 200% of the risk-based capital (RBC) set forth on the RBC report for 2018;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this County hereby commits to make a further capital investment to SCHA as follows:

(a) The capital contribution shall be in assets which qualify as “admitted assets” as defined in 2018 Minnesota Statues section 60A.02, subdivision 27.
(b) The total contributions from all Member Counties of SCHA shall not be less than those needed to give SCHA an RBC of 200%.
(c) This county’s share of the total capital contributions required shall be determined by Article 10.3 of the Joint Powers Agreement of 2013.
(d) The amount required of this county shall not exceed the sum of $1,377,484.
(e) The contribution shall be made not later than Friday, May 31, 2019.

Seconded by Commissioner Horsager and the same being put to a vote was duly carried; This Resolution shall become effective immediately and without publication.

Adopted by the following vote: Ayes 5 Nays ___
Dated this 19th day of March, 2019.

______________________
Chairperson Stearns

ATTEST: ________________________________
Heather Olson, Auditor/Treasurer

CERTIFICATION
STATE OF MINNESOTA

COUNTY OF Wadena

I, Bill Stearns, the duly appointed, qualified and acting County Commissioner for the County of Wadena, State of Minnesota, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of a Resolution with the original minutes of the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners, Wadena County, Minnesota, at their session held on the 19th day of March, 2019, now on file in my office, and have found the same to be a true and correct copy thereof.

Witness my hand and official seal at Wadena, Minnesota, this 19th day of March, 2019.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Reports will be at tabled until the special meeting on 3-26-19.

Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Kangas to adjourn the meeting at 12:13 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

___________________________________  ______________________________
Heather Olson,                               Bill Stearns, Chairperson
Wadena County Auditor/Treasurer               Wadena County Commissioners