

WADENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ADJOURNED MEETING
JANUARY 21 2010/9:00 A.M.

The Wadena County Board of Commissioners Adjourned Meeting was held on Thursday, January 21, 2010, 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 William Stearns and the pledge of allegiance to the flag was said.

Present: Commissioners Dave Schermerhorn, Rodney Bounds, Ralph Miller, Lane Waldahl, Auditor/Treasurer Char West and County Attorney Kyra Ladd who was periodically in attendance.

Agenda: Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Miller to amend the day's Agenda to include h.) GASB 34/Risk Assessment Committee Appointment, and 11:00 a.m. Lee Brekke, Assessor, Pipeline Tax, motion carried.

Minutes: Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Waldahl, to approve the Board Meeting minutes of December 29, 2009, as submitted, motion carried.

Closed Board Meeting: Chairman Stearns closed the Adjourned Board Meeting at 9:13 a.m. for the purpose of strategizing for 2010 Wage and Benefit Negotiations. In attendance were Chairman Stearns, Commissioners Schermerhorn, Waldahl, Bounds and Auditor/Treasurer West. Absent was Commissioner Miller due to a conflict of interest pertaining to the subject of the meeting.

Chairman Stearns opened the Regular Board Meeting at 9:51 a.m. and Commissioner Miller returned to the Meeting.

Confidential 2010 Salary/Benefit: Cindy Pederson, Public Health Supervisor, and Jeff Adolphson, Assistant Highway Engineer, representing the Confidential employees; came before the Board to discuss the 2010 Salary/Benefit Agreement.

Ms. West advised that the Board had been informed and discussed in Closed Session the Confidential Groups request for a one year Agreement instead of the three year Agreement as proposed by the Board.

Chairman Stearns informed Ms. Pederson and Mr. Adolphson that the Board would be accepting the three year Agreement which would keep them in line with the Department Heads.

Ms. Pederson and Mr. Adolphson questioned if the one year Agreement was not workable, they were fine with the three year Agreement, but there were some people in their group that had questions regarding the language.

Chairman Stearns commented that the Board could make a motion for the three year Agreement which they could take back to their group.

Paul Sailer, Social Services Director/Social Services Fund Manager, pointed out that the Confidential Group, the Department Head Group and the Social Services Group were not legal bargaining units and that the Board could choose their compensation. He added that the Board could also delay action on the Confidential group Agreement until the next Board Meeting.

Commissioner Waldahl commented that it was the Board's consensus to try to treat everyone equal with language and wage re-openers.

Ms. Pederson and Mr. Adolphson commented that they appreciated being part of the process.

Discussion was held as to whether the document needed to be signed.

Kyra Ladd, County Attorney, pointed out that the document did not require a signature as they were not a legal bargaining unit; the Board could make a motion to offer the employees the wage and benefits outlined in the document and they have to take what the Board offered them.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the Three Year Confidential Employees Wage and Benefit Understanding/Document for 2010, 2011 and 2012, Schermerhorn, Bounds, Waldahl and Stearns aye, Commissioner Miller abstain, motion carried.

Department Head 2010 Salary/Benefit: Deana Skov, Zoning/Parks Director, and Sean Uselman, Building Services Director, representing the Department Head employees, came before the Board regarding the Three Year Wage and Benefit Agreement present to them.

Chairman Stearns clarified that under point 4, "Additional Cash Compensation", it was the Board's intent to add a sentence that this was not retroactive.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Bounds, to approve the Three Year Department Head Employees Wage and Benefit Understanding/Document for 2010, 2011 and 2012, Schermerhorn, Bounds, Waldahl and Stearns aye, Commissioner Miller abstain, motion carried.

Ms. Skov and Mr. Uselman commented that it was appreciated that this was discussed with them.

Rin Porter, Verndale Sun, questioned regarding Section 3, "contingent if the County has funds available"; what would be the trigger to know that there were sufficient funds available.

Chairman Stearns responded that there was no trigger and would be part of the "Wage Opener" negotiations for the upcoming year. He pointed out that the 49'ers Union initiated the language.

Commissioner Waldahl reiterated that everyone considered what was happening with the State finances; if the State continued to provide funds and stop un-allotments, then the County would hopefully have sufficient funds.

Mr. Sailer informed the Board that Tentative Agreements were signed with the Teamsters General and Essential Units on December 31, 2009; he and Ms. West were working on turning the Agreements into Contract language, which was near completion. He added that the final Contracts could be signed during a Board Meeting in the near future or the Board could authorize the Board Chair to sign the Contracts when completed. Mr. Sailer pointed out that the Board had an Agreement with the 49'ers but their language was for the \$500 lump sum payment with "Me Too" language that would allow them to obtain the .24 per hour increase, which was felt they would do. He added that once they receive an answer from the 49'ers Business Agent the Auditor's Office would begin to process back pay checks to employees. Mr. Sailer also pointed out that the Social Services Board, during their previous Board Meeting, had approved the Social Services Agreement which was identical to what was offered to the Confidential and appointed Department Head employees.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to authorize the Board Chair to sign the Contracts between the Teamster Essential and General Units and the Highway 49'ers Unit, with the changes; also accept Social Service Agreement which was signed by the Social Services Board on Tuesday, January 19, 2010, Commissioners Schermerhorn, Bounds, Waldahl and Stearns aye, Commissioner Miller abstain, motion carried.

Commissioner Waldahl expressed his thanks to Mr. Sailer, Ms. West and all of the employees in getting the Agreements completed.

Mr. Sailer expressed his thanks to the Board for their confidence in including those who worked to see this to completion, especially in view of the financial situation.

2010 Negotiations: Chairman Stearns commented that there would need to be discussion on how the Board would handle negotiations in 2010; whether it would again be the three Fund Managers.

Ms. West interjected that she would not be available to participate in wage negotiations again in 2010 due to it being an Election Year and her responsibility in conducting the elections. She pointed out that she also appreciated the opportunity in 2009.

Chairman Stearns reminded the Board that there would be a new Highway Engineer and questioned whether that individual would feel the same need; the Board may not be able to rely on a new Highway Engineer to do negotiating.

Commissioner Bounds commented that he felt it was too early to make a decision on this; perhaps the Board should wait until March or April to discuss it. He added that he felt Mr. Sailer and Ms. West were key and made the negotiations work; he did not know if Mr. Sailer would be willing to do negotiations again.

Pay Equity Report Discussion: Commissioner Miller requested Mr. Sailer remain at the Board Meeting. He commented that he had been informed earlier that morning that there was a concern

regarding the Pay Equity Report that was on the Board Agenda for approval; he requested Ms. West and the Board's permission for Rosalie Miller to advise the Board of the information she had received that morning that was relative to the Pay Equity Report.

Chairman Stearns directed the Auditor/Treasurer, County Attorney and Social Services Director meet with Ms. Miller during the recess of the Board Meeting.

The Board recessed at 10:21 a.m.

The Board reconvened 10:44 a.m.

Highway Department: Jeff Adolphson, Assistant Highway Engineer, came to the Board and presented an agenda; he requested permission to advertise for bids for project SAP 80-621-10, CSAH 21 for milling and bituminous surfacing and shoulders, 5.3 miles.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the advertisement for bids on SAP 80-621-10, CSAH 21 from the north limits of Menahga to the junction of CSAH 23, milling, bituminous surfacing and shoulders, 5.3 miles, motion carried.

Mr. Adolphson requested Board approval to appoint Quentin Ness, Grade 51, Step 1, \$13.24 per hr. to fill the vacant Highway Maintenance III position. He pointed out that placement would either be at the Sebeka or Menahga shop, depending on in-house interest.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Bounds, to approve the hiring of Quentin Ness, Grade 51, Step 1, \$13.24 per hr., start date of February 1, 2010, contingent upon a satisfactory pre-employment physical, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Adolphson requested permission to sell the old Highway Department telephones at the Verndale Auction

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to authorize the selling of the old Highway Department telephones at the Verndale Auction, motion carried.

Mr. Adolphson informed the Board that the Highway Department was still considering updating their copy machine. He related the possibility of selling the existing machine to Solid Waste as discussed by the Solid Waste and Highway Department Committees; they were in the process of seeking quotes.

Mr. Adolphson informed the Board of a letter received from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources informing Wadena County that 2009 funding through the State Park Road Account Fund would not be received; they were informed of instructions to reapply by February 29, 2010, if they wished to continue to pursue funding for this project.

Mr. Adolphson informed the Board that he had attended the County Engineering Conference at which time he had been informed that three Wadena County bridges were on the list for the State bonding bill. He also pointed out that Wadena County currently did not have any projects that would qualify for JOBZ Bill Stimulus Funds.

Sheriff's Department: Mike Carr, Sheriff, came to the Board to inform them that Sheriff's Department Jailer/Dispatch Tom Aagard had been approved to return to work on February 1, 2010 at 50% time and continue to work up to 100% time over the next few months. He request Board approval to allow Mr. Aagard to return to his position at 50% time and gradually work towards his full time position.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to authorize Sheriff's Department Jailer/Dispatcher Tom Aagard, to return work on February 1, 2010 at 50% time and continue to work up to 100% time over the next few months, motion carried unanimously.

Sheriff Carr informed the Board that he had received donations equaling up to \$8,000 for the purchase and training of a new K-9 dog. He added that the purchase of the dog was \$6,000 and requested Board approval to purchase the K-9.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the payment of \$6,000.00 for the purchase of a new Wadena County K-9, motion carried.

County Attorney Office: Kyra Ladd, County Attorney, came before the Board to inform them that Administrative Assistant Cindy Rach had lost accrued vacation time equaling seven hours in November and ten hours in December, which was no fault of Ms. Rach's. She pointed out that she, as County Attorney, could not control how many cases came to her, which affected Ms. Rach's work as well. Ms. Ladd pointed out that Ms. Rach was a valued employee, had earned the hours and would be able to reduce the hours by May 1, 2010; Ms. Rach currently earned 12 hours per month due to her years of service. Ms. Ladd recommended the Board consider developing creative ways to address the issue of employees going over the maximum number of vacation hours so the matter could be addressed out side of a Board Meeting; employees could fill out a form that would require Department Head approval and not Board Action; the Board could negotiate with the valued employees the ability to be paid a portion of their accrued vacation time over the maximum, which could be less costly than the cost of the accrued vacation increasing each year an employee's wage increased.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to authorize the extended use of vacation time earned over maximum accumulation in November 2009 - seven hours and December 2009 - ten hours, to May 1, 2010 for County Attorney Administrative Assistant Cindy Rach, motion carried unanimously.

Minnesota Pipeline Property Tax: Lee Brekke, Assessor, informed the Board that Chairman Stearns had requested that he provide the Board with documentation indicating the property tax increase for the Minnesota Pipeline from payable 2009 to payable 2010. He presented the Board with a handout which indicated the property tax increase for the Minnesota Pipeline to be

\$1,065,960 County wide which included \$506,194 for Wadena County. Mr. Brekke also reviewed information pertaining to the Minnesota Pipeline property tax increase for the School Districts, State General Tax, Region 5 and Townships that were affected by the Pipeline.

R & J Horse Sale Liquor License: Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Miller, to approve the 3.2 On-Sale Liquor License application for the R&J Horse Sales/River Trail Riders, effective February 5, 2010 through February 7, 2010, motion carried.

Rural MN CEP: The Board reviewed a letter from Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. soliciting representatives and advising that applications must be submitted by January 20, 2010; deadline passed, no action taken.

Pay Equity Report: Ms. West commented, as a follow-up to the previous concern indicated by Commissioner Miller regarding the County's Pay Equity Report; the County Attorney, Social Service Director and herself, along with Ms. Miller, who compiled the Report on the Pay Equity software, had a conference call with Faith Zwemke, State Department of Employee Relations Director. Ms. West stated that apparently there was a concern regarding whether the "system used" question indicated that the individual conducting the County's pay equity studies was to be entered into the report instead of the methodology used by the County. Ms. West pointed out that the County had previously used the Hay Group and now used Gibson Consulting to conduct their pay equity classifications but the County had not changed their use of the Hay System; Ms. Zwemke informed them that she had discussed this with Mr. Gibson and concurred that the County's Pay Equity Report and practices were in compliance with State guidelines.

Ms. Ladd added that the issue raised by Commissioner Miller's inquiry was the question of whether the person doing the pay equity or the process that was being used was to be reported. She pointed out that Ms. Zwemke had a conversation with Mr. Gibson who had informed her of his process and forms used; she was able to confirm that he was using the correct methodology that was consistent with the Hay System.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the 2010 Wadena County Pay Equity Implementation Report, to be signed by the Auditor/Treasurer, Chief Elected Official, and submit the report to the Pay Equity Coordinator of the Department of Employee Relations of the State of Minnesota, motion carried unanimously.

Final 2010 Revenue/Expenditure Budget: Ms. West presented the Board with a 2010 Final Revenue and Expenditure Budget handout pointing out that the figures had been updated since the December 29, 2009 Board Meeting.

Motion by Bounds, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve the updated 2010 Final Revenue and Expenditures Budget as follows;

	Revenues	Expenditures
General Fund	\$6,292,686.00	\$5,825,998.00
Public Health Fund	\$1,393,570.00	\$1,368,770.00
Road & Bridge Fund	\$5,016,892.00	\$5,124,279.00

Social Services Fund	\$5,237,242.00	\$5,197,384.00
Solid Waste Fund	\$1,093,485.00	\$ 948,975.00
	\$19,033,875.00	\$18,465,406.00

Motion carried.

MCIT 2010 Premium Invoice: Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Miller, to approve payment of the MCIT Invoice in the amount of \$261,424 for Wadena County Funds 2010 Workers Compensation and Property/ Casualty Insurance, motion carried.

Risk Assessment Committee Appointment: Ms. West reminded the Board of State Auditor Bob Johnson’s discussion with the Board and the necessity of each entity developing a Risk Assessment Committee; he had indicated his willingness to assist Wadena County in setting up this Committee. She requested appointment of one or two Commissioners to this Committee.

Motion by Waldahl, seconded by Schermerhorn, to appoint the Board Chair and Board Vice-Chair as permanent members of the Wadena County Risk Assessment Committee, motion carried.

Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Schermerhorn: None

Commissioner Miller: Wadena County Law Library Meeting; Wadena County Ag Society; Wadena Soil and Water Conservation District – discussed possibility of transferring some of the Water Plan financing responsibilities to the Townships, Board discussion was to see if there was any interest in this by the Townships. Commissioner Miller indicated that he had contacted the Townships within his District; Crow Wing Water Shed Project Meeting; Old Wadena Society Meeting; Building Services Committee Meeting - the MIS Director talked about the replacement of the printers with complete laser system.

Commissioner Waldahl: SHIPS Meeting (Standard Health Improvement Program System); Todd Wadena Community Corrections Meeting - noting they only lost \$1,500 in grants from the State.

Commissioner Miller: Family Nutritionist and 4-H Coordinator were working with the media to get information out about the Community Garden; Penny Nelson, Extension Committee Member, was writing a grant through SHIPS for seeds.

Commissioner Bounds: Wadena County Ag Society Meeting - Circus in March as a fund raiser.

Commissioner Stearns: Department Head Meeting - video conferencing in the Auditorium was discussed; Solid Waste Committee Meeting - discussed a gate that the Highway Department was going to build for the Transfer Station, Highway Department Engineering Tech’s took elevations of the building area and parking lot, MCPA would have to sign off on any projects at the Transfer Station; Highway Department Committee Meeting; Perham Resource Recovery Center – would be meeting with immediate Legislators regarding the support of funds requested for expansion of the facility, MPCA will also be in attendance.

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Motion by Bounds, seconded by Schermerhorn, to approve payment of the Board of Commissioner bills in the amount of \$68,716.13, motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Schermerhorn, seconded by Bounds, to adjourn the Board of Commissioners Meeting at 12:11 p.m., motion carried.

Charleen West, Auditor/Treasurer

William Stearns, Chairman

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