

Traverse County Commission
Regular Board Meeting
September 1, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Mark Gail, other Commissioners present were Kevin Leininger, Tom Monson, Dave Salberg and Todd Johnson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The agenda was unanimously approved with the following additions and changes; Trevor Wright and Brenda Bartz are unable to appear before the Board; County Attorney Matt Franzese to discuss the approval of the contract between Traverse County and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church for Court services; Kit Johnson will discuss Alliance Pipeline appeal of assessed value 2017; approval to replace and hire a 30 hour per week Deputy Auditor/Treasurer; discussion on putting a moratorium on a Dairy; upon a motion by Monson and second by T. Johnson.

Highway Department

Chad Gillespie, County Engineer, and Brian Koch, Maintenance Supervisor, appeared before the Board. Gillespie gave the Board a department update.

Browns Valley MSCAH 105; they had finished sweeping seal coat and they striped yesterday. CSAH 9 graveling project has started. Gillespie is working on finishing up final payment paperwork on miscellaneous jobs.

Monson asked about the FEMA reimbursement, Gillespie said that FEMA is still working on it.

County Attorney

County Attorney Matt Franzese appeared before the Board with a facility usage contract between Traverse County and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church for use of their facility for Jury Trials. Franzese asked for the Board to approve the contract with the right to make any last minute de minimis changes, if needed, which was approved on a motion by Monson and seconded by Leininger and approved unanimously.

Monson asked if the County Board can put a Moratorium in place for Dairy's; Franzese said that the County Board can do this but for one year and it is to study how many Dairy farms should be in Traverse County. Leininger asked why we should be telling all the townships what they can do in their own townships. Monson said that it affects the whole county including the Elevator. Franzese explained that if a Township puts in a moratorium the County does have to abide by that in their Township. Salberg said that each Township should do their own if they want it.

Soil & Water Conservation District

District Manager Sara Gronfeld and Bruce Johnson, District Technical Manager, appeared before the Board with a department update.

Gronfeld discussed the SWCD's proposed budget. She broke down the budget request and discussed the total County Allocation which for 2021 is \$115,378.00, an increase of \$57.00 from 2020. The total allocation includes funds for program administration and grant funds passed

through from the state to the SWCD and ultimately to landowners for project cost share. She explained \$80,000.00 is the base allocation to the SWCD which hasn't changed since 2008. She also explained the capacity grant match of \$22,750.00 which is repaid to the County through direct payment of applicable invoices. Gronfeld just found out that this match is now optional but they hope the County continues its support. In addition, the request includes a figure of \$15,432.00 comprised of grant matches of which \$7,932.00 is optional and \$7,500 is a required feedlot program match. The SWCD has approximately 22 months of operating in their reserves however some is restricted. They rely on grants and the county for funding and they don't have taxing authority and that is why their board decided maintain a greater fund balance. Leininger talked about when SWCD moved to the new building and they indicated that at some point they won't need the whole \$80,000 allocation from the County because of the increased revenue from rent, he asked if they still need that amount due to the amount retained in the fund balance. David Rinke, SWCD Supervisor, said he doesn't think that the reserve should be held in their detriment, they don't know one year to the next what will be asked of them for old and new programs and that is why the reserve is there so that they can fulfill the programs. B. Johnson noted the total as published in the newspaper for "conservation of natural resources" was \$389,094 in 2019 and included funding allocated to several departments.

Gronfeld also had handed out the program updates which included: Two permit applications were received for the Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) program. There were no grant applications for upgrades and there is currently \$5,600 of current funds unallocated for upgrade grants.

Wetland Conservation Act: the no-loss application for beaver dam removal and associated temporary stockpile of materials project was approved with conditions. A no-loss application for a tiling project was received and approved without conditions.

The USDA Service Center remains locked with business by appointment only. Conservation Technician Catelyn LaCour was hired and employment begins at the SWCD on September 14.

Assessor

Dianne Reinart, County Assessor, appeared before the Board to ask for reappointment. Upon a motion by Salberg and seconded by Monson to reappoint Dianne Reinart as the County Assessor for the next 4 years and approved unanimously.

Auditor/Treasurer

Kit Johnson, County Auditor/Treasurer, appeared before the Board to discuss the Alliance Pipeline appeal for their valuation for 2017. It was settled in May of 2018 but the State of Minnesota didn't tell the 13 counties that were involved. K. Johnson found out late last week and it does include interest, the amount without interest is approximately \$6,019.19. K. Johnson proposes that we pay Alliance Pipeline without the interest. This was approved unanimously upon a motion by Leininger seconded by Monson and to pay without the interest.

K. Johnson would like to set the date, time and terms of the forfeited tax sale. The date will be October 21, 2020 at the County Highway Shop at 10:00 a.m. There are 12 parcels all priced at

\$150.00 for the opening bid. These terms for the tax forfeited sale were approved unanimously upon a motion by Salberg seconded by T. Johnson.

County Coordinator

A motion was made by Salberg to approve the August 18, 2020 Board minutes, with a second by Monson, and approved unanimously. Upon a motion by Salberg and second by T. Johnson, the following bills were approved unanimously:

BOIS DE SIOUX WATERSHED DISTRICT	\$227,001.20
REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA	\$18,813.99
CONTECH ENGINEERED SOLUTION, LLC	\$23,108.80
KELLEN/RYAN – 54 LLC	\$8,625.00
SCHMITZ/TODD	\$7,725.00

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2,000 or less were 31, amounting to \$12,181.78.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator, discussed the HRA Board and that District 4 term is expiring on October 4, 2020. The Board discussed that if Matt Smith would like to continue they will reappoint at the next meeting. Zahl asked about District 5 appointment, currently Monson is sitting in because no one has stepped forward. Monson made a motion to run an ad for District 5 replacement, seconded by T. Johnson with the following discussion. Salberg said we have ran it twice and no one has stepped forward, he doesn't want to spend the money to advertise right now and Monson might have to try to find his own replacement. Gail said we haven't received any interest with an ad and he isn't in favor of it. The motion failed with a 2 – 3 vote with Leininger, Salberg and T. Johnson opposed. The Board would like Zahl to put the advertisement for District 5 on the website and Facebook.

The CARES Committee met and approved the following amounts; \$31,611.00 out of County Operational Enhancement for 2 desks and GPS Bi-Polar Ionization systems for the Courthouse, Law Enforcement Center, Social Services and Highway; \$583.00 out of Personal Protective Equipment for courts; \$13,425.00 for Joint Powers Agreement for Horizon Public Health. These expenses were approved unanimously, to pay out of the CARES act funding, upon a motion by Salberg and seconded by Leininger.

Lynn Siegel, Emergency Manager, explained that she has received an EMPGS grant for approximately \$8,000.00 but it needs a County match. She is doing research to find out if we can use CARES funding for the match. She would like to purchase cleaning guns with the money and would like the approval of the Board to go ahead and purchase without knowing if CARES money will pay for them. Salberg said to go ahead and purchase them and if we can't match the grant with CARES funding we will take it all out of CARES funding, this was the consensus of the Board.

Upon a motion by T. Johnson and seconded by Monson the Board unanimously approved the hiring of a 30 hour per week Deputy Auditor/Treasurer to replace Rhonda Hanson who is transferring to the Deputy Assessor I position.

Gail adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Lisa Zahl, County Coordinator

Mark Gail, Board Chairman