

**MINUTES
OF THE
PINE COUNTY BOARD MEETING
Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, September 1, 2020 - 10:00 a.m.
North Pine Government Center, Sandstone, Minnesota**

Chair Steve Hallan called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Chair Hallan stated the Governor of the State of Minnesota has issued Executive Order 20-01 Declaring a Peacetime Emergency and Coordinating Minnesota's Strategy to Protect Minnesotans from COVID-19. On March 24, 2020, the Pine County Board of Commissioners declared a local emergency for Pine County.

Based on these conditions, the Chair of the Pine County Board of Commissioners has determined that the requirements of Minnesota Statute 13D.021, Subd. (1) have been met and it is not practical or prudent for all members of the county board to regularly meet in person.

The public was invited to join the meeting in person or remotely by phone, WebEx or watch via live stream on YouTube.

Chair Steve Hallan, Commissioners Josh Mohr, Steve Chaffee, John Mikrot and Matt Ludwig were present in the meeting room. Also present in the meeting room were County Administrator David Minke and County Auditor-Treasurer Kelly Schroeder. County Attorney Reese Frederickson was present via electronic means.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chair Hallan called for public comment. There was no public comment.

Chair Hallan requested the following revisions to the agenda:

Corrected Information: Regular Agenda #2/Investment Committee Minutes: The corrected total project cost is \$1,700,000.

Addition: Regular Agenda #4.1/ Consider Resolution 2020-60 Supporting the Continuation of the Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) at Willow River.

Motion by Commissioner Ludwig to adopt the amended Agenda. Second by Commissioner Mikrot. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Chaffee/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Mikrot/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Commissioner Chaffee to approve the Minutes of the August 18, 2020 county board meeting and Summary for publication, and August 25, 2020 Special Meeting-Committee of the Whole (Budget Committee). Second by Commissioner Mohr. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Chaffee/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Mikrot/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Minutes of Boards, Reports and Correspondence

2020 Primary Election Canvassing Board Minutes – August 13, 2020

Pine County Land Surveyor Monthly Report – August 2020

Motion by Commissioner Mohr to acknowledge the Minutes of Boards, Reports and Correspondence. Second by Commissioner Ludwig. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Chaffee/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Mikrot/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Commissioner Mikrot to approve the Consent Agenda. Second by Commissioner Chaffee. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 3-Commissioner Chaffee/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Mikrot/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Applications

Approve the following applications:

A. Tobacco/Off Sale/Sunday Liquor License

- i. Tobacco/off sale/Sunday liquor license for Red's Liquor Box (formerly West Beroun Liquor), pending approval by the State of Minnesota.

B. Exempt Permit

- i. Exempt permit for Quad River Chapter of the MN Deer Hunters Association to conduct lawful gambling on October 16, 2020 at Doc's Sports Bar and Grill pavilion, 34427 Majestic Pine Dr., Sturgeon Lake, MN (Windemere Township), pending approval by the State of Minnesota.

2. Septic Fix-Up Special Assessments

Approve Resolution 2020-58 extending a special assessment to the following:

- i. Christopher & Jeffrey Rasmusson, PID 04.0157.000, \$12,950
- ii. Deborah Vermeersch, PID 14.0019.003, \$14,800
- iii. Jay & Karlajean Becvar, PID 18.0230.002, \$16,950
- iv. La Le Lee, PID 18.0237.000, \$16,550
- v. Lee Turbin, PID 19.0207.000, \$13,938.99 (previously levied but being redone due to refinancing)
- vi. Jolene McQuiston, PID 22.0395.001, \$15,198.39
- vii. Donald & Suzanne Kennedy, PID 26.5313.000, \$14,349.41 (previously levied but being redone due to refinancing)
- viii. Scott & Melissa Anderson, PID 33.0358.001, \$19,739.75
- ix. Alexander Dzuik, PID 38.0085.000, \$9,900

Authorize Board Chair and County Administrator to sign.

3. New Hires

Approve the hiring of Child Support Officer Tracy Erickson, effective September 9, 2020, \$25.75 per hour, Grade 8, Step 5.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Insurance Committee Report

Commissioner Ludwig provided an overview of the August 19, 2020 Insurance Committee meeting stating the county is working toward a long-term health insurance rate stabilization solution. In July, 2020 the county health insurance plan was put out for bid. Justin Kroeger, Insurance Representative from Gallagher, provided the results of the bids received, including fully-insured and self-insured bids. An increase of 13.5% was received from the Service Cooperative, BCBS self-insured/13.46% increase, and United Health Care self-insured/11.62%

increase; only competitive bids were presented to the committee. Justin explained the differences in the contracts and will be comparing plans as to network disruption, prescription drug analysis, and carrier reprice and will report these findings to the insurance committee in September, and will present a full comparison of plans to the county board at the September 15, 2020 regular board meeting. The county will have until the end of October to make a final decision as to the 2021 health insurance plan renewal.

2. **2012 G.O. Courthouse Bonds**

County Auditor-Treasurer Kelly Schroeder and Todd Hagen, Senior Municipal Advisor from Ehlers, reviewed three options available for the refunding of the 2012 G.O. Courthouse Bonds.

Option 1: recapture \$836,720 in savings by reducing the interest rate and keeping the term the same (expires February 2031). This option would reduce the annual \$985,000 payment to \$915,000 each year (a decrease of \$70,000 each year).

Option 2: cash out of \$795,000, no increase in the annual payment, and no extension to the length of the term.

Option 3: cash out of an amount determined by the board (larger than \$795,000), maintain the annual payment but extend the length of the term to February 2032. This would add an extra \$570,000 payment in 2031 and \$194,000 payable in February 2032.

Option 2 and 3 both provide for a cash out of funds to be used for capital improvement projects. Proposed projects/estimated costs (totaling \$1,450,000) include jail camera system/\$300,000, Courthouse remodel/ \$300,000, Courthouse roof/\$400,000, Transfer Station building (Pine City)/\$250,000, Transfer Station (Willow River)/\$50,000, North Pine Government Center parking lot completion/\$75,000, and 1610 Building roof/\$75,000.

After discussion of the proposed improvement projects, it was determined that the project list can be modified to remove or include projects as long as they meet the authorized usage.

Eighty-five percent of the total bond proceeds must be spent within three years. There is not a time limit to spend the remaining 15%. It was the consensus of the board to select option 2.

Motion by Commissioner Mohr to approve Resolution 2020-59 Providing for the Sale of \$9,020,000 General Obligation Capital Improvement Plan Refunding Bonds, Series 2020A.

Second by Commissioner Chaffee. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 4-Commissioner Mikrot/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Chaffee/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

3. **2021 Budget Discussion**

The next Special Meeting-Budget Committee meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2020. The Sheriff's Office and Administrator's office will present their 2021 preliminary budget requests. Based on the initial revenue projections and department requests, the deficit is \$1,494,937, which would require a 7.7% levy increase. Commissioners were clear that they would not support a 7.7% levy increase and will continue to work to reduce this amount.

4. **Schedule 2021 Truth in Taxation Meeting**

Motion by Commissioner Chaffee to schedule the 2021 Truth in Taxation meeting for 6:00 p.m., December 3, 2020, at the North Pine Government Center, 1602 Hwy 23 No., Sandstone. Second by Commissioner Ludwig. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Chaffee; District 4-Commissioner Mikrot/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

4.1 **Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP)**

Motion by Commissioner Mikrot to approve Resolution 2020-60 Supporting the Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) in Willow River. Second by Commissioner Chaffee. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Chaffee/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Mikrot/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

5. **Coronavirus Response Update**

A. Health & Human Services Director Becky Foss provided an update on the current public health situation.

B. County Administrator David Minke provided an update on the small business assistance grants stating 43 applications were received with a total requested amount of \$334,000; of those, 20 businesses have been approved for a total of \$133,579. These payments will be sent to businesses starting the week of September 8th. The Initiative Foundation is working with other applicants to gather the required documentation and as the applications are completed, they will be funded. The non-profit program will be open starting September 8 through September 18. The maximum grant is \$5,000. A second round of small business assistance grants will open in mid-September. East Central Regional Library provided a request for \$50,000. Open issues: (1) the county has an opportunity to provide support for PHASE who has reported financial stress during the pandemic, (2) school districts: if the criteria changes to allow employers with over 50 employees to submit applications for grants, the county may be able to allocate funds to school districts who request assistance; and (3) Pine Technical and Community College is proposing a workforce development program that could be implemented before the end of the year.

6. **Commissioner Updates**

Snake River Watershed Management: Commissioner Mohr stated the meeting was a kick off to the One Watershed One Plan (1W1P).

East Central Regional Development Commissioner: Commissioner Mikrot stated two of their grant applications were approved (\$400,000 and \$550,000) which they used to hire an additional employee to process grant applications. Grant extended to business in Lindstrom to assist with operating expenses.

NLX: Commissioner Ludwig stated NLX Amtrak has two main priorities--a second train to Chicago and a train between Minneapolis/Duluth; there was discussion about lobbying the federal government for funding. Discussion about each county/cities' membership contribution—each contribution was reduced by 10%.

Other:

Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD): Emergency meeting held last week as District Manager Jill Carlier has resigned. Discussion of how to proceed until a new district manager is hired.

Zoning Meeting: *Old Chengwatana* preliminary plat was approved; applicant withdrew variance requests and proceeded with what could be done by statute. The county board would like a representative from Great River Energy to come to a Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss future plans for property Great River owns along the Snake River.

AMC Blue Ribbon Committee: Chair Hallan shared three transformation changes that the committee identified from the pandemic: (1) jails – public safety committees need to look at the roles county jails are playing. Shifting of inmates from jails to probation, yet probation is not being adequately funded, (2) Health & Human Services – temporary waivers extended until June, 2021; can some of those changes be modified to become permanent; (3) Telework- what role should AMC do to assist counties?

7. **Other**

AMC Policy Meetings: Commissioner Ludwig stated AMC will be holding its fall conference virtually this year.

8. **Upcoming Meetings**

Upcoming meetings were reviewed.

9. **Adjourn**

With no further business, Chair Hallan adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m. The next regular meeting of the county board is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., North Pine Government Center, 1602 Hwy 23. No., Sandstone, Minnesota.



Stephen M. Hallan, Chair
Board of Commissioners

Josh Mohr, Vice Chair



David J. Minke, Administrator
Clerk to County Board of Commissioners