

WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
JULY 24, 2008/9:00 A.M.

The Wadena County Adjourned Board of Commissioners Meeting was held on Thursday, July 24, 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, William Stearns, and Mary Harrison, Mike Gibson, Consultant and Char West, Auditor/Treasurer.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the day's Agenda as amended to table the 2008 and 2009 Timber Planting of County Lands until the August 5, 2008 Board Meeting, motion carried.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Harrison, to approve the Board of Commissioner Meeting Minutes of June 16, 2008 and July 1, 2008, as presented, motion carried.

Bob Zosel, Sandy Pratt, and Richard Paper, Wadena Historical Society representatives, came before the Board with Mr. Zosel expressing thanks to the Board for visiting the Museum and to clarify his position on the Wadena Historical Society Board; he was a Board Member but had been succeeded by Mr. Paper, but was still interested in Wadena County's history. He stated that the biggest concern he had was that the County population was aging and we are not obtaining history. Mr. Zosel expressed thanks to the Board for their help in the past and related that the heating and utility bills would almost double for 2009. He pointed out that the Wadena Historical Society was requesting an appropriation of \$10,000 for 2009.

Commissioner Harrison commented that they had done a wonderful job but this was a very tough year.

Chairman Meyer pointed out that the County's utilities will nearly double for 2009 also.

Commissioner Stearns stated that out of last years \$25,000 allocation to the Fair Board, \$6,000 of that amount went to repair the Historical Society's building roof at the Fair Grounds.

Chairman Meyer reiterated the good job done by the Wadena Historical Society and advised them that the Board would consider their request.

Gary Van Dam, Verndale, came before the Board with "good news"; he advised he had talked to Commissioner Meyer earlier and now he felt his friendships with the Commissioners meant more to him than the culvert so any issues were dropped.

Joel Ulring, Highway Engineer, came before the Board to present a Municipal Agreement between the City of Menahga and Wadena County regarding CSAH 21 Project. He added that

- Pavement Marking 95% complete
- Gravel Crushing to start in the next few of weeks
- CSAH 23 going well.
- CR 104 finish paving and plan to shoulder a week from Monday.
- CHSP in Verndale project; bid opening will be on August 1, 2008

Mr. Ulring informed the Board that he had talked with Rick Kjonaas, Assistant State Aid Engineer, who informed him that there would be a 10% increase of about \$218,000 in State Aid Construction and Maintenance funds in 2009. He added that this was part of the increase in gas tax.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the request by Huntersville Outpost for their Liquor License Renewal Application for the period of 8/1/08 to 7/31/09, motion carried.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the request by England Prairie Pioneer Club for a Gambling Permit Application, motion carried.

The Board tabled a request to authorize Dave Evert to put a mural on the Public Health Building until Karen Nelson, Public Health Director, came before the Board later on in the meeting.

Chairman Meyer set September 11, 2008, at 1:00 for a Special Budget Meeting.

The Board set the following dates for future Board Meetings: September 2, 2008, September 18, 2008, October 7, 2008, October 23, 2008, November 4, 2008 and November 20, 2008.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the request by Pine Cove Inn for their Liquor License Renewal Application for the period of 8/1/08 to 7/31/09, motion carried.

Char West, Auditor/Treasurer, distributed to the Board a handout outlining the January 1, 2009 Health Insurance Bid results which indicated the three low bidders to be HealthPartners through NJPA, Public Employees Insurance Plan (PEIP) and BlueCross/BlueShield through the South Country Cooperative out of Fergus Falls. She stated that the Health Insurance Committee would like to point out that NJPA underbid almost half of the premiums they were currently charging. Ms. West read the following recommendation by the Health Insurance Committee, which stated;

Motion by West, seconded by Sailer, to support the 2009 Health Insurance Bid from Public Employees Insurance Plan (PEIP) contingent upon Board approval and Employee approval based on a majority Employee vote, motion carried.

Mike Gibson explained that Public Employees Insurance Plan (PEIP) provided employees with the option to choose which insurance plan they wanted to network with.

Commissioner Waldahl, member of the Health Insurance Committee, relayed that he had received some questions as to whether the County contribution would be the same for the HSA as it was now for the HRA.

The Board further discussed the PEIP proposal. As Shawn Byrne, PEIP representative, was at the Social Services Department that day providing information to employees on the PEIP insurance, the Board requested Mr. Byrne's presence over the noon hour to answer further questions they had of the Plan.

The Board recessed at 10:00 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 10:15 a.m.

Chairman Meyer opened the Fee Public Hearing at 10:15 a.m.

Mr. Gibson informed the Board that Sole Henriksen, County Recorder was requesting a copy fee change that would be similar to other counties in the area. He added that she was proposing a .50 per copy charge if the person did their own research; however, the charge would be \$1.00 if the County staff had to do the research and copy the information. He added that Ms. Henrikson was available for information if necessary for discussion of the charge for copies in the Recorder's Office.

Commissioner Harrison reported on the NACO Conference she had attended in Kansas City. She stated that she received information on an on-line selling of County items instead of having to sell them at the Verndale Auction, which would eliminate the storage of items. She also reported on the ability to purchase on-line with the average savings of 50% on large items and 80% on small items such as paper supplies. Commissioner Harrison pointed out that the current NACO fee was considered the membership fee.

Commissioner Harrison also reviewed the information she had received on the NACO Prescription Drug Plan. She stated that there would be no fee, no tax dollars go in and there was no charge for the user; the amount saved on a prescription was 22%; this program did not work with insurance, but it helped persons who did not have insurance or any drug coverage. She added that the prescription card was available for pickup at public offices, i.e. drug stores, Social Services offices, the Library, Senior Citizen Centers, etc. and the card could be used at 90% of all pharmacies. Commissioner Harrison pointed out that Cass County and Crow Wing County were currently using this program and that Wadena County would have to register for the Program in order to join, which would take about 90 days to go through the process.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Waldahl, to join the NACO Prescription Drug Plan.

Commissioner Stearns commented his company has used Care Mart, a discount company, for years.

Motion carried.

Chairman Meyer closed the Fee Public Hearing at 10:45 a.m.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the copy fee for the Recorder's Office at .50 per copy if the person did their own research and \$1.00 per copy if the County staff did the research for information to be copied, motion carried.

Marian Ridge, Kitchigami Regional Library, came before the Board to discuss their 2009 Budget. She stated that they were facing the same challenges the state and counties were facing, namely fuel costs. She added that the second significant area of increase in costs was at the City of Wadena Library; the Kitchigami Regional Library Board had made the decision to provide health insurance benefits for full-time employees; the Librarian. Ms. Ridge pointed out that they obtained some cost savings by delivery 3 days per week instead of 5 days per week. Ms. Ridge also noted an increase in funds from the City and a \$7,200 increase in budget bringing the total up to \$97,785 needed from Wadena County.

Discussion was held clarifying that the statutory minimum set by the State would increase from \$54,380 to \$64,867 and the County levy request from \$90,587 in 2008 to \$97,785 for 2009.

Commissioner Stearns questioned what the Library would do if the County could only come up with \$90,587, as was paid the previous year.

Ms. Ridge responded that she understood the County's situation and if the County and the City could not meet the request, they would have to ask the County and City what services they would consider reducing. She added that currently the Wadena Library was open Monday thru Saturday for a total of 35 hour per week.

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether any Libraries were closed one day per week.

Ms. Ridge responded that only the small ones; delivery didn't seem to affect circulation which was the real demand that made hours open necessary. She added that she was not sure closing a day would be the best possible solution. Ms. Ridge stated that the sooner the Kitchigami Regional Library knew the County decision then the Library Committee could make recommendations.

The Board recessed at 11:05 a.m. to the Courthouse Auditorium.

The Board reconvened at 11:10 a.m. in the Courthouse Auditorium.

Mr. Gibson introduced Jeff Goldenberg, Time Tracker, who provided a presentation on the company's time card/security system.

Mr. Goldenberg stated that the system would provide a better way of tracking and calculating employee hours as well as providing access and control to some or all of the County Buildings. He added that the software provided data collection which would be designed to cover a wide range of rules/contracts, payroll administration, export to the payroll software and access control. Mr. Goldenberg also pointed out that the system could also provide telephone data collection.

The Board questioned Mr. Goldenberg as to what the cost would be to Wadena County for the system.

Mr. Goldenberg replied that based on 150 employees at \$4.25 per employee month, 10 readers at \$95 per month and telephone access at \$275 per month the total cost would be \$1,862.50 per month plus a one time set up fee of \$4,500, which could be allocated over the first 12 months.

Chairman Meyer thanked Mr. Goldenberg for his presentation.

The Board recessed at 12:00 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 12:05 p.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room.

Deana Skov, Zoning/Parks/Solid Waste Director informed the Board that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency had approved the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment pertaining to Sewage Systems. She recommended Board approval and adoption of the Amendment into the Wadena County Zoning Ordinance effective September 1, 2008.

Commissioner Schermerhorn pointed out that the Planning Commissioner had recommended reviewing the Amendment in one year.

RESOLUTION

Commissioner Stearns moved that the following resolution be adopted: *(This Ordinance can be viewed in it's entirety in the Auditor/Treasurer's Office or Planning and Zoning Office.)*

RESOLVED: That the County Board orders the amendment of the **Zoning Ordinance No. 1** as follows:

Section 4. B. Definitions

Add the following definition:

- 1.) Acceptable Pre-existing Septic System – A system installed prior to April 1, 1996, that may not meet all the requirements of MN Rules Chapter 7080 or 7081, as written upon the date of this amendment (, 2008), has a sealed septic tank, has a soil treatment area that is not surfacing or discharging in any other manner above ground or to surface waters, and meets one of the following criteria: 1) the only deficiency is the system's improper setback from the Ordinary High Water Level; or, 2) the system was constructed prior to April of 1996 and has a separation distance from the bottom of the system to indications in the soil of seasonal high water that is less than 3 feet, but not less than 2 feet, and is located outside of an S-1 Shoreland Overlay District, a well head protection area, or is an SSTS providing sewage treatment for food, beverage, or lodging establishments; or, 3) if the system was installed after the date above referenced and has a separation distance from the bottom of the system to indications in the soil of seasonal high water that is reduced by not more than 15% of the actual required separation distance.

Section 17. Sub-surface Sewage Treatment Systems

A. Sub-surface Sewage Treatment Systems (SSTS) – General Construction Requirements

B. Non-Conforming Individual SSTS – Requirements for Update, Repair, & Replacement

C. Requirements and Allowances for Installation of Complete Individual Onsite Sewage Treatment

D. Management Plans & Maintenance Requirements

E. Operating Permits

F. Additional Provisions Related to Discharge and Placement of SSTS

G. Class V Injection Wells

H. Variances

Commissioner Schermerhorn seconded the motion and the same carried unanimously.

Adopted this 24th day of July, 2008, and is effective September 1, 2008.

Attest: _____
Charleen West, Auditor / Treasurer Orville Meyer, Chairperson

Ms. Skov requested Board approval to pay \$4,950.00 to Bluffton Hardware for the installer portion of the Low Income Septic Installation Project that had been completed.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the payment of \$4,950.00 to Bluffton Hardware for the installer portion of the Low Income Septic Installation Project that had been completed, motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the request by the Zoning/Parks/Solid Waste Director to move funds from the Solid Waste Fund Cash to a Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$90,000, motion carried.

Ms. Skov informed the Board that a new law had been passed and effective July 1, 2008 concerning waste pesticide collections in the State. She stated that the new law required that the Minnesota Department of Agriculture conduct residential and Ag/Commercial waste pesticide collections in every county in the state of Minnesota. Ms. Skov explained the options open to the County and then recommended signing an agreement with a service provider or regional cooperative. She added that the Becker County Commissioners had stated that they would do the collections and have invited counties in our regional cooperative to sign on with them as service providers. Ms. Skov recommended signing on with Becker County.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Harrison, to authorize Becker County to act as Wadena County's Service Provider for the collection of Ag/Commercial Waste Pesticides, motion carried.

The Board recessed at 12:15 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

Ms. West introduced Shawn Bryne, Public Employees Insurance Plan (PEIP).

Commissioner Stearns questioned how the co-pays and annual deductibles worked in the PEIP Plan.

Mr. Bryne provided the Board with a handout and further explained that there were three choices made by an employee, do I want the high, medium or low plan; do I want Blue Cross, Health Partners or Preferred One as the Network Administrator and then I select a primary care clinic. He cited several examples on how the co-pays and annual deductibles worked. Mr. Bryne stated that the deductible was just one time.

Further discussion was held regarding co-pays, deductibles, wellness check-ups and primary care clinics.

Chairman Meyer thanked Mr. Bryne for attending the meeting.

The Board recessed at 12:50 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 12:58 p.m.

Dennis Miley, Tri-County Hospital Administrator, and Joel Beiswenger, Chief Financial Officer, came before the Board seeking a Letter of Support from Wadena County for an application to the United States Department of Agriculture for a Grant submitted by Tri-County Hospital to be used for a 1,900 square foot area expansion and remodeling project and the purchase of radiology equipment for the Hospital.

Mr. Beiswenger pointed out to the Board that this was only for documenting Community support from the County, not for financial support.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the submission of a Certificate of Support to Tri-County Hospital for their grant application to the United State Department of Agriculture to be used for an expansion and remodeling project and the purchase of radiology equipment; the proposed project will provide needed services and will have no adverse impact on other facilities providing similar services, motion carried.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the Health Insurance Committee recommendation to support the 2009 Health Insurance Bid from Public Employees Insurance Plan (PEIP) contingent upon Employee approval based on a majority Employee vote, motion carried.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Harrison, to pay the Comdata Fuel Invoice in the amount of \$270.05 submitted by the Wadena County Highway Department, motion carried.

Commissioner Stearns informed the Board that he had received a call from Duane Sahr, USDA

Wildlife Service, stating that they had a Wildlife Service program that conducted wildlife damage management projects throughout the state, some of which involves setting traps to capture animals that were causing damage. He had added that Wadena County's primary species that the Wildlife Service would be trapping would be timber wolves and beaver.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the signing of the USDA Wildlife Services Agreement, which authorized the USDA Wildlife Service to conduct trapping and dam removal activities on Wadena County property relating to wildlife causing damage on adjacent properties that the Wildlife Services would be working on, motion carried.

Commissioner Waldahl reviewed a letter received from Pederson & Pederson, P.A. Law Firm regarding the Bell Hill Recovery Center electric issue. He added that they were currently waiting for a response from Attorney Luther Nervig who was representing Todd Wadena Electric Cooperative.

Ms. West informed the Board that she had received a notice from the Sebeka Economic Development Authority (SEDA) advising that a Public Hearing would be held on August 4, 2008 at 8:00 a.m. at the Sebeka City Hall regarding the sale of the Wadena County DAC to SEDA with SEDA then transferring the property to the DAC.

Mr. Gibson recommended to the Board to consider the Time Trackers presentation as good information and educational, however, due to the shortage of funds, it could not be justified to spend money on a time clock system at this time. He added that he would like the opportunity to at least look into something to secure the building for night meetings and recommended a system involving a swipe card.

Commissioner Waldahl suggested checking with Todd County as they use a swipe card for security.

Discussion followed regarding the lack of security for night meetings held within the Courthouse.

Ms. Skov commented that if we could keep the front door secured and cycle everyone through the Sheriff's Department so at least if someone comes in the door they would have to give their reason for being there. She added that we could notify the dispatcher if there was to be a meeting held that night.

Board discussion was held regarding the back door and what time the doors of the Courthouse were opened in the morning.

Mr. Gibson stated that he would return with an estimate on making the building more secure and if a swipe card could be added.

Mr. Gibson reported that he had received several e-mails from Social Services requesting to start

wage negotiations and that he had replied back to them that due to the severe shortage in funds in the County it was way too soon to meet with them. He added that he had also notified the Teamsters of this fact.

Chairman Meyer set a Special Meeting for August 12, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Room for the next Budget Meeting.

Mr. Gibson reported that, as requested by the Board, he did research, based on the square footage for the Master Plan, as to what options there might be. He added that he had also checked with Sean Uselman, Building Services Director and Cody Yglesias, Building Services Department, regarding an estimate of the cost to finish part of the Wensman Building; they reported that they needed more time to research this.

Mr. Gibson reported that there was sufficient room at the Highway Building for Planning and Zoning. He added that the other offices that would fit in the Work Force Center would be the Assessors' Office, the Veterans Services Department and the Extension Office. Mr. Gibson pointed out that there would be enough room left to provide space for Planning and Zoning, instead of possibly relocating them at the Highway Department. He stated that all of this could be done with very little remodeling.

Mr. Gibson stated that a priority that the County and the City have would be to keep MNCEP in the community. He pointed out that the charges to MNCEP were a little over \$13.00 a square foot, research showed space in the new strip mall at \$10.50 a square foot and there may be other spaces available within the City.

Mr. Gibson stated that the MIS Department needed office space for three people and could go into the current Extension Office. He added that the Law Library could be placed in the small Court Room, but some fine tuning would have to be done.

Mr. Gibson added that there would be a \$30,000 income loss but there also would be no capital expense. He stated that at the Department Head meeting there was some concern about communications between Departments, however, in talking with the MIS Director this could be handled electronically. Mr. Gibson added that they did request that rather than having a decision made today, could it be tabled for a month before making a final decision.

Ms. West informed the Board that Craig Nathan, MNCEP representative was currently out of his office and was unable to be reached.

Ms. Skov voiced a concern that she would like input on the setting up of a workspace for work flow.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he felt there would be a lot of remodeling that would have to be done at the Highway Department to make an area of office quality. He added that at the Work Force Center a lot of walls, heating, ventilating and air conditioning would have to be moved as it was set up for line offices right down the hallway.

Ms. Skov commented they would not be part of the Highway Department; they were a separate Department so there would have to be a wall. She added that they could not be put in three separate cubicles and expect their work to flow.

Commissioner Stearns further commented that the constituents don't want to walk all over town and this would really be running people all over town.

Chairman Meyer called for any comments from the audience pro or con regarding the Work Force Lease Agreement.

Dean Uselman, Economic Development Director City of Wadena, voiced his concern that the County needed to make sure there was adequate space within our community so the MNCEP offices did not end up being combined with other states offices in Detroit Lakes, Brainerd or another larger community. He commented that he would like to see the County explore a modified version of the plan to relocate offices into the Wensman Building, even in a phased plan. Mr. Uselman added that if you have to do remodeling in the Social Services Building why not do remodeling in the Wensman Building and have space for all four offices. He pointed out that you have about \$30,000 roughly net revenue from the Lease Agreement that could go towards the debt service of a remodeling project in the Wensman Building and that it made good sense to put all offices in the same building and maybe long term the Wensman Building could house other County offices.

Toby Pierce, Wadena City Council and Economic Development Board Member, stated that he remembered when this came up before and MNCEP talked about being relocated to Brainerd. He reiterated what Mr. Uselman stated and referred to the request that this be tabled a month so they could come up with something.

Commissioner Stearns commented that if MNCEP moved to Detroit Lakes or Brainerd it would be a detriment due to the gas prices in traveling to these places just to find a job.

Commissioner Waldahl commented that the County was not trying to push them out and he would like to see the Work Force Center stay in Wadena County. He added that when the contract was being discussed MNCEP was advised that the County had a space need which was the reason for the two year contract in case space was needed.

Commissioner Schermerhorn stated that they had found a space or two in Wadena that was cheaper but they opted not to move because they were happy with their present location.

Commissioner Waldahl further stated that they had a good meeting with MNCEP with Ms. West, Commissioner Schermerhorn and Mr. Sailer also in attendance and there were no hard feelings. He added that MNCEP was informed of what the County's space problems were and we have to use the space available. He added that that may mean going out to the Highway Department and that he agreed with Ms. Skov that if the Planning and Zoning Office went out there he would sooner see you walk into the Planning Zoning Office or walk into the Highway Department.

Chairman Meyer stated that he felt the Work Force Administration needed to know of the possibility of them having to move.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Stearns, to table further discussion of the Work Force Center leased space, motion carried.

Commissioner Meyer commented that since no date was put in the motion it would be tabled indefinitely.

Commissioner Stearns made an additional request of Mr. Gibson that he might consider moving the Department of Health in with Social Services and asked Mr. Gibson to look at how that would free that building up for other offices.

Mr. Uselman commented that if the Board was going to look at other options; if two agencies were working very well together in the same space and by moving one out and bringing three other offices in you are not fixing your space problems. He added that he thought it would be wise to take a look at what it would cost to renovate 3,000 or 4,000 square feet of the Wensman Building to provide adequate office space for the offices that may need to move.

Mr. Gibson felt he could get a rough estimate of the cost without using an architect at this time.

Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Waldahl	Historical Society Meeting Otter Tail Wadena Community Action; two houses were sold. A profit was made on both and there were seven more to sell CHAMPS Meeting-grant money will not be received until September and may have to make a loan to them until then.
Commissioner Harrison	NACO Conference – Wadena County was behind technologically due to the fact we cannot afford it, but in other areas we are at cutting edge. Keynote speaker, David Walker, President & CEO of Peterson Foundation and former Comptroller General of the U.S., gave a very bleak financial outlook for the nation.
Chairman Meyer	Todd Wadena Community Corrections
Commissioner Schemerhorn	None
Commissioner Stearns	Perham Incinerator Board Meeting-Ottertail County decided that if Stearns County pulled out they would be willing make up some of the loss; however, they would not participate in expansion or provide any additional waste for an expansion project. Otherwise it was on track and making money.

Karen Nelson, Public Health Director, informed the Board that the Health Department was requesting a cash advance from the General Fund in order to be able to cover the prepayment of some major expenses for the Chemical Health Grant by a deadline date, which totaled \$99,000.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve payment of the second half County Levy Allocation to the Public Health Fund in the amount of \$63,788.50, motion carried.

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Schermerhorn, to authorize an advance from the General Revenue Fund to the Public Health Fund in the amount of \$80,000, motion carried.

Chairman Meyer questioned Ms. Nelson as to how she felt about a mural on the Public Health Building.

Ms. Nelson replied that she hadn't brought it up because there was a request to give a contribution, which they would not be able to do.

The Board felt if there was a mural placed on the Public Health Building it should be something historical of Wadena County instead of the mural suggested. Also, it would be necessary to sign an agreement and this would have to be reviewed by the County Attorney. This will be checked out and brought back to the Board.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Harrison, to approve payment of the Board of Commissioner bills in the amount of \$348,727.89, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

Orville Meyer, Chairman