

Traverse County Commission  
Regular Board Meeting  
October 16, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commission Chair Kevin Leininger. Other commissioners present included Dave Salberg, Tom Monson, Mark Gail, and Todd Johnson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson, the agenda was approved unanimously with the following additions: County Facebook page and Amy Olson from the City of Wheaton to discuss tax forfeited properties.

**Traverse Care Center**

Kristina Guindon, Regional Director HDG, was unable to attend the meeting today. The Health Department arrived at another facility that she is the Director for. She will be at the November 6, 2018 Board meeting.

**Highway Department**

Chad Gillespie, County Engineer, presented the department update. There was a motion by Monson, seconded by T. Johnson and approved unanimously to hire three seasonal wingman for the 2018/2019 winter season and to offer the seasonal workers a wage between \$12.50 - \$16.00 depending on experience. There was unanimous approval to hire a full-time temporary Highway Maintenance Worker until September 30, 2019 with the possibility of permanent employment upon a motion by Monson and second by T. Johnson. The online auction went well; only two items out of twenty did not sell.

**Auditor/Treasurer**

Kit Johnson, Auditor/Treasurer gave a department update. Truth and Taxation is being put together the statements will go out the first week of November. There is a political group that is sending out absentee voting applications which is causing confusion; these are not coming from the County. The new driver's license system is in place. With the old system all the information was sent into the State and they entered it but now we enter all the information and the driver's license are processed faster. The down side is that the public might have to stand in line because the process takes longer.

K. Johnson plans to have the forfeited tax sale November 19, 2018. The notice of sale will go in the paper and any residents that live 300 feet around the property will receive a notice. County Attorney Matt Franzese just recently forfeited two properties in Wheaton, 308 Broadway and 404 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S, the City would like us to knock the houses down. Amy Olson, City of Wheaton Administrator said that both of them are health hazards. In past years the County had a tax forfeited fund that paid to knock these houses down, we currently don't have any money available in that fund. The City talked to County Engineer Chad Gillespie about hauling away the debris, he said he would charge the Highways regular rates to do this as this is what the Commissioners have put into place. The City would have to clear out the houses and then knock down the house so the City is wondering if the County would help defray the expense by 50%. Leininger said that if we do it in Wheaton then we need to do it in Browns Valley. Gail

said if the County is charging for hauling away the debris then why doesn't the company that tears down the house just haul it away instead. Gillespie would prefer that but would do whatever the better option is. Big Stone County and Lac Qui Parle County have a program where the county, city and buyer will each pay a certain amount to tear down houses. Monson doesn't have a problem with using the County equipment to haul away the debris at the Highway rates that are currently in place. T. Johnson said that if the contractor has trucks available then they should do it otherwise the County should haul away the debris but at the same rate we charge everyone else. Olson will get an estimate to see how much it would cost to tear down the two houses. Salberg said Olson will get bids for removal and then they can decide which will be the best way to go. The Commissioners do not want to pull the two parcels from the sale, if we can sell them go ahead and sell them. Franzese asked K. Johnson how late can the parcels be pulled from the sale, his response was up until the sale. Leininger doesn't want the tax payers to have to pay to tear down houses, where would you start and stop. K. Johnson asked the Board to set the price for the tax forfeited properties, Leininger suggested \$150.00, with that there was a motion by Monson and second by T. Johnson and approved unanimously. The following resolution was approved unanimously upon a motion by T. Johnson and seconded by Monson.

I, Kit D. Johnson , County Auditor of Traverse County, Minnesota, do hereby certify that the following action was taken by the Traverse County Board of Commissioners at their regular meeting of October 16, 2018.

Commissioner Monson submitted the following and moved its adoption:

Whereas, The County Board of Commissioners of the County of Traverse, State of Minnesota, desires to offer for sale certain parcels of land that have forfeited to the State of Minnesota for non-payment of taxes,

Whereas, Said parcels of land have been viewed by the County Board of Commissioners and have been classified as non-conservation lands as provided for in Minnesota Statutes 282.01.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved; That the Traverse County Board of Commissioners hereby certifies that all parcels of land have been viewed and comply with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes 85.012, 92.461, 282.01 subd. 8, 282.018 and other statutes that require the withholding of tax-forfeited lands from sale.

The above resolution seconded by Commissioner T. Johnson and unanimously adopted this 16<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2018.

Kit D. Johnson  
County Auditor  
Traverse County, Minnesota

Salberg said if we are the second lowest tax rate in the state then why is there information going around that we are the highest tax rate in the adjoining counties. T. Johnson said that without seeing the information that they used to come up with that information it is hard to say. K. Johnson said that it is hard to clarify that answer without the information in front of him. He said that property taxes are property taxes and the amount of property taxes is based on property owned in Traverse County.

### **HRA Board Appointment**

We advertised for Districts 2, 4, and 5 and received one letter of interest for District 2. Jodi Hormann is interested in sitting on the HRA Board, she has previous experience working with the Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Upon a motion by Monson and second by Salberg the appointment was approved unanimously. Salberg and Monson will continue on the HRA Board until their replacements are approved by the Board.

### **County Coordinator**

A motion was made by T. Johnson to approve the October 1, 2018 Public Meeting, October 2, 2018 and October 2, 2018 Public Meeting minutes, seconded by Gail with unanimous approval. Upon a motion by Salberg and second by Monson, the following bills were approved unanimously:

CARDMEMBER SERVICE	\$3,892.53
COUNTIES PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY	\$14,096.78
ENGAN ASSOCIATES	\$5,000.00
GAZETTE PUBLISHING CO.	\$2,371.66
MORRIS ELECTRONICS	\$7,961.01
TRI COUNTY COOP	\$19,137.30
TRUE NORTH STEEL	\$9,748.20
TWIN VALLEY TIRE WHEATON, INC.	\$2,251.00
WALLWORK TRUCK CENTER	\$3,922.25

Per M.S. 375.12, the number of claims totaling \$2000.00 or less were 65, amounting to \$29,160.01.

Letters to Congressman Tim Walz and Commissioner Jeff Johnson were suggested to make them aware of County-Based Purchasing and the benefits of it for rural Minnesota Counties. The Board was in consensus to send this letter out.

Public tours of the courthouse will be available to the public every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. through October 31, 2018. If anyone would like other dates and times they can contact Shawn and set up an appointment.

Siegel asked the Board if they would approve of a County Facebook page, this could be updated with information regarding the County. There was a motion by Monson and seconded by Salberg with the following discussion. T. Johnson wants it to be only information not a place where Siegel would have to respond every time someone would give input. He doesn't want to see the need for additional hours because of this page. Leininger said that if there is a way to set it up without taking questions set it up that way. The Traverse County Facebook page was approved 4-1 with T. Johnson opposed.

Leininger adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

---

Lisa Siegel, County Coordinator

---

Kevin Leininger, Board Chairman