

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

**Tuesday, March 16, 2021 - 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 meet in person. Members of the county board will join the meeting remotely.

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

Commissioner Terry Lovgren and Commissioner Matt Ludwig were present in the meeting room. Members present via electronic means were Chair Hallan, Commissioner Josh Mohr, and Commissioner J.J. Waldhalm. Also present in the meeting room was County Administrator David Minke and present via electronic means was County Attorney Reese Frederickson.

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:

ADDITIONS:

1. Commissioner Updates: 2nd Amendment Resolution Request
Commissioners have received a request to consider a resolution regarding the 2nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
2. Regular Agenda Item 9: Legislative Updates
Discussion of proposed legislative change to volunteer driver programs in Minnesota.

REVISIONS:

1. Regular Agenda Item 2Cii(b): Personnel Committee Report (revised request)
Acknowledge the resignation of Joy Hix, Zoning and Solid Waste Technician, effective March 26, 2021 and authorize the back fill of the position and any subsequent vacancies that may occur due to internal promotion or lateral transfer. The position is a Grade 7 with a minimum starting wage of \$21.04/hour.
2. Regular Agenda Item 12: Upcoming Meetings
Cancelled meetings: Snake River Watershed Management Board and Snake River Watershed Policy Committee, March 22nd
Added meeting: Lower St. Croix Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Implementation Policy Committee, March 22, 2021, 4:00 p.m.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1. Regular Agenda Item 2Di(b) & (c): Personnel Committee Report
2Di(b) Temporary Employees – redlined revised policy
2Di(c) Performance Reviews – redlined revised policy

Motion by Commissioner Lovgren to adopt the amended Agenda. Second by Commissioner Mohr. 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 Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Commissioner Ludwig to approve the Minutes of the March 2, 2021 county board meeting and Summary for publication. Second by Commissioner Lovgren. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Minutes of Boards, Reports and Correspondence

- Pine County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board of Director regular meeting
Minutes – December 30, 2020 and January 27, 2021
- Pine County Land Surveyor Monthly Report – February 2021

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

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

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Approve February, 2021 Cash Balance**

Fund	February 28, 2020	February 28, 2021	Increase/Decrease
General Fund	3,113,692	4,279,954	1,166,262
Health and Human Services Fund	769,661	1,942,706	1,173,045
Road and Bridge Fund	4,635,595	1,845,418	(2,790,177)
COVID Relief	0	0	0
Land Management Fund	2,482,249	2,374,934	(107,315)
TOTAL (inc non-major funds)	12,004,415	11,973,765	(30,650)

2. **February 2021 Disbursements/Claims Over \$2,000**

Approve the February 2021 disbursements and claims over \$2,000.

3. **Applications**

Approve:

A. **Tobacco License**

- i. DG Retail, LLC DBA Dollar General #21195, 109 Ashley St., Sandstone.
- ii. DG Retail, LLC DBA Dollar General #22256, 304 Fire Monument Rd., Hinckley.

B. **Premise Permit**

- i. Pokegama Lake Association to conduct lawful gambling at Red's Liquor Box, 18070 Beroun Crossing Rd., Pine City (Pokegama Township). Consider approval of Resolution 2021-20 approving premises permit for Pokegama Lake Association and authorize Board Chair and County Administrator to sign.

C. **Abatement**

- i. Joshua & Sarah Sill, PID M30.8800.001, 47024 Government Rd, Hinckley (Sandstone Township).

4. **Personnel (Employment Status)**

- A. Acknowledge the promotion of part-time correction officers Rebecca Blodgett and Zackrie Carter to full-time status, effective March 17, 2021. Grade and wage remain unchanged.

5. **New Hire**

- A. Approve the hiring of Angelika Veldhouse as a full-time sheriff's secretary, effective March 29, 2021, grade 4, starting wage \$17.66 per hour.

6. **Training**

- A. Authorize Social Services Supervisor Barbara Schmidt to attend the virtual 25th Annual Child and Adolescent Mental Conference, April 19-20, 2021. Registration fee: \$180.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. **Facilities Committee Report**

Commissioner Waldhalm stated the Facilities Committee met on March 3, 2021. An update was given on the remodeling of the courthouse. The district court is proceeding with the remodeling of a storage room into a staff training room and has requested the county enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to expedite completion of the project; the MOU will allow court administration to work directly with the vendors. County Attorney Frederickson will draft the MOU for consideration at the April 6th county board meeting. This is a time sensitive project with a scheduled completion deadline before June 30th which is the end of the fiscal year for the State of Minnesota. An update was given on the status of the South Pine Transfer Station (SPTS). This site will serve as a recycling drop off, drop off for brush, and a solid waste transfer station, with the possibility of adding household hazardous waste collection. New construction versus purchasing a used "pod" for a building at the site was considered. Also discussed was the placement of a highway traffic counter inside the gate to determine current usage of the facility. The construction of a building at the North Pine Transfer Station was also discussed--the county is applying for a grant which will pay 75% of construction costs.

2. **Personnel Committee Report**

Commissioner Ludwig stated the Personnel Committee met on March 8, 2021. The Personnel Committee made the following recommendations:

A. **Sheriff's Office – Dispatch**

- i. Ratify the termination of probationary part-time dispatcher Marcus Hamilton-Gustafson

effective February 23, 2021, and request backfill of the position and any subsequent vacancies that may occur due to internal promotion or lateral transfer.

B. Health and Human Services

- i. Acknowledge the resignation of Social Worker Jessica Zirbes, effective February 19, 2021, and request backfill of the position and any subsequent vacancies that may occur due to internal promotion or lateral transfer.
- ii. Acknowledge the retirement of Eligibility Worker Sue Blechinger, effective May 7, 2021.

C. Auditor/Treasurer

- i. Treasurer Clerk/Payroll
 - (a) Approve the re-grade of the Treasurer Clerk/Payroll position from 170 (Grade 5) to 210 (Grade 6) due to increased duties and classification change from “Skilled Administrative Support” to “Administrative”. Update the job description reflecting the change.
- ii. Land Services—Household Hazardous Waste Attendants
 - (a) Approve the Household Hazardous Waste Attendant job description. Grade 1, starting salary \$15.28 per hour; and authorize the hiring of two part-time Household Hazardous Waste Attendant positions.

The Personnel Committee had also recommended the temporary filling of the Zoning and Solid Waste Technician and Solid Waste Office Support Specialist position due to a leave of the incumbent technician. Subsequent to the Personnel Committee meeting, the Zoning and Solid Waste Technician submitted her resignation and the technician position will now be vacant. A revised request was presented to the County Board to consider

- (b) acknowledge the resignation of Joy Hix, Zoning and Solid Waste Technician, effective March 26, 2021 and authorize the backfill of the position and any subsequent vacancies that may occur due to internal promotion or lateral transfer. The position is a grade 7 with a minimum starting wage of \$21.04 per hour.

D. Administration

County Administrator Minke provided an overview of the revised travel, temporary employees, and performance review policies and requested:

- i. Approve the revised policies for the following:
 - (a) Section 12 Travel
 - (b) Temporary Employees
 - (c) Performance Reviews

Motion by Commissioner Ludwig to approve the above recommendations of the Personnel Committee, and the revised request to acknowledge the resignation of Joy Hix and authorize the backfill of the Zoning and Solid Waste Technician position and any vacancies that may occur due to internal promotion or lateral transfer. Second by Commissioner Mohr. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Appointment of Chief Deputy

Sheriff Nelson stated the incumbent chief deputy will retire May 24, 2021 and requested appointment of a chief deputy for the Sheriff’s Office.

Motion by Commissioner Lovgren to approve the appointment of Sergeant Scott Grice as Chief Deputy for the Pine County Sheriff’s Office, effective May 24, 2021, at a salary of \$90,000. 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 Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

4. **Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Vacancy**

Motion by Commissioner Mohr to approve the appointment of Claudia Bloom to fill the Housing and Redevelopment Authority commissioner vacancy on the HRA Board, term expiring October 4, 2024, due to the death of HRA Commissioner Dorothy Stockamp. Second by Commissioner Ludwig. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

5. **Greater Minnesota Recycling and Composting Grant**

Land and Resources Manager Caleb Anderson stated the Solid Waste Department has applied for \$178,275 of state funding through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Greater Minnesota Recycling and Composting Grant program to construct a household hazardous waste collection facility in northern Pine County. There is a 25% match requirement which includes \$3,516.40 of in-kind county staff time and \$47,525 of local funds. The facility will be co-located with existing solid waste/recycling services.

Motion by Commissioner Lovgren to approve Resolution 2021-21/Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Fiscal Year 2021 Grant Program Agency Authorization, and Resolution 2021-22/Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Fiscal Year 2021 Grant Program Matching Funds. Second by Commissioner Mohr. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

6. **2020 Probation Out-of-Home Placement Report**

Probation Director Terry Fawcett provided information regarding court-ordered juvenile placements in Pine County. Fawcett provided information regarding costs, budget busters (which decreased from 6 juveniles in 2019 to 3 juveniles in 2020), placements used and expenditures, use of the East Central Regional Juvenile Center, community alternatives and Evening Reporting Center. Placement expenditures for 2020 was \$185,357, down from \$382,128 in 2019.

7. **2020 Highway Annual Report**

Public Works Director/County Engineer Mark LeBrun reviewed the 2020 Public Works Department Annual Report including a review of unaudited projects, assets, liabilities, account balances, and inventory. In 2020 the department completed 2.75 miles of reconstruction, 10.5 miles of bituminous resurfacing and three bridge replacement projects. As of December 31, 2020, the Fund Balance was \$1,966,307 with an undesignated fund balance of \$965,397. Sales tax projects totaling \$1,387,482 were completed in 2020 with collection of \$1,394,167 and \$408,903 undesignated.

Motion by Commissioner Ludwig to accept the 2020 Highway Annual Report. Second by Commissioner Waldhalm. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye; District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

8. **Coronavirus Response Update**

A. Community Health Services Administrator Sam Lo provided an update on the current public health situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccine distribution. Currently 63% over age 65 in Pine County have received at least one dose, 21% have been fully vaccinated.

B. **American Rescue Plan Update**

County Administrator David Minke stated the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan federal relief package was recently signed into law. The initial estimate of the amount of aid to Pine County

is \$5.7 million. Each city and township will be eligible for aid separate of the county's allocation. The first-half payment may be received within 60-90 days and the second-half payment may be received in one year. The funds must be spent by December 31, 2024. County Administrator Minke explained one of the uses of American Rescue Plan funds could be the hiring of an Economic Development position. Current and long-range funding for the position was discussed.

Commissioner Waldhalm also remarked on constituent at Sand Lake who would like to expand and has received some opposition/restrictions from the Department of Natural Resources.

Motion by Commissioner Mohr to proceed with the recruitment of an economic development coordinator, grade 12, with a pay range of \$60,299-\$78,395. Second by Commissioner Lovgren. A Roll Call vote was called by Chair Hallan: District 4-Commissioner Waldhalm/Aye; District 5-Commissioner Ludwig/Aye; District 1-Chair Hallan/Aye; District 2-Commissioner Mohr/Aye; District 3-Commissioner Lovgren/Aye. Motion carried 5-0.

9. Legislative Updates

- A. Chair Hallan stated the Minnesota Council on Aging is concerned with two major issues relating to volunteer drivers – auto insurance carriers are increasing the volunteer drivers' insurance treating them like for-hire drivers, and volunteers are required to pay federal and state income tax on mileage reimbursement when total reimbursement is over \$600 per year. There are four bills currently being considered: HF586/SF748 which would define a volunteer driver as “not for hire”, and HF 586/SF1766 which would create a state income tax subtraction for volunteer drivers to reduce their tax liability in Minnesota.
- B. County Administrator Minke stated March 19th is the second committee deadline where bills to be considered need to have had a hearing in both the House and the Senate. A bill being considered, HF1914, would give additional business relief funding to counties to distribute; this funding would need to be distributed by May 31, 2021. Another bill, SF1432, relates to state property tax on commercial industrial properties, which is a rebate of those taxes.

10. Commissioner Updates

Central MN Council on Aging: Chair Hallan stated items discussed included the not-for-hire volunteer drivers legislation, food support, and additional pandemic struggles/chore support for the elderly.

East Central Solid Waste Commission: Chair Hallan stated deer carcass disposal and the receipt of carcass from other counties was discussed due to chronic wasting disease. The Pollution Control Agency will provide information as to carcass incineration recommendations.

Chemical Health Coalition: Commissioner Lovgren stated the P&I grant expires June 30th. Applying for additional grants to continue funding the Coalition was discussed. Also discussed was placement of new billboards, radio ads, and opportunities for training.

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe: Chair Hallan stated meetings with the MLBO are back on schedule – the next meeting topics will include Health & Human Service issues.

Jack Friebe/Congressman Stauber's Office: Discussion included broadband funding and facilitation of discussions between government and broadband providers.

Soil & Water Conservation District: Commissioner Waldhalm stated Russ Kurhajetz from Carlton County SWCD spoke about his work with SWCDs and legislation. Several homeowners have contacted Commissioner Waldhalm about the potential high water situation on Sturgeon Lake. SWCD employee compensatory/overtime work hours were discussed.

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services: Chair Hallan stated CMJTS is working with people to help them get back to work.

Minnesota Rural Counties: Chair Hallan was unable to attend due to conflict with another meeting.

Lakes & Pines Community Action Council: Chair Hallan stated grants were approved. Last fall Lakes & Pines had staffing issues and fell behind on processing fuel assistance, however is now getting caught up on requests.

Other:

2nd Amendment Resolution Request: Chair Hallan stated commissioners have been contacted requesting support of a 2nd Amendment Resolution. Chair Hallan recommended this matter be referred to a special committee, the committee will consist of Commissioner Matt Ludwig, Chair Hallan, County Attorney Reese Frederickson and County Administrator David Minke.

11. **Other**

Commissioner Lovgren attended the graduation of a welding class at Pine Technical and Community College (PTCC) which was funded through CARES Act funding. PTCC has received a grant to continue offering these classes.

12. **Upcoming Meetings**


Upcoming meetings were reviewed.

Add: Township Officers Meeting, Saturday, March 27, 2021, 9:00 a.m., Community Center, Hinckley.

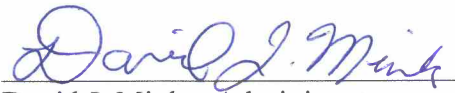
Add: Lower St. Croix Watershed Management Policy Committee, Monday, March 22, 2021, 4:00 p.m.

13. **Adjourn**

With no further business, Chair Hallan adjourned the meeting at 12:09 p.m. The next regular meeting of the county board is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 10:00 a.m., North Pine Government Center, 1602 Hwy 23. No., Sandstone, Minnesota.



Stephen M. Hallan, Chair
Board of Commissioners



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