

**WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
**JUNE 3, 2008, 9:00 A.M.**

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 3, 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.

Also present: Commissioners Lane Waldahl, Dave Schermerhorn, Mary Harrison, and William Stearns. Mike Gibson, Consultant, was also in attendance.

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

Commissioner Harrison noted from the May 7, 2008, Board Minutes on the last page, the spelling of "parameters" and it should read "each Commissioner should appoint two representatives from their own district". She also noted in the May 22, 2008 Board Minutes, Mr. Speed, Sheriff's Department, was talking about the number of prisoners being boarded out, and that this year it had dropped down to four. She stated that it was month or week but it was not a year and requested that the word year be changed to "month".

Rin Porter stated Mr. Speed was meaning "day".

Commissioner Stearns pointed out that the May 22, 2008, should read "Commissioner Stearns stated his concern over the expenses of \$64,000 through April, 2008, and that out of county boarding would be over budget by the end of the year. He also requested the addition of "\$109,070 would put the out of county boarding way over budget" as he had made the point that there was only \$120,000 budgeted for the entire year.

There was some discussion as to what Commissioner Stearns actually said at the meeting; it was pointed out that the tape would have to be checked for his actual words.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the Board Minutes of May 7, 2008, as corrected, and the Board Minutes of May 8, 2008, motion carried.

Approval of the May 22, 2008 Board Minutes was tabled until the June 19<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting to allow time to review the tape recording.

Al Evans came before the Board to offer his services in the elimination of beaver dams. He stated that Commissioner Harrison had invited him to the Board two years ago but due to health problems he was unable to attend. Mr. Evans explained that the product he dealt with was explosives; he was licensed by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and was certified by Sheriff Mike Carr to be able to come in to do work in his domain. He added that he also worked in Todd County, Cass County and Crow Wing County. Mr. Evans reviewed his equipment and pictures of his work.

Chairman Meyer thanked Mr. Evans for his presentation.

Silvia Silvers, Wadena DAC Director, and Dave Anderson, Mayor of Sebeka and Sebeka Economic Development Authority Representative, came before the Board to review a Property Transfer Agreement for the sale of the Wadena DAC to SEDA from Wadena County.

Ms. West informed the Board that the document had been drawn up by Jeff Pederson, Pederson & Pederson, who was representing all parties involved. She added that this Agreement was a result of a meeting of all party representatives that was held the end of 2007. Ms. West pointed out that the only change from the initial draft was the addition of the reimbursement by the Sebeka DAC to Wadena County for the payment of the special assessment due on May 15, 2008. She added that the balance of the special assessment would be assumed by the DAC. Ms. West stated that SEDA would be meeting to schedule a public hearing that needed to be held prior to the transaction being finalized.

Mr. Anderson stated that SEDA would be meeting on June 10, 2008.

Commissioner Harrison questioned how this would affect expenses to SEDA as one of their requests was to have the transfer of the property instantaneous.

Ms. West stated that it was her understanding from Mr. Pederson that a deed would not be signed or recorded until after SEDA held the public hearing.

Ms. Silvers stated that the sooner the transaction was complete the better as the DAC had plans for improvements to the building.

Commissioner Stearns stated that the document had finality and was not dated. He questioned whether the Board would approve this Agreement in principal and then come back with a date later.

Commissioner Waldahl recommended questioning Mr. Pederson on what the Board legally should do.

Mr. Pederson was contacted and would come before the Board shortly.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to charge off the following outstanding checks as presented by the Auditor/Treasurer:

6/27/05	American Emblem Manufacturing	Comm. Ck. #1790	\$95.93
3/26/07	Julie Vry	Comm. Ck. #7082	\$20.37
8/9/06	Department of Public Safety	Soc Serv Ck #80354	\$12.50
5/10/06	Gail Klunenber	Soc Serv Ck #23265	\$ 1.34
7/25/06	Kari Carpenter	Auditor Ck #23564	\$ 1.20

Motion carried.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the request by Kitchigami Regional Library for the first half of their 2008 Appropriation in the amount of \$45,293.50, motion carried.

Ms. West read the amendments to the HealthPartners Plan to the Board which reflected legislative changes for dependent coverage.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to accept the amendment to the HealthPartners Open Access Choice Summary Plan, motion carried.

Mr. Pederson came before the Board to answer questions regarding the Wadena DAC Property Transfer Agreement.

Commissioner Stearns questioned Mr. Pederson regarding the Property Transfer Agreement stating that the date was blank and was wondering whether the Board needed to agree in principal and then at a later time the date would be filled in or fill in today's date and the Chairman signs it.

Mr. Pederson responded that it was his understanding that everyone would be in attendance today and it would be signed today. He added that this Agreement obligated SEDA to proceed with the hearing. Mr. Pederson further explained that even if SEDA would be signing the document at a later date, today's date could be used in the document and the actual transfer of the property would be made following the public hearing.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Harrison, to approve to signing of the Property Transfer Agreement between Wadena County, Sebeka Economic Development Authority and the Wadena DAC for the transfer of the Wadena DAC to the Sebeka Economic Development Authority, motion carried.

Deana Skov, Zoning/Solid Waste/Parks Director, came to the Board regarding the Ordinance Amendment pertaining to hunting in or near County Parks; however, this needed to be tabled until the County Attorney returned from vacation. She added that the County Attorney did have a concern regarding a possible conflict with the statute.

Ms. Skov informed the Board that in March she had a walk through with the Safety Coordinator at the Transfer Station. She stated that he expressed concern over not having fall protection while workers were tarping trailers in the loading bay. Ms. Skov added that she contacted a company in Redwood Falls who made a recommendation for the equipment, but they said it should be designed by an engineer. She stated that she then called R.W. Beck, who was the original engineer on the project, and he recommended using someone locally so she then contacted Widseth, Smith & Nolting to design the equipment. Ms. Skov stated that the quote for the design of the fall protection system would be \$2,900 to \$3,400; they would be in contact with the company that actually made the equipment, consult with our contractor and do the inspection of the equipment once it was installed. Ms. Skov stated that there were funds in the budget to cover this and recommended moving forward with this project, starting with the design.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the hiring of Widseth, Smith and Nolting for engineering services to design fall protection equipment at the Transfer Station in the amount of \$2,900 - \$3,400,

Commissioner Stearns commented they should provide an engineering estimate of the potential cost of the equipment.

Ms. Skov responded that she would request this additional information.

Motion carried.

Dave Anderson, Veterans Service Officer, came to the Board to further discuss having the Veterans Service Office open an additional 4 hours on Fridays, which was previously tabled by the Board for one month. Mr. Anderson informed the Board that the extra cost to the County would be \$74.40 per week or \$3,868.80 per year and if he were to start this July 7, 2008, the amount for the remainder of this year would be \$1,934.40. Mr. Anderson pointed out that he would earn .8 hours of vacation and sick time per month or 4.8 hours for the rest of the year.

Mr. Anderson also addressed the need to consider budgeting for the replacement of the Veterans van. Mr. Anderson informed the Board that he had added at least 10 new riders this year; the van was a 2006 vehicle that was purchased in late 2005 and he was estimating the vehicle's current mileage to be close to 100,000 miles.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that since Social Services was also using the van, Mr. Anderson work with the Social Services Director on this matter and maybe the cost could be split between the two departments.

Commissioner Stearns commented that about 6 to 8 months ago the Social Services Director had a bid to replace a car and at that time we asked that it be replaced with a van so we might have one and he didn't feel the Board would need to budget for a new one.

Rin Porter, Verndale Sun, questioned whether the vans had handicap access.

Commissioner Schermerhorn responded that they did not.

Mike Gibson commented that Public Health thought a van might be helpful to haul things and that the Board might want to talk with the Public Health Director before going forward.

Commissioner Waldahl commented he came in on Friday; Mr. Anderson was working at the Library and the Vets were going to the Library to talk to Mr. Anderson.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to authorize having the Veterans Service Office open four hours on Friday and authorize the Veterans Service Officer to work 90% per week starting the week of July 7, 2008,

Commissioner Harrison stated her concern that the Board may be in a climate to cut in the next year or two so where did this leave us with a precedence for that and how was it going to play out if we have to discuss this issue with the Union if we have just added hours to someone.

Commissioner Schermerhorn commented he understood the question, but felt for now the Veterans were a priority and cross the other bridge when we get to it.

Chairman Meyer added that the addition of PERA and other employee expenses the cost will be brought up to about \$5,000.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that we hired one last month and the State told us we have to have that person and that he felt the State was telling us the same thing regarding Veterans Services.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Board recessed at 10:00 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 10:15 a.m.

Joel Ulring, Highway Engineer, came to the Board recommending acceptance of the low bid for CP 80-104-08 Overlay of CR 104 from Tri City Paving of Little Falls; this bid was about 17% or \$47,000 over the estimate. He added that he proposed to Tri City Paving to modify the sub grade repair work with the balance of the contract remaining unchanged.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Harrison, to approve the Highway Engineer's recommendation to accept the low bid from Tri City Paving for CP-80-104-08 Overlay of CR 104 in the amount of \$327,004.30,

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether the engineering could be bid back, as done in some projects.

Mr. Ulring stated that it could as he had the opportunity to recoup engineering costs on the State Aid work and bring that back into the County.

Motion carried.

Mr. Ulring informed the Board that he was obtaining annual quotes on chloride for CR 146, CR 169 and CSAH 24. He added that he hoped to reduce the requirement of maintenance by the road grader. Mr. Ulring recommended the use of magnesium chloride and to purchase this from Dust Coating, Inc. for Magnesium Chloride at .78 per gallon.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Schermerhorn, to purchase magnesium chloride from Dust Coating, Inc., Savage MN, at a price of \$.78 per gallon, motion carried.

Mr. Ullring informed the Board that Todd County had informed him that they would be covering the cost to haul fill and grade the turn and bypass lanes on CSAH 3 (Warner Road). He added that Lakewood Health Systems would be paying \$7,600 for one-half of the bituminous paving and that Todd County had requested they and Wadena County split the balance, which would be an estimated cost of \$3,800 each. Mr. Ullring pointed out that this was certainly a safety addition and was needed.

Mr. Ullring informed the Board that his Department had reviewed applications for the Seasonal Temporary positions and recommended approval by the Board to hire Robin Wegscheid and Lance Perius to the positions at \$10.00 per hr. He pointed out that both applicants had worked for the Highway Department in the past as temporary seasonal workers.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the appointment of Robin Wegscheid and Lance Perius to the two Highway Department Temporary Seasonal positions at \$10.00 per hour with a start date of June 16, 2008, motion carried.

Mr. Ullring informed the Board that he had received 15 applications for the Engineering Technician position and recommended hiring Tyler Boyne, New York Mills, to the position at Grade 51, Step 2 with a start date of June 16, 2008. He added that this would be filling the position opening when Bill Ness resigned.

Chairman Meyer confirmed with Mr. Ullring that this was replacement and not a new position.

Mr. Ullring responded that it was a replacement.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schmerhorn, to approve the appointment of Tyler Boyne to the Engineering Technician position, Grade 51, Step 2 at \$13.91 per hour with a starting date of June 16, 2008, conditioned upon a background check and a medical physical evaluation,

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether the offer was consistent with union guidelines.

Mr. Ullring responded that it was.

Motion carried.

Mr. Ullring reminded the Board that last fall an agreement was reached with the City of Staples to lease space in their public works facility, which had worked out well for the County. He stated that he was proposing the Verndale Garage be officially closed and the property sold. He added that the property was within the Verndale City limits and recommended working with the Verndale EDA on the disposal of the property. He further recommended that an appraisal of the property be obtained and pointed out that the current assessed value was \$14,900. Mr. Ullring requested Board approval to work with the Verndale EDA, negotiate a price on the value of the building and then the City of Verndale would purchase the building.

Commissioner Schermerhorn stated that the Sheriff had expressed to him their desire for use of the building for storage. He also questioned what equipment was moved out from the building besides the snowplow.

Mr. Ulring responded that a grader was moved out.

Commissioner Schermerhorn questioned whether it was economical for refueling purposes of the grader.

Mr. Ulring responded that it would not be an economic issue. He added that he would talk with Sheriff Carr regarding his concerns for storage.

Commissioner Stearns commented that if County property was sold it would have to go on an auction. He questioned whether the proceeds would then go back to the General Fund by statute. He requested that the matter of the money going back in to the General Fund or staying within the Highway Department be researched.

Mr. Ulring stated that he mainly wanted to bring the issue to the Board for discussion and that he would be talking to the County Attorney on the process.

Jeff Adolphson, Assistant Highway Engineer, presented the Board with a handout regarding the replacement of five County bridges that had dropped below 80% of their sufficiency rating, as determined by Erickson Engineering following inspection. He added that these bridges had been placed on a replacement list adopted by the Board by resolution earlier this year. Mr. Adolphson also pointed out that the bridges required a more in depth evaluation to assure that they did not require posting. He added that Erickson Engineering had provided them with a quote of \$1,400 per bridge for a total cost of \$7,000 and they were recommending the hiring of the firm to evaluate these bridges.

Mr. Ulring updated the Board on several projects; State Aid Hwy 23 Project had begun and the Wadena Depot was trying to work through final items so that this project could be closed out. He added that the County had been totally reimbursement for their investment in this project.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Stearns, to approve the hiring of Erickson Engineering to conduct an in depth evaluation of the five bridges recommended by the Highway Engineer, which had a sufficiency rating that had dropped below 80%, at a cost of \$1,400 per bridge for a total cost of \$7,000, motion carried.

Commissioner Waldahl informed the Board that he had been requested by the County Attorney to present to the Board her recommendation to appoint Angela Swenson-Sonsala to the Assistant County Attorney position, Grade 56, Step 3 at \$24.83 per hour with a start date of June 23, 2008. He added that Ms. Swenson-Sonsala was currently a staff attorney for the Community Violence Intervention Center since May, 2004; she also provided legal representation through Northwest Legal Aid, Moorhead, and prior to her current employment she worked in a private practice firm and did an internship with Grand Forks State Attorney's office.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Harrison, to approve the appointment of Angela Swenson-Sonsala to the Assistant County Attorney position, Grade 56, Step 3 at \$24.83 starting June 23, 2008, motion carried.

Chairman Meyer suggested that a thank you letter be sent to Jeff Pederson, Pederson & Pederson, for filling in as Assistant County Attorney during the hiring period.

Chairman Meyer set the 2009 Budget Meeting for 11:00 a.m. on July 17, 2008 in the Board of Commissioners Room, which would follow the Highway Department Planning Meeting at 9:00 a.m. He requested that the Budget Meeting Agenda provide Department Head presentations at 15 minute intervals with a 30 minute break for lunch from the Jail.

Commissioner Schermerhorn, seconded by Stearns, to transfer accumulated benefits for Barbara Szymonowicz from the Auditor's Accounting Assistant position to Public Health as follows: Vacation Balance: 27.6 hours, Sick Balance: 28.1 hours, Comp/Holiday Balance/22.8 hours, motion carried.

Commissioner's Reports:

Commissioner Waldahl	Todd Wadena Community Corrections CHAMPS
Commissioner Harrison	AMC District Meeting
Commissioner Meyer	Emergency Medical Services
Commissioner Schermerhorn	AMC District Meeting
Commissioner Stearns	Perham Incinerator

Commissioner Stearns informed the Board that he was receiving lots of questions about every Deputy Sheriff having their own squad car and that they take it home to and from work and that even the part-time deputies had squad cars setting outside their homes for a long time on the city streets of Wadena. He added that the question really was about part-time deputies having their own squad car.

Commissioner Waldahl commented that part-time Deputies were taking the squad car home on weekends as they were on-call just like the Deputies.

Mr. Gibson stated that in talking with Sheriff Carr and Mr. Ullring, they both were trying to be sensitive to the issue.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve payment of the Board of Commissioner bills in the amount of \$62,601.13, motion carried

Commissioner Waldahl stated that since the Building Services Director was also the Safety Officer and was in charge of all the buildings maybe he should work with Ms. Skov on the cat-walk.

Chairman Meyer agreed stating that maybe the County would not need to hire an engineer.

Mr. Gibson stated that the Inspector that comes out and conducts the OSHA type inspection would know who to contact and it would be worth the time to use Mr. Uselman and work with the Inspector so there may not be a need to spend the extra money on an Engineer.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to rescind the following motion; "Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the hiring of Widseth, Smith and Nolting for engineering services to design fall protection equipment at the Transfer Station in the amount of \$2,900 - \$3,400", motion carried.

Board consensus was to have Ms. Skov work with Mr. Uselman on this project and return to the Board with a cost of the project.

Chairman Meyer pointed out that Ms. Skov needed to be contacted immediately regarding this Board action.

Chairman Meyer closed the regular Board of Commissioners Meeting at 11:13 a.m. for the purpose of discussing Negotiation Strategy for 2009.

Chairman Meyer re-opened the regular Board of Commissioners Meeting at 12:01 p.m.

Mike Gibson requested Board direction on discussion for the June 12, 2008 Management Team Meeting. He added that he would like to talk about the time clocks as well as also suggesting all departments do evaluations of their staff as he felt it was critical to do this. Mr. Gibson further pointed out that some Departments do not have formalized schedules for their staff, in some cases all like to take their meals together and maybe we could suggest that if there were three people in a Department, one stay back around the Building. He stated that we have some staff that are transporting themselves by County vehicle to eat and they may say they are on call and if called they could get back quickly, but he did not feel the general population liked to see a County car used for this purpose. Mr. Gibson added that he would also like to suggest that any time a Department Head was going to make changes in their office space, they contact and include Mr. Uselman in what they are doing, whether it included electrical, moving a wall, or whatever; they need to get into the pattern of involving the maintenance and safety person. He requested the Board's backing of this. Mr. Gibson added that it was also very necessary that there be Board backing, that the Board agrees that anytime there was rehiring or the hiring of a new person, they come to him so Union things could be checked. He pointed out that Mr. Uselman should be contacted if there was a roof leak or if there was a similar problem at Zoning; it was not the Department Heads responsibility to see that it be taken care of. He added that the Department Head had the best of intention to get things done but it should have gone with the Safety Officer.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he would contact Ms. Skov, along with Mr. Gibson, regarding the Board's action rescinding the motion authorizing the hiring of an engineering firm to develop the fall equipment at the Transfer station.

Chairman Meyer reported that the Closed Board Meeting generated no required action.

Mr. Gibson commented that the Board's suggestion of organizing a Planning Committee of citizens was very positive, but he pointed out a concern if there were 10 people on a Committee and the Board was just looking for their input; will they think they have authority. He recommended that before going ahead with the Committee, the Board hold further discussion at the next Board Meeting.

Commissioner Harrison recommended using the word "panel" rather than using the word "committee" to try to mitigate some of that feeling of authority.

Mr. Gibson recommended that since some of the Board Members would not be present at the next Board Meeting, the subject be put on the Agenda for a month from now.

Chairman Meyer adjourned the Board of Commissioners Meeting at 12:10 p.m.

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Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

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Orville Meyer, Chairman