

## WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

March 24, 2020

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners' Meeting was held on March 24, 2020 in the Small Courtroom, Wadena County Courthouse, 415 South Jefferson Street, Wadena, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order at 2:07 pm by Commissioner Horsager via zoom and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present were: Commissioners Bill Stearns via Zoom, Sheldon Monson, Jim Hofer via zoom, Jon Kangas, County Coordinator/Engineer Ryan Odden, County Attorney Kyra Ladd, IT Director David Hotchkiss, IT Department Tyrell Levig, and Public Health Director Cindy Pederson.

**Amend/Approve the Day's Agenda:** Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Hofer to approve the day's agenda as presented with the addition of 6.5 IT Update. Row call vote: Kangas –yes, Monson-yes, Stearns-yes, Hofer-yes, Horsager-yes. 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 3-17-20 meeting.
- Approve the K9 Donations for 8-10-2018 to 12-31-2019 from: Leaf River Ag Service \$1,000.00, Cobank, ACB \$1,000.00, Staples Lions Club \$200.00, Bell Hill Recovery \$250.00 and Gary and Kathy Dooner \$50.00 for a total of \$2,500.00.
- Approve the Medical Services Agreement as of November 15, 2018 between Wadena County and MEnD Correctional Care, PLLC.
- Approve that the County Coordinator will have the ability to waive the maximum accrual limit for employees involved in the planning and operations during the COVID-19 emergency until June 1, 2020.

Kangas-yes, Monson- yes, Stearns-yes, Hofer-yes, Horsager-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

### REGULAR AGENDA

**IT Update,** David Hotchkiss, warned zoom session will end up at 3:00. The bandwidth into the county is being monitored and we are restricted to a 100 mgbt. usage. We are working with West Central on increasing that. Cell phones as well as the internet may be slower due to higher usage due the COVID #19 crisis. Today's meeting will be limited to 1 hour on ZOOM. The licensing for ZOOM will allow for longer meetings after today. The IT department is working to help with all of those who are remotely working or calling in for meetings while we are practicing the social distancing that has been requested. The department was thanked for all of their hard work in the changes that we have had to implement due to COVID #19.

**COVID 19 Update** – Public Health director Cindy Pederson gave a short report on COVID #19. As of March 23<sup>rd</sup> 235 positive cases and one death have been reported in Minnesota. Today there are 262 positive tests in the state without any listed in Wadena County as of yet. However, we can assume that community spread is happening statewide.

Cindy read a letter from Sheriff Mike Carr explaining that the Wadena County Emergency Operations Center was opened here in the Courthouse Auditorium on March 19<sup>th</sup>. They meet daily for planning and support. Tyler Wheeler has done a good job of leading this effort.

**Personnel Policy Changes:** Ryan Odden presented the request from the personnel committee to make the following changes to the Wadena County Personnel Policy due to COVID #19. Moved by Commissioner Kangas, seconded by Commissioner Monson to adopt the following changes for the Personnel Policy:

1. Temporary revision to Article 10.05 of the Wadena County Personnel Policy – allow employees still in their probationary period (and are accruing paid time off) the ability to utilize their accrued sick or personal leave time (PLT) before the end of their probationary period. This revision will be effective up to December 31, 2020.
2. Temporary revision to Article 30 of the Wadena County Personnel Policy – After employees have used all available accrued time in vacation, sick, personnel leave time, compensatory, Holiday compensatory and personal day. All employees will be allowed to use up to a negative eighty (-80) hour balance of sick or personal leave time (PLT). This revision will be effective up to December 31, 2020.
3. Temporary revision to Article 32 of the Wadena County Personnel Policy – Any employee making use of this amendment will reimburse Wadena County should they leave employment before their sick or PLT balance is back at, or above, zero (0). This revision will be effective up to December 31, 2020.

Kangas-yes, Monson-yes, Stearns-yes, Hofer-yes, Horsager-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The question was asked how many employees are now working from home. Ryan Odden said that employees that can work from home are doing so or transitioning over to working from home. Each department head is to work out a plan if the Shelter At Home order comes through from the Governor so that the county can still provide services to the public as much as is possible. We are doing our best to still meet the needs of the public in this difficult time.

**Update on New Employment Laws Due to COVID #19:** Ryan Odden presented the new laws that go into effect in April 2, 2020 concerning changes to family leave. Included in the packet for this meeting are the laws so that the commissioners are aware of these changes.

**Restroom Remodel Upgrade:** Ryan Odden presented the plan for the project. We did not receive any bids on the general construction/demo and for installing the ceiling tile. We will allow the sentence to serve crew and our maintenance department to do those parts of the remodel. It was pointed out that sentence to serve is indefinitely on hold right now and would not be able to work for the county.

Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Kangas to table this project for now because of the unknown problems happening with COVID #19. Commissioner Hofer believes that we should move forward as it will help with employing some small businesses in the area. Commissioner Stearns also believes that we should go through with this project as it was let out for bid and the bids have been received. Commissioner Monson amended the motion to table the bids on this until April 7, 2020. Commissioner Kangas seconded the amendment to the motion. The vote was taken on tabling the decision until the April 7, 2020 meeting. Kangas-yes, Monson-yes, Stearns-yes, Hofer-yes, Horsager-yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Monson: 3/17/20 Board Meeting, 3/23/20 Central Minnesota EMS, 3/24/20 Board Meeting.

Commissioner Kangas: 3/17/20 Board Meeting, 3/23/20 Solid Waste Committee, 3/24/20 Board Meeting.

Commissioner Stearns: 3/17/20 Board Meeting, 3/23/20 Solid Waste Committee, 3/24 Board Meeting.

Commissioner Hofer: 3/17/20 Board Meeting, 3/19/20 and 3/23/20 COVID #19 Executive Committee, Numerous Corrections meetings with Kathy Langer, 3/24/20 Board Meeting.

Commissioner Horsager: 3/17/20 Board Meeting, 3/19/20 and 3/23/20 COVID #19 Executive Committee, 3/24/20 Board Meeting.

Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Kangas to adjourn the meeting at 2:59 pm. Motion carried unanimously by roll call.

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Ryan Odden,  
Wadena County Coordinator/Engineer

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Charles Horsager, Chairperson  
Wadena County Commissioners