

WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ADJOURNED MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 9:00 A.M.

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners Adjourned Meeting was held on Thursday, February 19, 2009, 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 Dave Schermerhorn and the pledge of allegiance to the flag was said.

Also present: Commissioners Rodney Bounds, Ralph Miller, Lane Waldahl, William Stearns and Auditor/Treasurer Char West.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Bounds, to amend the day's Agenda to include 4a.) Karen Nelson, Public Health Director, motion carried.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Miller, to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2009, as sent, motion carried.

Stephanie Hakes, Program Coordinator, Nutrition Program, and Donna Anderson, Wadena County Nutrition Program Specialist, came before the Board to provide information relating to the Nutrition Program. Ms. Hakes stated that their mission was contributing to stronger, healthier communities by providing help to persons with limited resources. She pointed out that they were a collaborative program involving the USDA, Minnesota Department of Human Services and local support and the University of Minnesota as the source for information provided to local residents. Ms. Hakes added that Ms. Anderson's position was 50% funded by the Food Stamp Program and a matching grant from Federal funds. She pointed out that the U of M Extension was set up on a regional system.

Ms. Anderson presented the Board with a hand out listing contacts she had made as well as an example of an activity she did during her presentations, which assisted in providing information relating to food safety, cutting coupons, good eating recipes, etc. She added that she provided resources to families regarding the Food Program as well as visits to schools throughout the County. Ms. Anderson stated that a Junior Master Gardener Program had been started and the produce they grew would be donated to the Food Shelf or Senior Citizens Centers.

Ms. Hakes stated that they were working towards developing a program called the Farm to School Program where the schools purchase their produce from the local farmers which would provide locally grown produce to the schools.

Susan Henriks, Horizons Program, came in place of Jim Carlson, Regional Extension Director. She stated that the New Horizons was an Extension Program and that there were two communities in Wadena County, Menahga and Sebeka, who were participating in the program. Ms. Henriks explained that the program was an 18 month program for communities of less than a 5,000 population with a poverty level greater than 10%; there were just under 200 communities throughout Minnesota that qualified. She added that the project was fully funded by the NW Area Foundation and used the expertise of Extension.

Karen Nelson, Public Health Director, came to the Board to request the appointment of Maxine Norman to the Public Health Advisory Committee.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Miller, to appoint Maxine Norman, Menahga, to a 3-year term on the Wadena County Public Health Advisory Committee representing District 3, effective January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011, motion carried.

Ms. Nelson also requested permission to submit a Family Planning grant application to the Minnesota Department of Health.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to recommend that the Morrison-Todd-Wadena Board of Health submit a renewal Family Planning grant application together with the Cass County Board of Health to the Minnesota Department of Health for federal funds for pre-pregnancy services for the counties of Cass, Todd and Wadena effective July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011, motion carried.

Ms. Nelson informed the Board that the Board of Health would be considering joining with the Minnesota Department of Health to develop a research grant to gather data on the human impact of pesticide drift. She pointed out that this grant would require one additional staff person in either Morrison, Todd and less like Wadena County, which would be paid for through the grant.

Ms. Nelson presented the Board with a copy of her Performance Appraisal conducted by the Wadena County Board of Health.

The Board commented that Ms. Nelson's Performance Appraisal looked very good.

Commissioner Miller stated that he dealt with pesticides and was interested to know who the Department of Health would be relying on for their research.

Ms. Nelson stated that there would be a meeting held on February 20th at 10 a.m.

Chairman Schermerhorn pointed out that there were already two Commissioners appointed to the Board of Health and advised Ms. Nelson that they would let who know who would be attending as three would be a quorum; he would not attend if Commissioner Miller wanted to attend.

Scott McKellep, EMS Director, and Jay Eckel, Contact Radio, came before the Board to present them with a proposal for the ARMER (Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response) System. Also present were Chuck Goddard and Don Weniger of the Verndale Fire Department.

Mr. McKellep stated that they were pleasantly surprised at what Mr. Eckel, Sheriff Mike Carr, and he were able to work out as an alternative. He reviewed example #1 reflecting a total cost of \$150,475 and example #2 reflecting a total cost of \$449,650. Mr. McKellep pointed out that they actually preferred example #1 due to the cost and lower maintenance expense of \$3,000 annually which had already been included the Sheriff's Department budget.

Mr. McKellep stated that the reason for not going with example #2 was because it included the purchase of a Motorola IP Console with higher maintenance costs, which the County did not need; the actual radio reprogramming was done at the State level so the benefits of going with the more expensive example would be very minimal to the County on a day to day basis. He pointed out that this proposal was exclusive of any grant money received.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned if the \$48,000 plus grant the County had already been awarded could be used towards this expense.

Mr. McKellep responded that these grant funds could be used towards the expense.

Commissioner Waldahl requested Mr. McKellep verify that the time the grant money had to be used had been extended.

Mr. McKellep stated that the State tower proposed for construction would not be done until the end of 2009, which was located about one mile north of Old Wadena Campground.

Chairman Schermerhorn questioned whether the tower being erected southeast of Nevis could be used by Wadena County.

Mr. McKellep responded that Wadena County would benefit from that tower and several others in the area. He stated that what they were proposing, so the County could avoid constructing their own tower, was to put repeaters in the squad cars, fire trucks, etc.; which had been proven to work. Mr. McKellep added that this was a full ARMER System hybrid with the County's current VHS system, which included the Sheriff's Department, Emergency Management and Public Health equipment and infrastructure; the County Highway Department could be added at a later date.

Commissioner Waldahl clarified that this did not include the Fire Departments expenses. He questioned Mr. Goddard and Mr. Weniger if they had started working on applying for grants for the Fire Department equipment.

Mr. Goddard and Mr. Weniger commented that all Fire Departments were working together and were waiting for direction from the Commissioners as to what system to go with.

Mr. McKellep added that if the Board approved their proposal that day it provided him with the opportunity to seek Homeland Security Grants as well.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that Sheriff Carr had also mentioned possibly using funds from the E-911 system.

Mr. McKellep advised those funds were currently available for the dispatch area but not for the purpose of mobiles or portables.

Commissioner Stearns pointed out that the Sheriff's Association was lobbying for a change in

legislation to authorize the use of E-911 funds for the purchase of mobiles.

Mr. McKellep stressed the urgency for the Board to adopt a Resolution in order to avoid losing the opportunity.

Commissioner Miller questioned if the proposal was relevant to the four proposals laid out at the Tech School Public Hearing.

Mr. McKellep responded that it fit in with Option 4, the full ARMER System; a hybrid system, as well as Option 1, which was the mandate.

Mr. Eckel pointed out that the repeater system that was in place now would include narrow band so anyone, fire departments, etc., would be able to use the system.

Ms. Porter questioned whether the cities could buy just one repeater for the Fire Department and Police.

Mr. McKellep responded that they could but that was not recommended.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Bounds, to adopt the Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response (ARMER) System in conjunction with VHS as the primary communication source at an approximate cost of \$150,475.00, Option #1,

Commissioner Bounds questioned that of the \$150,000, what should the County be looking at budgeting to set aside and when do you feel this would be up and running.

Mr. Eckel responded that the funds would probably be spent in 2010.

Chairman Schermerhorn questioned whether any of the expenses had been budget for in the Sheriff's budget.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he felt they were waiting until the end of the Legislative Session to see if the bill authorizing the use of E-911 funds passed.

Commissioner Waldahl stated there would be around \$50,000 from the current grant and the County match.

Commissioner Bounds clarified that the County would have approximately \$100,000 to come up with in two to three years.

Mr. McKellep responded that this would be a worse case scenario.

Commissioner Stearns stated that it was important to talk with the Senators and Legislators to

encourage passage of the bill so counties would have access to the E-911 funds.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Miller stated that there were some unhappy landowners in the area where the tower was proposed to be erected about one mile south of Thomastown Covenant Church. He stated that he had requested the Auditor's Office provide a tax forfeited land color coded map to see if there were alternative sites available. Commissioner Miller added that he had visited with Mr. Hogan in regards to the Old Wadena area, which was quite a bit larger tract of land; it was a pretty sticky situation and questioned whether an alternative site would be available.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that he did not think the County had the right to say where it was to be located since it was a State project. He added that he felt Mr. McKellep had offered several options that would work into their plan; then the State decides.

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether they were talking about placing it on Wadena County park land; they could be upset too.

Commissioner Miller commented he was on the Parks Committee.

Mr. McKellep stated that if the County owned land, then the people might be upset with the County. He pointed out that there was a Statute regarding this type of situation and that he had discussed the matter with Deana Skov, Planning and Zoning Director, some time ago. Mr. McKellep added that there may be a public informational meeting on this due to complaints the State had received.

Commissioner Miller stated that the biggest concern to these people was that they had not been talked to by anybody.

The Board recessed at 10:14 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 10:24 a.m.

Commissioner Stearns provided a brief update on the MCIT Employee Assistance Program. He stated that MCIT, through Sand Creek, had a counseling program for employees and Department Heads where they could obtain advice for up to four sessions on a subject or on an issue, which would be a resource for Department Heads to use. Commissioner Stearns pointed out that there was a current need for several Department Heads to discuss some things, which normally would be done by a Human Resources person or Coordinator with a Human Resource background. He added that there was no cost for the first four sessions as MCIT considered it part of their role to help counties control loses; if it would go beyond four sessions there would be a cost involved. Commissioner Stearns stated that it seemed reasonable, at the present time, that we should direct our Department Heads to contact Sand Creek, since the County did not have a Human Resources Coordinator at this time.

Chairman Schermerhorn commented that this was basically a resource lacking a Human Resource person and a resource for the County to use.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he had talked with Robyn Sykes, MCIT Executive Director, who stated that she would come out to talk to the Board to explain the program more in depth.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether the meeting the next day in Brainerd was regarding this topic, which he had received a letter on.

Discussion was held as to the purpose of the February 20th meeting which was a Planning Commission training.

Chairman Schermerhorn recommended that Commissioner Bounds attend the MCIT Solid Land Use Decision training session in Brainerd on February 20th, since he was on the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether the Board was in agreement, by consensus, to request the Auditor/Treasurer to contact the Department Heads to inform them of the Sand Creek services, for the time being anyway.

Board consensus was for the Auditor/Treasurer to inform the Department Heads that they could use the services of Sand Creek through MCIT for any personnel issues that arose.

Commissioner Miller stated that the Ag Society had requested their first half 2009 County allocation and also had a request, on the back stretch of race track, what they consider a safety issue; they requested him to bring to the Board to authorize removal of the first row of trees.

Chairman Schermerhorn questioned whether the trees were on County property and whether they were requesting the County to remove them.

Commissioner Miller responded it was just the authorization to remove the trees.

Commissioner Stearns suggest they check on the land ownership.

Commissioner Bounds questioned regarding language in the Labor Negotiations, what did it cost when they changed the language from \$400 to \$500 or \$200 to \$400 for insurance benefits, what did it cost the County for the language change.

Ms. West responded that there was no cost to the County as it was an employee withholding.

Commissioner Bounds commented to the Board that they had to come up with some figures of how much the County was going to be short for the year; was the Board going to put some dollars back into the reserve; how was the Board going to fund the \$100,000 for the ARMER System.

Commissioner Waldahl commented that the dollar amount of the cut would not be known until after the legislative session.

Commissioner Stearns referred to the AMC handout outlining the Governor's proposal. He pointed out that the proposed cuts were just speculation at this time, but the handout indicated two different sets of cuts, which was based on whether a county was going to participate in the Human Service Delivery Consolidation Program; state aid would be cut less if a county participated, which meant if Human Services Administration was combined a county would be cut less than if you did not participate. He added that the Governor's proposals stated that 83 delivery systems for Social Services was too many and he wanted it cut to 15; this was the reason for the meeting on March 6th in Brainerd; to discuss that proposal using the Region 5 Development Commission area. Commissioner Stearns pointed out that AMC had recommended counties start this discussion as soon as possible and find out more about the proposal.

Commissioner Bounds stated the Board still knew it would be stuck for the next two years at a 3.9% increase in the budget as per the State Auditor.

Commissioner Stearns replied that it was 5.8% in 2009 depending on what special levies were approved.

Commissioner Bounds stated that the State Auditor's report for 2007 indicated the County better be concerned how far reserves were spend down; 2008 will not look as good as in 2007; when do you look at starting to pick up some of the funds that had been spent.

Commissioner Stearns pointed out that that same discussion was being held in 87 counties.

Commissioner Bounds added that he would like to start finding those numbers and addressing them.

Ms. West stated that she would like to point out some of the budget cuts the Board had previously made; Board direction in 2008, relating to union negotiations, was no increases; Board direction late summer was no capital expenditures unless absolute necessary. She added that the Social Services Director and Highway Engineer had presented to her a 2009 budget revision to address the loss in County Program Aid from 2008; department heads were reviewing their budgets, but it takes time. Ms. West pointed out that she had provided the Board with the 2009 budget and questioned what additional information the Board would like from her.

Commissioner Bounds stated that there had to be numbers that we know we are going to be short; the radio system, we know that dollar amount; where was that going to come from; where are we going to build up the reserve.

Ms. West stated that that would be Board direction. She added that the Board had previously met with Department Heads on various subjects and suggested consideration of meeting with them on this issue.

Commissioner Waldahl stated he thought the first step would be to take care of the \$133,000 the County had already been cut; Social Services and Highway have presented a revised budget. He pointed out that the Board still needed to meet with Department Heads to come up with the rest of it, which the Board had directed them to do. Commissioner Waldahl added that the next step would be addressing the additional funds the State would be cutting, which was unknown at this time; it was hard for counties to plan. He pointed out that the Board had already started that planning; they stated no capital expenditures, they had to freeze wages; we will try to do every thing we can to keep employees working; what we have to do would be cut equipment; don't plow when there was an inch of snow; hopefully that will help build up the reserve which the State was stating had to be done.

Chairman Schermerhorn stated that the information from AMC had a worse case scenario if the County did not go with the Regional Social Services; what was the number the County would be cut; the Board had to have an idea as to what was being working toward; the Board needed to look at the high and the low they could cut the County to meet that funding deficit.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether the dollar amount of \$133,000 divided in three different parts; one being Social Services, Highway and General Fund.

Chairman Schermerhorn pointed out that Social Services and the Highway Department had already addressed the cut.

Ms. West pointed out that the current Board consideration of payment to the Soil and Water District, Ag Society, etc., those expenditures were made out of the General Fund and controlled by the Board.

Commissioner Bounds added that a payment needed to be made to Solid Waste.

Commissioner Miller pointed out that he had previously expressed his concern over the payment of funds to Soil and Water.

Commissioner Bounds questioned whether the Building Committee would be recommending someone to be in charge and follow through with the recommendations on the office relocations.

Ms. West responded that it was the Building Maintenance Committees understanding that the Board gave that direction to the Department Heads, so they had not scheduled a meeting. She pointed out that the Department Head group had met and had another meeting scheduled the previous day, which had been rescheduled to the following week; it was her understanding that just the Department Heads involved in the relocation would be meeting and presenting their recommendation to the Board.

Commissioner Bounds further questioned whether the Extension Office would be going to the Highway Department stating that they need an office; who would be overseeing this and making sure this would be on track.

Commissioner Stearns responded that would be something the Board would have to discuss once the Department Heads brought the proposal to the Board.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that he recommended meeting with the General Fund Department Heads to discuss budget reductions to address the 2008 cut in State Aid to the General Fund in the amount of \$57,000; possibly at the next Board Meeting.

Commissioner Stearns stated that the question would come up by the General Fund Departments that, if they did not spend their entire 2008 budget, why would they have to cut this year, based on what they didn't spend the previous year, so the reserve should increase. He pointed out that the fact was that there were over expenditures in other Departments.

Ms. West responded that she had been asked that question and had explained there was a difference between cash and budget; that the County had been shorted \$133,000 in cash in 2008; that by adjusting 2008 budget numbers the cash loss in 2008 would not be addressed; cash expenditures and budget amendments needed to be made in 2009.

Commissioner Stearns pointed out that wages paid to employees the previous year could not be reduce, each General Fund department was dealing with smaller amounts of cash, which made it more difficult to know where to cut. He stated that the Board had previously authorized a higher levy for the Road and Bridge Fund to help reduce the deficit in the Fund, maybe consideration needed to be given to reducing the Road and Bridge levy if additional Highway State Aid funds would be received.

Gina Dahms, Assistant Zoning & Planning Director, came before the Board regarding a Conditional Use Application submitted by Erik & Melissa Olsson for a commercial feedlot for up to 999 animal units, which had been tabled from the February 3, 2009 Board Meeting.

Chairman Schermerhorn added that the vote was postponed from the February 3, 2009 Board Meeting so Commissioner Miller could receive answers to his questions.

Commissioner Miller stated that he had researched several different areas; the Soil & Water Conservation District, where he learned the chain of command; tax classification was a dead end as you can't single people out. He added that mostly, via Commissioner Bounds through Kyra Ladd, County Attorney, he was able to separate his concerns with compliance and the fundamentals of a Conditional Use Permit. Commissioner Miller stated that based on the existing rules at that time there was a violation in the number of cattle; this was an area he was uncomfortable with which had to be addressed at a later date. He stated that, based on what he was able to separate, he was ready to make a decision.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he had been contacted by someone stating a concern, not by the present operation or present site, but the potential expansion of the farm by purchasing another farm next to it; if that farm was part of this feedlot would it have to come back for another Conditional Use Permit.

Ms. Dahms responded that this would have to come back before the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned what the penalty would be for a violation.

John Pokorney, MPCA, responded that until there were 1,000 animals at one site a permit was not required from the MPCA; the proposal was for 999 animal units which was 1,400 plus feeder cattle.

Discussion was held regarding comparison of animal units and various farm animals.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned whether the County Board could require the applicant to return to the lower number of head if the Permit was violated.

Ms. Dahms responded that the Conditional Use Permit would be revoked.

Erik Olsson stated that he first went to the Soil & Water Conservation District office and asked how many animals he could have. He stated that he was informed he could have 999; he pointed out that his original Application was for 3,000 animal units. Mr. Olsson added that Ms. Skov later informed him that the County Zoning Department could not issue a permit for over 999 animal units. He stated that he did know what was happening until he tried to go down the right path; he was not told he had to get a Conditional Use Permit to have 999 head he was told he needed to get a Conditional Use Permit to have 999 animal units; he had no idea that Planning & Zoning could only issue him a Permit for 999 animal units.

Ms. Dahms clarified that the Zoning Office could issue a Permit for over 999 animal units but then an EAW (Environmental Assessment Worksheet) was required.

Commissioner Miller requested clarification of the difference between “head” and “animal unit”. He stated that he had talked with Melinda Dexter, Soil & Water, and Deana Skov, Planning & Zoning, and felt he had the best interpretation from Ms. Skov; she told him that Mr. Olsson’s Conditional Use Permit was for 999 animal units, which was 1427 head, however, if he went over the 999 head he would fall under the Planning and Zoning jurisdiction; he would need a federal and state permit if he went over 999 head. Commissioner Miller stated that he felt the number in “head” and “animal units” needed to be made clear to Mr. Olsson. He stated that he wanted to know the numbers, as of that day, with the stipulation that if it was over then the County would have to deal with Mr. Olson lawfully.

Mr. Cottrell stated that he agreed with Mr. Olsson on the confusion over the guidelines and criteria that were set for feedlots. He stated that at the numbers Mr. Olsson was at now, had anyone seen a Waste Management Plan; it was his understanding that as soon as an operation when over 300 animal units a Manure Management Plan was needed. Mr. Cottrell added that if I, as a neighbor, had a concern of whether the rules were being followed or not, where would I go to get the correct answers.

Molly Costen, Wadena Soil & Water Conservation District Feedlot Officer, stated that Mr.

Olsson was working on a Manure Management Plan and that she thought he understood the rules. She added that the SWCD tries to be proactive and work with people.

Chairman Schermerhorn called for a motion on the Conditional Use Permit for Erik and Melissa Olsson.

RESOLUTION

Commissioner Stearns moved that the following Resolution be adopted:

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

Erik H. & Melissa J. Olsson application for Conditional Use Permit to authorize a commercial feedlot up to 999 animal units with the following findings of fact:

1. That the MPCA will be monitoring as far as the runoff and as to where the manure is going;
2. The requested use will not create an unreasonable excessive burden on the existing roads;
3. The requested use is compatible with the surrounding area and will not significantly depreciate nearby properties that much because it is an agriculture area;
4. The structure and the use shall have an appearance that will not have an unreasonable adverse effect on nearby properties, because from what we have seen, he is running a very neat operation;
5. The requested use, in the opinion of the Planning Commission, is reasonably related to the existing land use and environment of that area;
6. The requested use is consistent with the Wadena County Land Use Control Ordinance, because this is an agriculture area;
7. The requested use is not in conflict with the Wadena County Comprehensive Plan; and
8. The requested use will not create any adverse affects as far as general unsightliness or glare for nearby property owners.

on property described as: The North Half of the Northwest Quarter (N1/2 NW1/4), Section 17, Township 135, Range 34 West, Wing River Township, located in an A-3 General Agriculture District.

Commissioner Waldahl seconded the motion, Stearns, Waldahl, Miller and Schermerhorn voting aye, Bounds abstaining, motion carried.

Adopted this 19th day of February 2009.

Attest: _____
Charleen West, County Auditor/Treasurer

Dave Schermerhorn, Chairperson

Beth Cottrell questioned what the consequences would be if Mr. Olsson were in violation and whether they realized by law the Permits were only required to be reviewed every four years. She added that she was disappointed she did not get a chance to speak prior to the vote so some additional conditions might have been added to the motion such as the permit being reviewed more often.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that he hoped citizens would report it if they saw any violation; if Mr. Olsson was found to be in violation, then pull the permit.

Ken Moyer stated that if there were going to be zoning laws then there had to be something to back them up.

Chairman Schermerhorn pointed out that the Board had the ability to revoke the Permit and issue a penalty.

Commissioner Stearns stated that most of the violations result in the person filing the Conditional Use Permit application, it usually was not a Zoning violation; a large percent of the Permits were granted after somebody had too many junk cars etc. and they do not have a Conditional Use Permit to operate; they are then informed that they have to file an application and then everyone had a chance to speak.

Commissioner Bounds commented that in speaking with Ms. Ladd, the issue was the issue and now there was the issue that the County had to address. He added that the problem was how things were being addressed. Mr. Olsson stated that he would clean his areas every month which he felt was feasibly impossible.

Mr. Olsson responded that he did not want to be the norm, he wanted to be the exception; he wanted his area to be the 'poster spot' in Wadena County. He added that he felt it was not a commercial feedlot and that he lived right in the middle of it.

Commissioner Bounds stated that he felt the Board needed to address the issue of inspections more often than every four years.

Mr. Olsson commented that more inspections could be done on his property as long as they did the same for everyone else.

Commissioner Miller stated that it was a credit to Mr. Cottrell and his wife for making the Board aware of how lax our feedlot inspections were. He stated that he credited Ms. Ladd in helping him separate the two issues, which was another fight not for this time, and that he did not like it done that way; the Board had been made aware of areas that needed to be corrected, particularly in the inspection process; there had to be accountability.

Ms. Dahms pointed out that the County Zoning Office just issued the use on the property, they did not do any regulating, which would be done by Soil & Water. She added that if the property

owner did not follow the Conditional Use Permit it could be revoked; Ms. Costen did the regulating of a feedlot.

Commissioner Bounds stated that the Board needed to sit down with Planning & Zoning and Soil & Water and address the problems and make goals.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that he felt Commissioner Bounds would return to the Planning Commission and put together some goals that had been discussed at the Board Meeting and then return to the Board for their approval.

Malinda Dexter, Wadena Soil & Water Conservation (SWCD) District Director, came to the Board to discuss their 2009 budget. She referred to a letter she had sent to the Board requesting the first half of their allocation and pointed out that she had been asked to come before the Board regarding this. Ms. Dexter pointed out that their 2009 Budget had changed somewhat due to a Surface Water Grant they have received, but the request from the County had not changed. She stated that the District had applied for and received approximately \$62,000 annually in grants; some of the grants, however, had to be matched with County funds or District dollars; of the grant dollars received very little of the funds went towards wages. Ms. Dexter added that in 2008 it was necessary to purchase a no-till drill at a cost of \$23,000, which had been a benefit to landowners, and in the near future the native grass seeder would need to be replaced; both of their vehicles were over 10 years old and would need to be replaced. She stated that their cash on hand was \$92,000 and that it took about \$27,000 to \$30,000 per month to operate; hence the request for the first half of their allocation in the amount of \$36,170 was needed. Ms. Dexter pointed out that part of the allocation from the County was for the County Water Plan which had been running in the red the past few years; the County did provide \$25,000 for the first time the previous year.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned Ms. West whether it would be beneficial if the payment of the first half of the allocation be held back until May.

Ms. West responded that it would be beneficial for the County's cash flow.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he had pointed out at the Soil & Water Board Meeting that it would help the County if one-fourth could be paid now and one-fourth in July.

Ms. Dexter responded that it would work if they could receive the allocation quarterly.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned whether the SWCD could wait until May.

Commissioner Miller stated that the concern he had was that at the previous meeting the Board was looking at something to cut and it did not appear like the Board was going to accomplish that. He also commented that the Board did not want to do anything that would jeopardize federal or state grants.

Ms. Dexter commented that the SWCD had already cut their budget by 11% and if they received

some cuts, it would be difficult; they would probably have to eliminate one staff person.

Chairman Schermerhorn questioned whether everyone was agreement with waiting until the May Board Meeting and if there were an emergency Ms. Dexter would inform the Board.

Melvin Kinnunen, SWCD Board Member, commented that they were willing to work with the County Board.

Commissioner Waldahl added that if the state cut County funds, the Board could not promise that it would not affect the SWCD District as well.

Scott Carpenter, Solid Waste Director, introduced the Board to Chris Harshaw, the new Solid Waste Recycling Processor.

Mr. Carpenter requested approval by the Board of the annual G&T Sanitation Equipment Lease.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the annual Equipment Lease for G & T Sanitation, Inc. for the recycling trailer for \$1.00, motion carried.

Mr. Carpenter informed the Board that at the February 11, 2009 Solid Waste Committee Meeting, it was recommended to bring to the Board the issue of bulky garbage versus solid waste. He stated that some light bulky items were measured by the yardage as it came in; the heavier garbage that was compacted when it came in, or heavy items that had to be shipped out, were charged by weight. Mr. Carpenter pointed out that it was more cost effective if they could get more into their trailer. He added that there currently was not a policy covering this situation; they needed to have something in their policy to be able to have the discretion to determine if the load was bulky or a tonnage load.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether the key was compaction.

Mr. Carpenter responded that this was correct. He stated that the issue had now come up as there was a gentleman from Park Rapids coming to Menahga with a small compactor truck; he puts the garbage in a roll-off container until the load was large enough to bring to a land fill. He pointed out that it would not stay compacted all that time and questioned how to charge him.

Mr. Carpenter added that due to this issue he came up with a category of bulk garbage; he requested a decision by the Board as to whether a policy or a Board motion should be made. He stated that he viewed this situation as unfair competition.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether there should be various rates for tonnage and various rates for bulk garbage charged.

Chairman Schermerhorn stated that he felt it was unfair competition with the local haulers the County currently had contracts with.

Mr. Carpenter stated that he agreed with Commissioner Miller and Chairman Schermerhorn. He also pointed out that Hubbard County did not charge their haulers for garbage brought to their Land Fill, if the situation was that the Park Rapids hauler was bringing it there.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that Mr. Carpenter knew more about the situation than the Board and questioned what his recommendation was.

Mr. Carpenter responded that he recommended Commissioner Miller's suggestion of rates for tonnage and rates for bulk garbage.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Miller, to approve a charge for garbage by bulk or by weight, the greater of the two, as determined by the Solid Waste Director, and that a policy be developed outlining the charges, motion carried.

Mr. Carpenter informed the Board that the Solid Waste Committee recommended the repair of the Transfer Station stairway for safety reasons, which had been completed. He also reported that three out of the five roll-off containers had been retrofitted with a hook system. Mr. Carpenter stated the Committee recommended obtaining a quote on cardboard only containers, which would gain space and cardboard; the boxes had to be broken down for better compaction. He added that they had previously paid \$6,575 for the original containers and that the current quote was \$5,600 each; probably due to lower steel prices; so this was something to consider in the spring.

Commissioner Stearns commented that in contrast the Ottertail County system owned their own garbage compactor truck which was used only for cardboard containers; they had 62 townships in Ottertail but he felt Wadena County's method was much more efficient.

The Board tabled the purchasing of cardboard containers until the May Board Meeting.

The Board Recessed at 12:15 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 12:47 p.m.

Kevin Stensrude, MIS Director, came before the Board to present them with several requests; to request a leave of absence for the period of February 28, 2009 to October 31, 2009, for the purpose of being recalled to Military Service under "involuntary recall" orders, not to exceed 300 days; to request approval of 2009 Budget amendments to the MIS Department Budget; to request a flat rate stipend of \$400 per person, per pay period for Carol Tabery and Rhonda Dittberner, as compensation for greater responsibilities and duties that would be placed on both of them during his absence; to recommend a IT Consultant be hired in his absence.

Mr. Stensrude introduced Shawn Larsen, Morris Electronics, who was in agreement to contract with Wadena County for IT Consultant services in his absence.

Mr. Larsen stated that he had served as an IT Consultant for Wadena County and 37 other counties for several years. He pointed out that a lot of the duties could be completed remotely and that he would then be on site two days per month to make sure Social Services, Law Enforcement, etc., stayed stable.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned if there were an emergency that could not be fixed remotely, would he then come on site; if he were already here two days per month would he still come to Wadena in the case of an emergency.

Mr. Larsen responded that he had various ways of contacting him; if there were a disaster for two weeks he would still come and then talk to the Board if the time was exhausted.

Commissioner Miller commented that the cost could possibly be larger.

Mr. Larsen responded that he would then come back to the Board for approval.

Mr. Stensrude reviewed a handout outlining the cost savings the County would receive in his absence; reductions of the MIS Director's salary - \$51,360; expenses of stipend for the two employees - \$13,600, and IT Consultant services at \$60.00 per hr. - \$21,120, which reflected a net savings of \$16,604.

Ms. West informed the Board that County Attorney Kyra Ladd's opinion was that the Consultant Contract would be considered the backup for the Department Head, in this case; precedence had been set when compensating the Building Maintenance staff during the time period that the Department Head position was vacant, but pointed out that there had not been a backup contracted during the vacancy. She added that the County Attorney also indicated that Social Services was considering the absorption of work done by retirees by the current staff.

Commissioner Waldahl reiterated that Social Services was considering not filling staff vacancies and distributing the extra work to the current employees without pay.

Commissioner Stearns questioned whether there was a limit to the amount of compensatory time that could be accumulated.

Ms. West responded that there was a 40 hour maximum only for department heads.

Commissioner Waldahl stated that his concern was that the County was hiring a person to fill in for Mr. Stensrude. He added that this was not done at the Highway Department or the Building Maintenance Department; Social Service employees may be receiving additional responsibilities without pay.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether the employees could be given the temporary title of Co-MIS Directors.

Commissioner Stearns pointed out that the employees would still only work 8 hours per day and would earn compensatory time or over-time.

Ms. West pointed out that the employees were part-time employees; Rhonda Dittberner worked 32 hours per week and Carol Tabery worked 36.5 hours per week.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the leave of absence request for Kevin Stensrude, MIS Director, from February 28, 2009 to October 31, 2009 in response to the “involuntary recall” of Mr. Stensrude to Military Duty, not to exceed 300 days, motion carried.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Bounds, to approve the proposed 2009 Budget amendment reductions for the MIS Department, as recommended by the MIS Director;

a. 6340 - Service Agreements	\$7,200
b. 6241 (3,680) – Conference & Training	2,000
c. 6330 (2,700) –Lodging & Meals	1,700
d. 6334 (2000) – Mileage	<u>1,000</u>
Total	\$11,900

Motion carried.

The Board tabled Mr. Stensrude’s request for a \$400 per pay period per employee stipend for Carol Tabery and Rhonda Dittberner during his leave of absence until additional information could be received.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Miller, to approve an IT Consultant contract between Wadena County and Morris Electronics for IT support; On-Site – two times per months * 12 hours per trip * 8 months * \$60.00/ hour = \$11,520.00; Remote Support – 20 hours per month, or as needed, * \$60.00/hour = \$9,600.00;

Commissioner Stearns stated that Mr. Larsen may need some flexibility if something came up; maybe the Chair could authorized him to come without having to convene the Board.

Mr. Larsen stated that if a catastrophic event did occur he assumed there were, within the County, provision for special Board intervention. He added that he felt there was considerable flexibility built into the plan and if the Board wanted him physically on site on a Board day he could step in for 15 minutes and update the Board as to how things were going.

Commissioner Stearns clarified that Mr. Larsen’s rate was \$60 per hour.

Mr. Larsen responded that it was \$60 per hour which was the discounted rate based on pre-payment of blocks of time.

Motion carried.

Lee Brekke, County Assessor, came to the Board to schedule the County Board of Equalization meeting. He advised the Board that a new law now required the Meeting to stay open until

7:00 p.m. or hold the Meeting on a Saturday.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Bounds, to set the County Board of Equalization Meeting for June 15, 2009 at 12:30 p.m., motion carried.

Joel Ulring, Highway Engineer, came to the Board regarding the approval of a Resolution for the Mn/DOT, who was scheduled to perform major roadwork on TH 71 from Menahga to TH 34 in Park Rapids, which would authorize a detour on CSAH 31 and CSAH 23 in Wadena County. He pointed out that the proposed start date for the detour was July 13, 2009 with completion being approximately September 4, 2009. Mr. Ulring stated that the County would be compensated in an amount of \$11,268.90 for the use of the roads as a detour.

RESOLUTION

Commissioner Waldahl offered the following Resolution.

IT IS RESOLVED that Wadena County enter into Mn/DOT Agreement No. 93952 with the State of Minnesota, Department of Transportation for the following purposes:

To provide for payment by the State to Wadena County for the use of the County State Aid Highway No. 31 and County State Aid Highway No. 23 as a detour route during the culvert, mill and overlay, bituminous reclamation, shoulder paving, and turn lane construction and other associated construction to be performed upon, along and adjacent to Trunk Highway No. 71 from Menahga to 0.8 miles north of Trunk Highway No. 34 in Park Rapids, under State Projects No. 2904-16 (T.H. 71 = 004), No. 2905.29 (T.H. 71=004), No. 8005-18 (T.H. 71 = 004) and in the records of the Federal Highway Administration as Minnesota Project STP 7110 (034).

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Chairman and the Auditor/Treasurer are authorized to execute the Agreement and any amendments to the Agreement.

Adopted this 19th day of February, 2009.

Commissioner Miller seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

Dave Schermerhorn, Chairman

Mr. Ulring requested Board approval to enter into a Design Services Agreement with WSN, a consultant out of Alexandria, in the amount of \$7,808, for the design of the replacement of bridge No. 7278 over the Partridge River on CSAH 26; this project was scheduled for replacement in 2011.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Stearns, to approve a Design Services Agreement between Wadena County and WSN in the amount of \$7,808, for the replacement of bridge No. 7278 over the Partridge River on CSAH 26, motion carried.

Mr. Ulring presented the Board with the CSAH apportionment information for 2009, which he recently received from St. Paul. He pointed out that apportionments were based on money needs of the County and with the apportionment issued under the new legislation, the County's portion increased by .5% rather than a reduction over the previous year.

Commissioner Waldahl questioned whether the funds, available in St. Paul for distribution to counties, were from the gas tax or motor vehicle tax. He also questioned whether there was any reason why the funds could not be sent to the counties to earn interest on.

Mr. Ulring responded that the interest was earned by the State Highway Trust Fund and then distributed back out.

Mr. Ulring informed the Board that the Mn/DOT was updating its 20 Year Statewide Transportation Plan; it was required that the Plan be updated every 6 years and the process was guided by state and federal regulations and statutes. He reviewed the three defined objectives:

- 1) Support continued development of the statewide economy and livability of our communities.
- 2) Represent the optimum allocation available revenues among the four strategic investment priorities of Safety, Mobility, Infrastructure Preservation, and Regional and Community Improvement Priorities.
- 3) Result in a consistent investment effort across districts toward statewide system performance.

Mr. Ulring presented the Board with information indicating the proposed road construction projects within the County in 2009 and future Mn/DOT construction within the County;

CSAH 23 TH 227 to CR 167 - 4 miles, federally funded project.
CSAH 21 TH 71 to east of city limits of Menahga to CSAH 23 – 1 mile Municipal Acct.
CSAH 21 East city limits of Menahga to CSAH 23 – 5 miles
Bridge 269 Over the Partridge River, ¾ mile west of CSAH 26, Bridge replacement

Mn/Dot construction within Wadena County included;

TH 10 Wadena to Staples, Resurfacing 14 ½ miles
TH 71 Menahga to Park Rapids, Resurfacing 14 Miles

Future Mn/Dot road construction within Wadena County;

2011 TH 227 bridge replacement of the Cat River
2013 TH 10, through Wadena 4-lane to 4-lane through Wadena, resurfacing
2013 TH 227 Sebeka to Nimrod (Turnback) reconstruction

Mr. Ulring informed the Board that through the recent Stimulus bill, Wadena County would receive \$625,000 for the replacement of bridge No. 269 (SAP 80-0602-08) on CSAH 2 over the Partridge River, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile west of CSAH 26 NE of Aldrich. He add that also funded under the Stimulus bill, was the Mn/DOT project to resurface Highway 10 between Wadena and Staples, which included paving of the County and Township road crossings of the BNSF tracks. Mr. Ulring stated that bids were planned to be opened March 13, 2009 and that the Project was 100% federally funded; including consultant fees and construction inspection incurred by the County.

Mr. Ulring informed the Board that the Region 5 Development Commission's Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) met to prioritize the available federal funds for 2013. He stated that Wadena County would be the recipient of funds for a new transit bus (\$56,000) as well as \$352,000 for mill, overlay and shoulder paving on CSAH 18.

Mr. Ulring requested Board permission to attend the National Association of County Engineers (NACE) Annual Conference noting that he was willing to provide his own travel expenses to and from the conference. He requested the County cover the cost of registration and four nights lodging during the conference; he felt there were many benefits in attending the Conference.

Commissioner Bounds questioned Mr. Ulring as to whether he would use the County vehicle or his own vehicle.

Mr. Ulring responded that he would be using his own vehicle.

Commissioner Stearns stated he felt this was reasonable and was in line with the original condition of hiring agreement with Mr. Ulring; the fact that he was willing to assume the travel expenses was a good thing.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the request by the Highway Engineer to travel out-of-state to attend the National Association of County Engineers (NACE) Annual Conference April 19 – 23, 2009 in Peoria, Il, with the County paying only the registration fee and four nights lodging and Mr. Ulring assuming the gas expenses,

Commissioner Miller questioned what the estimated cost to the County would be.

Mr. Ulring responded that the conference registration was \$450 and \$100 to \$150 per night for lodging for an estimated total cost of \$1,000.

Commissioner Miller questioned Commissioners Stearns' statement regarding 'condition of hiring'.

Commissioner Stearns responded that it was this conference and the Cold Weather Conference that the Board had agreed at the time of hiring, that Mr. Ulring could attend.

Commissioner Miller questioned whether it was assumed at the time of the hiring two years ago

that there would be an economic crisis in January 2009.

Mr. Ullring responded that this was why he was proposing to cover for the gas expense.

Motion carried.

Mr. Ullring referred to action by the Board to close the Verndale Shop. He stated that he had discussions the Commissioners and with the City of Verndale and did not receive any opposition from them, however, when during elections there seemed to be some issues with the closing. Mr. Ullring pointed out that he had never received any phone call in opposition and would like to know what the major concerns were.

Commissioner Stearns stated that, as a bit of history, he reviewed the conversations that came about in the first place; as Mr. Ullring's liaison and the Highway Department being in the red, the Board authorized a massive tax levy increase in the Road and Bridge account over about 4 years, with an \$800,000 increase. He added that the Board could not continue raising taxes, but had to cut expenses and become more efficient; at that time it was brought up that five garages in a county the size of Wadena were too many, four of which were over 50 years old. Commissioner Stearns stated that it was asked the Board, at that time, if there were any 'sacred cows' before they started closing any of the County shops; ones that could not be closed no matter what the cost was. He pointed out that the two new Board members were not present during this decision and their Districts were represented by other Commissioners; one previous Commissioner specifically stated there were no 'sacred cows'.

Commissioner Miller referred to the age of the White House, commenting that age was not a factor. He stated that Slayton was a county seat that was centrally located in that County which was why Wadena County had more shops and they had one. He pointed out that if the Wadena County Highway Department were located two miles east of Blue Grass, Wadena County could logically have one shop also. He stated that when that was brought up he had suggested that the entire County operation be moved up there and see how popular it was then. He further commented about the people previously filling their positions, neither one actually lived in the District in which the Shop proposed to close was located; it was 2 ½ miles from where he lived. Referring to location of the Verndale Shop, Ken Moyer, who was in attendance, was one employee who drove into the Shop and typically started his day there; problem was that was where the vehicle he was operating was located; it forbid him to attend daily meetings typically conducted in the mornings at the Highway Dept without driving a vehicle from there into Wadena.

Mr. Ullring responded that there were occasional employee meetings, but not daily.

Commissioner Miller stated that he had received many calls regarding the situation; asking why had the Board done this. He stated that to him it did not make sense to drive a County vehicle

from Wadena to Staples; there were some benefits to this as far as gravel/salt mixture and a loading agreement.

Mr. Ulring clarified that the City of Staples provided a loader to load the truck with salt and sand.

Commissioner Miller further commented regarding the Motor Grader; it takes probably two hours per day to transport it from where it was in Wadena to east of 23 where it was utilized; tires, hours, fuel, etc. was part of the cost. He added that basically it was the people in the Verndale and Aldrich Township area that did not like that the shop had been closed.

Mr. Ulring questioned whether they felt they were receiving a lower level of service.

Commissioner Miller responded that he did not feel that was so much the issue; the cost that they were interpreting, based on what he knew.

Mr. Ulring responded that this was what concerned him, decisions were made based on what he considered were good facts; no one had ever requested him to provide those facts; things were being said without having the facts upon which he and the Board based their decision.

Commissioner Miller stated that Commissioner Stearns pointed out that there was red ink in the past and exactly what part of the Highway budget that showed upon, he was not aware of; but he would not want to interpret that the benefits that now show up in black ink had any major reflection one way or the other on the Verndale Town. He concluded that these were the concerns he had and the people of Verndale and Aldrich, particularly Aldrich Township, most of the services on the Thomastown roads were being done privately or by the Township.

Mr. Ulring responded that that was correct; Wadena County had very little mileage left in Thomastown Township.

Commissioner Miller stated that he had attended the Verndale Economic Development Association Meeting and they were wondering what the status was.

Mr. Ulring stated that he had worked with the City and the EDA and that they had expressed interest in the Building. He added that it was his recommendation to the Board to work with the EDA as it would be better for the City of Verndale to decide what to do with the structure than for Wadena County to offer it up for auction, then the city would have no control over what happened to the building. Mr. Ulring stated that the EDA had expressed interest in the building and made an offer, which he understood still stood. He added that that was probably what they were questioning, as they wanted to move forward in taking possession of the building; they did offer the County the market value price of approximately \$15,000, including the land.

Commissioner Miller stated that he did advise them that he was not attending the meeting as a representative of the County Board; he was there as an interested party. He also told them that if it became an absolute liquidation, which he made clear he was not in favor of, that he could not think of anybody better to have the facility than the City of Verndale; the only logical use he had heard of for the building was to put a fire truck there.

Commissioner Bounds stated that he would like to have Mr. Ulring bring in where he had saved the County money by moving the garage from Verndale to Staples. He added that when you look at the whole picture of what the cost for the County was at this time versus what the cost was when the equipment was in Verndale; you can not run a truck and labor one hour per day per man, valued at so much per hr.; how many times in a year does the employee go over to Staples; one hour out of production of that person; seven hours per day working constructively. Commissioner Bounds stated that you have to take the value of the truck and the number miles – 20 miles time so much per mile. He added that like Commissioner Miller stated, how many hundred thousand dollars for a road grade to drive over to CR 4; factor in all factors and return to the Board and show him what the savings to the County was by closing the Verndale garage. Commissioner Bounds stated that he was a business person and looked at it logically as a business; all costs before were normal maintenance, roof repair, fuel to heat the building, schedule in 20 years on a furnace and sewer and water, which were fixed costs. He added that he had no idea what it cost for the garage in Staples; add that cost with everthing and what was it actually costing compared to the garage in Verndale.

Mr. Ulring responded that he did bring some of the figures with him based on records from the previous winter. He stated that part of the original agreement with the City of Staples was to use their salt/sand but the City mixed theirs with a different percentage of salt so he requested they be allowed to have our own salt and sand at the Staples garage, but the County utilized the Staples Loader to load the County truck. Mr. Ulring further explained that the County leased the garage 27 weeks, about 129 actual working days; based on time records, there were 40 trips out of 129 actual days; 1 hour was allotted for each round trip; of those 40 trips, 11 trips were for washing up and maintenance of the truck; 29 trips were for actual snow event days; that left 89 days where the truck stayed in Wadena and the employee did not report to the shop. He added that 40 trips/40 hours based on the employees rate of pay he came up with \$750; vehicle costs for the 40 trips/40 miles per trip totaled 160 miles which came to a little over \$100 in cost including oil changes, maintenance of the vehicle; an approximate cost of a little over \$850 to trip or about \$20 per trip. Mr. Ulring stated that if the employee wasn't traveling to Staples then he would have been traveling from Verndale to Wadena; during the winter months when there was not any work in the shops they would typically come to Wadena to work on things in the Wadena shop.

Chairman Schermerhorn recommended that Mr. Ulring prepare answers to the Commissioners questions and the Board continue with the additional business to come before the board.

Commissioner Bounds stated that he had no problem in meeting with Mr. Ulring.

Mr. Ulring stated that in conclusion it cost approximately \$3,000 to keep the Verndale Shop open utility wise, which did not include lawn mowing, etc. He stated that it currently cost

\$2,400 to rent from Staples for a net savings of \$600.

Commissioner Bounds questioned how many County garage locations there were.

Mr. Ullring responded that with the Verndale shop the County had five separate locations. He added that he had also done a survey of counties surrounding Wadena and looked at the density of their shops, mileage or roads. Mr. Ullring pointed out that Wadena County had five, shops, 15 townships and 400 miles of roads.

Commissioner Bounds questioned whether Mr. Ullring felt that he was eliminating a shop; what about the Staples shop which was not located in Wadena County.

Mr. Ullring stated that the density reflected each County shop servicing approximately 80 miles per shop and the surrounding counties serviced 105 to 206 miles per shop. He added that looking at the density based on what surrounding counties had, Wadena County should be down around two shops instead of five.

Commissioner Bounds questioned how having a shop in Staples, out of Wadena County was cost effective; there were not many County roads to plow by Staples and then they have to come back; when did the City of Verndale get plowed.

Commissioner Waldahl responded that Verndale City plowed the City roads.

Commissioner Bounds stated that there were two or three County roads within the City; who plowed them.

Mr. Ullring responded that the City was plowing them through their contract; Wadena County would reimburse the City.

Commissioner Bounds questioned whether that was not a fixed cost that the County had now that was not there before.

Mr. Ullring responded that this was not an additional cost because whether the City contractor did the plowing or the County did the plowing, it was paid out of state aid for state aid routes.

Commissioner Bounds stated that it was still an added cost.

Commissioner Stearns stated that it was not a cost to the County levy.

Mr. Ullring responded that it did include some County roads so there was some County levy cost.

Commissioner Bounds stated that if the County employee was in Verndale they would not spend one hour of travel time to Staples, which would allow them to plow in Verndale for basically nothing.

Mr. Ulring responded that what they were seeing was a lot of time spent in Verndale doing clean up and plowing instead of getting out in the County where the bulk of miles were.

Commissioner Bounds stated that he did not disagree, but with the garage out of Wadena County the employee had to go over there to start work.

Chairman Schermerhorn stated that this topic needed to be tabled as other items needed to be addressed.

Mr. Ulring stated that he would be more than happy to sit down and talk about this, we need to.

Commissioner Waldahl commented that he was probably receiving the same complaints as Commissioners Bounds and Miller were receiving. He stated the biggest complaint he was hearing, and it was probably a public relations thing, was having a shop in Todd County which a lot of citizens do not like. He recommended emphasizing the public relations portion of a shop located in Todd County versus a Wadena County shop.

Mr. Ulring responded that part of Staples was in Wadena County and it so happened that their maintenance garage was in Todd County and not Wadena County. They were very accommodating to Wadena County and he felt it was great when government agencies were able to work together.

Commissioner Bounds stated that the County was still not cutting a garage.

Mr. Ulring responded that he felt they were providing better service.

Ms. West reminded the Board that the Wadena County Ag Society first half 2009 allocation request had come before the Board during their January 22nd Board meeting and that Board discussion at that time was to table action until the Ag Society meeting was held so the Commissioners serving on the Ag Society Board could inquire whether this needed to be paid at this time. She pointed out that payment was usually made the end of May or June.

Commissioner Miller stated that he had attended their meeting; they had a little money on hand, but he did not know if they could wait that long.

Chairman Schermerhorn recommended tabling action until the next Board Meeting.

The Wadena County Crisis & Referral Program request for their first half of the 2009 allocation was tabled until the March Board Meeting.

Chairman Schermerhorn reminded the Board of the Special Board Meeting on March 6, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.; Paul Sailer, Social Services Director, would be taking a vehicle from Social Services, if any of the Commissioners would like to ride with; the meeting was the AMC Human Services Meeting in Brainerd.

The Board reviewed information regarding a DNR Public Hearing pertaining to Wadena County Prescriptive Easements which would be held on March 18, 2009.

Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Stearns; Perham Incinerator Meeting coming up, recommended Scott Carpenter, Solid Waste Director, be designated as an Alternate Voting Member for the Perham Resource Recovery Center in the case Chairman Schermerhorn or Commissioner Stearns were unable to attend.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Waldahl, to appoint Scott Carpenter, Solid Waste Director, as an Alternate Voting Member to the Perham Resource Recovery Center, motion carried.

Commissioner Stearns stated that the Stimulus Package needed to be discussed at the Board meeting as to how the County could possibly participate.

Commissioner Miller stated that he had been informed at the WesMin RC&D Meeting that SWCD had paid their \$200 share of the RC&D dues and he was asked when the County would be paying their share. He had contacted Ms. West regarding the matter.

Ms. West stated that she had researched the issue and found out that; the County had never paid dues to the organization; Melinda Dexter, SWCD Director, informed her that previously Commissioner Mattila had stated the County would pay half of the \$400 dues, she thought SWCD had probably paid the entire \$400 but she had just paid the \$200 in 2009; RC&D informed her that they had never billed the County for dues. She added that she had informed Ms. Dexter that she did not know if the Board had ever been made aware of the arrangement.

Commissioner Stearns stated that he did not remember the County ever paying dues to RC&D, but did remember their paying a special assessment due to employee theft. He stated he would bring this matter up at the next SWCD Meeting.

The Board received a handout regarding the Kitchigami Regional Library 2009 Operating Budget, for their information.

Motion by Stearns, seconded by Miller, to approve the Kitchigami Regional Library Joint Powers Agreement, as recommended by the Auditor/Treasurer and the Wadena County Attorney, motion carried.

The Board received the Todd Wadena Community Corrections Quarterly Financial Report, for their information.

Ms. West presented the Board with the final Teamster #320 General and Essential Unit 2009 Union Contracts. She informed the Board that Mr. Gibson had informed her that he had reviewed the Contracts, they were exactly the same as the pre-signed copies the Commissioners had previously received and his recommendation to the Board was to approve and sign them.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Stearns, to approve the Teamsters #320 General and Essential Unit 2009 Union Contracts, motion carried.

The Board received written documentation on the number of hours worked by Attorneys on CHIPS cases since July 2008, which they had previously requested. The Board tabled discussion on the information until the March 19, 2009, Board Meeting.

Commissioners Reports

Commissioner Waldahl; STS Crew Leader interviews 25 applicants/11 interviewed for two part-time positions; Bell Hill Recovery Center Meeting - electrical was almost completed, STS remodeled one house and was working on a second home.

Commissioner Bounds; Public Health, Environmental Health Board, Public Health Director provided a good review, Public Health received a drug-free grant of \$125,000 for 10 years.

Commissioner Miller; Extension Meeting - presentation by Donna Anderson, Nutrition Program Specialist; Aldrich Township Board Meeting, attended as an interested person; WesMin RC&D - Smokey Timbers; Old Wadena Society Meeting discussed the Rendezvous and entertainment.

Commissioner Schermerhorn; No report.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Miller, to approve the payment of the Board of Commissioner bills in the amount of \$99,101.09, motion carried.

Motion by Miller, seconded by Bounds, to approve the payment of two additional bills; Staples Business Advantage - \$26.94, and reissued check to MN Department of Public Safety - \$275.00, replacing original check in the amount of \$250.00, motion carried.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Miller, to adjourn the Board of Commissioners Meeting at 3:30 p.m., motion carried.

Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

David Schermerhorn, Chairman