WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’ MEETING
MAY 14, 2019

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners’ Meeting was held on May 14, 2019 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 Stearns and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present were: Commissioners Chuck Horsager, Jim Hofer, Sheldon Monson, Jon Kangas, County Coordinator/Engineer Ryan Odden, Auditor/Treasurer Heather Olson, County Attorney Kyra Ladd, IT Director David Hotchkiss, Chief Deputy Joe Schoon, Transit Director Randy Jahnke, HR Specialist Janet Kern, Payroll/Benefits Coordinator April Damlo, Human Service Sharilyn Rasmusson, Review Messenger reporter Matthew Johnson, Wadena Pioneer Journal reporter Michael Johnson, Independent News Herald reporter Trinity Gruenberg.

Amend/Approve the Agenda: Moved by Commissioner Kangas, seconded by Commissioner Horsager to approve the agenda for today. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

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

- Approve the Minutes from the 5-7-19 meeting.
- Approve the hiring of Philip Theisen as a Transit Driver, Part-Time, Exempt, Grade 48, Step 1 at $13.20 per hour beginning on April 15, 2019. Approve the hiring of Garth Johnson as a Transit Driver, Part-Time, Exempt, Grade 48, Step 1 at $13.20 per hour beginning on April 16, 2019. Approve the hiring of Debbie Rohr as a Transit Driver, Full-Time, Exempt, Pay Grade 50, Step 2, $14.69 per hour. Moving from Part-Time to Full-Time with benefits on May 6, 2019.
- Approve the temporary reduction in employment status for Jill Davis from 60% FTE to 40% FTE for the period of June 1, 2019 to August 30, 2019; returning to 60% FTE on August 31, 2019; at her current grade and step.

Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Central Minnesota Council on Aging Annual Update: Lori Vrolson, Executive Director for the Central Minnesota Council on Aging, was present to give the annual update. She explained that they provide services to help keep the elderly in their own home for as long as possible. They are trying to reach the lower income 65+ citizens that need services that will assist with keeping them in their homes. They are looking for assistive transportation services to be added in the Wadena County area. Currently 23% of the population in Wadena County is 65+ which is above
the state average of 17%. This older population is expected to increase in the next 10 years.

Lori was thanked for the report and the work that the Central Minnesota Council on Aging does within Wadena County.

**Classification of Administrative Assistant/Accountant Sheriff’s Department:** Ryan Odden presented the request to move Missy Peterson from Grade 52, Step 7 to Grade 54, Step 3 as the classification by DDA recommended. Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Monson to approve the new job description for the Administrative Assistant/Accountant in Sheriff’s Department to be at grade 54 effective May 11, 2019 and that Missy Peterson be placed on Grade 54, Step 3, $23.34 per hour on that date. Motion carried unanimously.

**Upper Level Remodel Furniture Quote:** David Hotchkiss was present to show the quote for the furniture for the two upstairs conference rooms. He also showed the electronic room scheduling option that would be available. Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Horsager to approve the purchase of the furniture for the upstairs conference rooms at $3,293.20 and up to additional $200.00 to add small windows to the doors. Motion carried unanimously.

**Purchase of New Payroll/HR Software:** Heather Olson and Dave Hotchkiss presented the recommendation to purchase Paycomm payroll software for use in the county. The cost is around $31,026.32/yr ($139.32 per employee) for the county. We will not be in a contract with this company and could leave at any time. There is a one-time implementation fee of $4,000.00. Moved by Commissioner Kangas, seconded by Commissioner Hofer to approve the purchase of Paycomm payroll software at $31,026.32 (this will be a variable amount based on number of employees.) Motion carried unanimously. Moved by Commissioner Kangas, seconded by Commissioner Horsager to approve the $4,000.00 implementation fee for the Paycomm software. Motion carried unanimously.

A break was taken at 10:01 am. Meeting reconvened at 10:11 am.

**Summary of Closed Meeting for Employee Performance Evaluation – County Engineer/Coordinator:** Commissioner Stearns read the employee performance evaluation for County Engineer/Coordinator.

The Annual Performance Review of the Coordinator/County Engineer occurred in closed session on May 7, 2019, pursuant to statute the summary will be given at the next board meeting. The employee provided the board with a self-evaluation relating to both the Engineer duties and the Coordinator duties. Engineer: the broad consciences is that the employee highly meets and exceeds expectations of the Engineer duties and is highly effective in this role. The department is established, has clear goals and project timelines and a staff to manage and deliver efficient services. Coordinator: the board consciences is that the employee meets the expectations of the job and is effective in this role. The employee identified needs related to job performance. Specifically, completing tasks or being timely with tasks is an area of improvement and is
related to the time of the shared allocation between the duties of Engineer and Coordinator. The board has established a time share allocation of 40% Coordinator and 60% Engineer. The time accounted for by the employee over the past year indicated that 50.24% of the time was spent on Coordinator duties and 49.76% of the time was spent on Engineer duties. This time allocation indicates that more time was spent on the Coordinator role and the employee acknowledges that it is still not enough time to get the essential duties of the job completed and or timely completed. The employee expressed a need and want for training related to the Coordinator duties, but again due to the time of allocation issues, there isn’t any time to engage in training opportunities. The employee indicated that he believes that both positions are full time positions; County Engineer and Coordinator and a shared role of one FTE indicates that this is not sustainable. It is not a sustainable business model. There was discussion of how to accomplish necessary duties of Engineer and Coordinator going forward and the expectations for Ryan Odden related to both of these roles. The Board consciences is to have the prorated time share adjusted so that 70% of the time will be spent as Coordinator and 30% as Engineer. The further consciences by the board is that there will be a work session within the next year to examine reorganizational issues to include the efficiencies of duties of the shared role of both Coordinator and County Engineer as one topic of that work session.

Moved by Commissioner Hofer, seconded by Commissioner Horsager to allocate Ryan Odden’s time starting with the June 8th payroll to 70% Coordinator and 30% Engineer. The board further moves that we will meet to further discuss the roles within the next year.

In the interim the Board further directs that the position of the HR Director not be filled and that Ryan Odden will direct and supervise the work in that Department and that he uses the office in that department when he is in the courthouse.

Ryan to be able to contract out professional engineering work to a qualified professional engineer on a part time and “as needed” basis. Motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session for Negotiation Strategy: Meeting was closed at 10:17 am for negotiation strategy. Meeting reopened at 10:26 am.

Closed Session to Develop or Consider Offers or Counteroffers for the Purchase or Sale of Real or Personal Property at 400 Ash Ave, NW, Wadena, MN 56482 and 1721 US Hwy 71, Wadena, MN 56482: Meeting closed at 10:27 for the above listed real estate offers. Meeting reopened at 11:14 am.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:


Commissioner Stearns: 5/9 Annual Alliance Meeting, 5/14 Board Meeting.

Moved by Commissioner Monson, seconded by Commissioner Hofer to adjourn the meeting at 11:32 am. Motion carried unanimously.

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Ryan Odden,                                     Bill Stearns, Chairperson
Wadena County Coordinator/Engineer               Wadena County Commissioners