

**WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS BOARD MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 5, 2008, 9:00 A.M.**

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners Meeting was held on Tuesday, February 5, 2008, at the Wadena County Courthouse in the Commissioners Room at 415 Jefferson St. S., Wadena Minnesota. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Orville Meyer and the pledge of allegiance to the flag was said.

Present: Commissioners Mary Harrison, Bill Stearns, Dave Schermerhorn and Lane Waldahl.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Meyer, to approve the day's Agenda as presented, motion carried.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the Board Minutes of January 24, 2008, as amended on page 9, second paragraph, i.e. changing "Commissioner Harrison felt" to "Commissioner Harrison asked", motion carried.

Deana Skov, Zoning/Parks/Solid Waste Director, stated that she was unaware that a Human Relations Consultant was going to be talked about at the January 24 meeting and felt this would be her last opportunity to go on record respectfully as not being in favor of this particular professional service for the County. She stated that, as a Department Head, it saddened her that the need was felt to bring in a professional to help deal with personnel related issues in our office activities or relations; that Departments Heads have that responsibility. Ms. Skov stated that maybe she was not fully aware of what the services of this position were or perhaps maybe she did not comprehend that maybe everyone did not think the way she did, but that she felt that we as Department Heads and Supervisors, should be just that and as part of our paid wages we were already responsible to handle personnel issues and problems. She added that she hoped that at the end of the year her inhibitions with all of this were of little to no consequence to herself or anyone else. Ms. Skov stated that she also hoped that at the end of the year this would be looked at very closely before any commitment was made and that she respected the Board's decision on the matter

Chairman Meyer asked Ms. Skov what her judgment was of counties that had a human resources position.

Ms. Skov responded that in larger counties it probably was something that was warranted, but a county as small as Wadena County, in such close knit working conditions, she did not see where it was warranted, especially when it seemed to her that the County was already struggling financially. She added that it may save some money down the line or it may not, that's why at the end of one year it needed to be looked at very closely before another \$60,000 or double that was spent for full time. Ms. Skov stated that she regretted not being at the Department Head Meeting when this was discussed as it would not have been a unanimous recommendation of support, but she had a speaking engagement at a Soil & Water program that was going on.

Brian Hagen, business owner, informed the Board that he had talked to a couple of other

business owners in Wadena, and that he shares the same sentiment as Ms. Skov. He added that as a business owner he was concerned over spending \$60,000 for someone to come in and tell County leaders what was needed for human resources. Mr. Hagen added that Department Heads were hired to be managers and should be able to handle their own department's human resource issues; that employee law was changing all of the time but that Department Heads were hired to stay abreast of what laws had changed. Mr. Hagen added that it did not sound like a need that this County had, maybe there were larger counties in Minnesota that might need a position such as this, but he did not see that need here.

Commissioner Harrison commented that she had been approached by people stating that Mr. Gibson did not have a degree in human resources; and the question being why was the County spending \$60,000 for someone to do human resources that did not have a degree to back it up should they ever be called into court as an expert for their decision. She added that it appeared to her that part of the reason for spending \$60,000 was to save outside consultant fees to a personnel company and a labor lawyer, but now she wasn't sure if the County wouldn't still be liable for those outside expenditures. Commissioner Harrison asked for comments from the Committee regarding this.

Ms. Skov questioned who the outside personnel company was that the County was using.

Char West, Auditor/Treasurer, responded that the firm's name was Government Management Group and several Department Heads had received Board authorization to use their services.

Chairman Meyer stated that in response to Commissioner Harrison's question regarding qualifications, Mr. Gibson was a certified instructor and taught at four different colleges.

Commissioner Harrison responded that that was the information she needed to know.

Commissioner Schermerhorn also added that Mr. Gibson was licensed by the state to teach human relations and management.

Rin Porter, Verndale Sun, questioned whether the position was relating to human resources or human relations as they were two different professions.

The Committee responded that it was human resources.

Commissioner Schermerhorn stated that the Committee was looking at government purchasing, ways to save money, if there was any duplication of effort and that at the current time he believed this position would pay for itself.

Chairman Meyer added that it was felt that there were places in the County where money could be saved, which wasn't taking place at this time.

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether this person would be doing more than human relations; would it include management and administrative counseling and duties?

Chairman Meyer responded that Mr. Gibson would be looking at whether the County needed a coordinator in the future.

Ms. West added that the Committee had met on February 1<sup>st</sup> to define the duties of the position which included the top duty of researching and meeting with Department Heads and the Board as it related to human resources or coordinator position, being available to Department Heads or Commissioners for personnel questions and look at central purchasing. She pointed out that these were the duties discussed but the Committee would like Board input for any additional duties.

The Committee pointed out that the contract was in a preliminary stage and when finalized it would be presented to the Board for consideration.

Commissioner Harrison stated that it appeared to her that the County Department Heads were very skilled in their areas; there was no reason why any of the Department Heads should be an expert in knowing the law about things such as benefits, retirements, etc. She added that this was why an overview was needed that was consistent throughout the County.

Ms. Skov questioned whether she had the correct understanding that the duties were being worked out in the contract but the Board had already approved hiring Mr. Gibson.

Ms. West pointed out that until the agreement was signed by both parties it was not set; the Board had approved the hiring so the details of the agreement could be worked out.

Commissioner Stearns stated he felt the Board was empowering this Committee to do the work and it could come back and report the details could not be worked out. He added that the Board had not signed a contract with anyone, that this was being worked through and everyone had a different vision of what this person may do.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that maybe the Committee needed to get back with all of the Department Heads that it was going to affect and then come up with an idea of what everyone expected. He added that 100% of the Department Heads should attend a mandatory meeting, that way there would be no questions or concerns.

Mr. Hagen questioned that if the scope of the hiring had not been identified yet how a number of hours could be assigned.

Chairman Meyer responded that a number of hours had not been assigned; it was up to a certain number. He added that that was a misconception; the cost was not \$60,000, it was up to \$60,000. Chairman Meyer stated that if there are no further questions, thank you for your input.

Paul Friedrich, Trailbreakers Snowmobile Club representative, came before the Board to request approval of the Certification of Satisfactory Grooming application for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Benchmark in the amount of \$15,342.50.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Harrison, to approve the DNR Snowmobile Trails Assistance Program Certification of Satisfactory Grooming, 2<sup>nd</sup> Benchmark grant application in the amount \$15,342.50, motion carried.

Mr. Friedrich commented that the Club had completed GPS'ing of the snowmobile trails in the County.

Sheriff Mike Carr came before the Board to inform them that Deputy Sheriff Eric Sonnenburg was resigning and his last day of employment would be February 8, 2008. Sheriff Carr requested the hiring of two deputies; the first to be hired April 1, 2008 to fill Deputy Sonnenburg's position and the additional deputy would be May 1, 2008, which was approved in the budget.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to accept, with regret the resignation of Deputy Sheriff Eric Sonnenburg with his last day of employment being February 8, 2008, and when representing the County in pending criminal court matters he will be compensated at his current rate of pay of \$21.13 per hr., motion carried.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to authorize the County Sheriff to post appropriately and advertise accordingly for two Deputy Sheriff positions, one starting April 1, 2008 and the second May 1, 2008, motion carried.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the St. Joseph's Area Health Services Minnesota Lawful Gambling Application for Exempt Permit at the Blueberry Pines Golf Club on May 28, 2008, motion carried.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Harrison, to approve payment of the \$20.00 registration fee to WesMin RC&D for Commissioner Schermerhorn's attendance of their Annual Meeting, motion carried.

The Kitchigami Regional Library 2008 Operating Budget was presented to the Board for their review.

Commissioner Harrison reported that the Kitchigami Regional Library Board felt the need to make more of an effort to be in touch with all of the counties so there will be more updates.

Todd Wadena Community Corrections Quarterly Financial Report was presented to the Board for their review.

Commissioner Waldahl reported that Community Corrections had purchased a new 15-passenger van for Sentenced to Serve and had hired two probation officers to fill vacancies.

Gary Van Dam, Aldrich Township resident, came before the Board and questioned whether the County furnished the culvert for a new driveway approach.

Commissioner Waldahl responded that he thought the first culvert was furnish, but this was only when the driveway was on a County Road.

Mr. Van Dam stated that last fall he and Commissioner Meyer had looked at the situation on his property and he had been informed that he had to purchase two new culverts for the County ditch. He added that he has spent over \$20,000 in keeping the ditch clean. Mr. Van Dam pointed out that he was not asking for all money, but was requesting if the County would supply a culvert for the approach. He added that it was located on a private road, not a County road, and was off County Ditch #5.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that the Board would have to have the Highway Engineer look at the situation.

Ms. West provided Mr. Van Dam with the procedures, developed by the Assistant County Attorney and approved by the Board, of how landowners could legally have the County Ditches cleaned.

The Board was presented with the January 24, 2008 meeting notes from Tony Stoll, Baker, Hogan & Houx Architecture, for their review.

Commissioner Stearns commented that item #13 of Mr. Stoll's meeting notes pointed out that after reviewing the three options, the architect recommended the Government Services Center as being the most cost-effective and provided square footage for years. He stated that he did not think this information was included in any of the news papers.

The Board recessed at 9:52 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 10:05 a.m.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Harrison, to approve payment of the Board of Commissioner bills in the amount of \$120,012.78, motion carried.

Joel Ulring, Highway Engineer, presented the Board with an agenda. He informed the Board that Jason Miller, Maintenance Worker, had successfully completed his 6-month probationary period and had proven himself to be a great asset to the Department and Wadena County.

Mr. Ulring informed the Board that the Wensman Building Parking Lot and CSAH 50 Downtown Wadena Project had been completed and was deemed acceptable by himself and Kelvin Howieson, MnDot District State Aid Engineer. He added that the project was in excess of the original bid due to the necessary removal of additional concrete for the Wensman Parking lot and additional milling and overlay by the City of Wadena. Mr. Ulring requested a motion to accept the project so that final payment could be made.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Harrison, to approve final payment of SAP 80-650-09 in the amount of \$56,670.00 for the completion of the Wensman Parking lot and final cost of



Motion by Stearns, seconded by Schermerhorn, to authorize the advertisement for bids for the annual aggregate crushing contract, with bids to be received in the Highway Engineers office until 12:00 p.m. on March 31, 2008 and awarded at the April 1, 2008 regular County Board Meeting, motion carried.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Harrison, to authorize the advertisement for bids for the annual roadway striping contract, with bids to be received in the Highway Engineers office until 12:00 p.m. on March 31, 2008 and awarded at the April 1, 2008 regular County Board Meeting, motion carried.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to authorize the advertisement for bids to reconstruct the segment of CSAH 23 between CR 167 and CSAH 31 in Meadow Township and Shell River Townships, upon state approval of the plan, motion carried.

Mr. Urling informed the Board that he had resubmitted a project for consideration in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for 2012 funding to overlay and pave the shoulders of CSAH 4 from the end of the curb and gutter section in Wadena to CSAH 23 to make this section of road safer and more pedestrian friendly and to increase the road strength to a 10 ton capacity and reduce gravel shoulder maintenance.

Mr. Urling stated that he had previously presented the Board with a draft copy of a Purchasing Card Policy and requested their questions or comments on the draft.

Chairman Meyer questioned whether other counties had quite a few credit cards or were they limited?

Mr. Urling responded that state wide he did not know, but that this was the policy adopted by St. Louis County five or six years ago. He added that the policy outlined certain requirements that had to be met as well as help the Department Heads and the Auditor in overseeing the policy.

Ms. West added that the draft policy was also submitted to the State Auditor's Office for their review and they were in support of it.

Mr. Urling pointed out that this policy was meant to be an umbrella policy and then each Department would set it up for their own needs. He added that it was called a purchasing or procurement card instead of credit card.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned whether the draft policy stated that there would be one card per Department?

Mr. Urling responded that it could be set up differently for each department and that typically a card was set up for one individual and that individual was then responsible for how that card is used.

Further discussion was held regarding authorized uses of the card.

Mr. Ulring stated that he will provide the Department Heads with the Board's questions.

Mr. Ulring requested a committee of two Commissioners to meet with other Department Heads and himself regarding fuel purchases for the County. He added that he realized there was sensitivity to the bidding process for fuel purchases and he would like to develop a purchasing policy that all County Departments could abide by.

Commissioner Stearns expressed his concern over losing the .07 per gallon discount received through the bidding process.

Chairman Meyer reported on Hubbard County's multiple unit purchasing with the school district, city and county at the Highway Department

Chairman Meyer appointed Commissioners Stearns and Waldahl to the Fuel Purchasing Committee.

Mr. Ulring stated that the Stonemen Oil agreement would continue until a Committee recommendation was approved by the Board.

Mr. Ulring presented the Board with a handout regarding the hiring of a County Surveyor. He pointed out there were two individual who had expressed interest; George Coulombe, Registered Land Surveyor, who was retiring from Beltrami County and Ron Carnell of Park Rapids, who was also a Registered Land Surveyor. Mr. Ulring recommended he meet with Department Heads Deana Skov, Zoning/Parks/Solid Waste Director and Sole Henriksen, Recorder to discuss what minimum services would be needed.

The Board's consensus was for Mr. Ulring to meet with Ms. Skov and Ms. Henriksen and provide a presentation at the February 21, 2007 Board Meeting.

Mr. Ulring reported on the Farm Service Agency/National Imagery Program and the AMC Rural Transportation Tours.

The Board requested Mr. Ulring contact Gary Van Dam regarding is request for a culvert.

Lee Brekke, Assessor, came before the Board to request they set a date for the annual County Board of Review.

The Board set the annual County Board of Review for Monday, June 16, 2008, at 9 a.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room.

Gina Dahms, Assistant Zoning/Parks/Solid Waste Director, came before the Board to request approval of the Planning Commissioner minutes which recommended Board approval of a Conditional Use Permit for Jonathan Lee Korfe to operate a one chair salon. Also present was

Jonathan Lee Korfe and Denise Rousslang.

Motion by Stearns, second by Harrison, to approve the January 17, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting minutes, as previously sent, motion carried.

### RESOLUTION

Commissioner Waldahl moved that the following Resolution be adopted:

**RESOLVED: That the County Board approves issuance of the following Conditional Use Permit:**

Jonathan Lee Korfe application for Conditional Use Permit to authorize a one chair salon with the following findings of fact:

- 1) The requested use will not create an unreasonable excessive burden on the existing roads or other utilities;
- 2) The structure and the use shall have an appearance that will not have an unreasonable adverse effect on nearby properties;
- 3) The requested use, in the opinion of the Planning Commission, is reasonably related to the existing land use and environment;
- 4) The requested use is consistent with the Wadena County Land Use Control Ordinance; and
- 5) The requested use is not in conflict with the Wadena County Comprehensive Plan.

In property described as: The West 330 feet of the South 660 feet of the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter (NW1/4 SE1/4) and the West 330 feet of the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter (SW1/4 SE1/4) being North of the Northerly Right of Way of U.S. Highway 10, Section 09, Township 134 North, Range 35 West, Wadena Township, located in an A-1 Transitional Agriculture District.

Commissioner Harrison seconded the motion and the same carried unanimously.

Adopted this 5<sup>th</sup> day of February 2008.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

Chairman Meyer questioned whether anyone in attendance was in favor of the Conditional Use Permit or against the Conditional Use Permit.

No response was received.

Motion carried.

Ms. West presented the Board with a summary of an electronic transaction processing agreement that she was reviewing with the Official Payments Corporation. She stated that numerous requests have been received from taxpayers requesting the ability to use their credit card for payment of their property taxes. Ms. West pointed out that the fees would be completely paid by the taxpayer wanting to use their credit card with no expense to the County. She stated that she would return to the Board to request approval once the County Attorney completed her review of the Agreement.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve payment of the MRCC 2008 Annual Dues in the amount of \$2,100.00 less a \$500.00 Research Fund Reimbursement for a total of \$1,600.00, motion carried.

Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Waldahl        800 MHZ Board  
   CHAMPS

Commissioner Harrison       Update on sale of the Wadena County DAC  
   Wadena Soil & Water Conservation District

Commissioner Meyer         Otter Tail Wadena Community Action Council

Commissioner Schermerhorn None

Commissioner Stearns        AMC Health Task Force  
   AMC Legislative Steering Committee

Karen Nelson, Public Health Director, came before the Board to requested Board approval of the revisions to the Bylaws of the Wadena County Public Health Advisory Committee which reflected the change from the participation of four counties to three counties as well as changing the types of members.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to adopt the revisions to the Bylaws of the Wadena County Public Health Advisory Committee per recommendations of the WCPHAC effective February 5, 2008,, motion carried.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Harrison, to adjourn the Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting at 11:20 a.m., motion carried.

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Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

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Orville Meyer, Chairman