

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BIG STONE COUNTY BOARD
May 5, 2020

The Big Stone County Board of Commissioners met via Microsoft Teams at 8:30 AM on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, as allowed by M.S. 13D.021. Chairman Athey called the meeting to order with Commissioners Backer, Klepel, Olson and Sandberg participating. Also online were Dillon Dwyer of the Ortonville Independent, Countryside Public Health Administrator Liz Auch, County Attorney Joe Glasrud, County Auditor Michelle Knutson and other department heads and staff. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Klepel and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to approve the agenda with noted addition from Chairman Athey for miscellaneous under the HR Director.

Countryside Public Health Administrator Liz Auch provided a COVID update.

Environmental Technician Danny Tuckett presented a resolution to support a Minnesota River – Headwaters 1W1P project. Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Olson and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to adopt the following resolution:

2020-15

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources has developed policies for coordination and development of comprehensive watershed management plans, also known as One Watershed, One Plan, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.801, Comprehensive Watershed Management Planning Program; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.301, Comprehensive Local Water Management Act, authorizes Minnesota Counties to develop and implement a local water management plan; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103D.401, Watershed Management Plan, authorizes Minnesota Watershed Districts to develop and implement a watershed management plan; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103C.331, subdivision 11, Comprehensive Plan, authorizes Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts to develop and implement a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the counties, soil and water conservation districts, and watershed districts within the Lac qui Parle Watershed (#18) and Upper Minnesota River Watershed (#16), as identified in the attached One Watershed, One Plan Suggested Boundary Map, have interest in developing individual comprehensive watershed management plans for these areas; and

WHEREAS, the counties, soil and water conservation districts, and watershed districts within the Lac qui Parle Watershed District, #18, and Upper Minnesota River Watershed, #16, request that the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources accept the proposed boundary change to watersheds #16, #18 and #20 as delineated in the attached Intended Boundaries Exhibit. Local Government Units believe these changes will allow for a more localized approach to One Watershed, One Plan by allowing the Lac qui Parle – Yellow Bank Watershed District to adopt the portion highlighted in yellow on the attached exhibit of the suggested Minnesota River 1W1P planning boundary #16 that lies within the Lac qui Parle – Yellow Bank Watershed District legal jurisdiction into their plan. In addition, the hashed portion in #16 will be adopted into the Chippewa 1W1P.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Big Stone County recognizes and supports watershed-scale planning efforts consistent with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103B.801, also known as One Watershed, One Plan; and
 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Big Stone County agrees with and supports the boundary change identified in the attached map and requests, from BWSR, an approval of the planning boundary change as identified; and
 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Big Stone County welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the counties, soil and water conservation districts, and watershed districts within the Minnesota River – Headwaters for watershed-scale planning efforts in the future; and
 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Big Stone County supports an application to the Board of Water and Soil Resources for a planning grant to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan and anticipates entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the counties, soil and water conservation districts, and watershed districts within the Upper Minnesota River Watershed, to collaborate on this effort, pending selection as a recipient of a planning grant.

Tuckett also presented the 2019 County Feedlot Officer Annual Report and the MPCA County Feedlot Financial Report for the Board’s information.

Commissioners reported on the following committees:

- Olson – Nurse Family Ptsp
- Sandberg – MSI
- Athey – COVID Calls; Park; Personnel; Prairie 5; DH; Extension
- Backer – CPT; COVID Call; Personnel

Motion by Backer, seconded by Sandberg and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to authorize payment of the following claims as presented by Auditor Knutson:

Applied Concepts	\$ 2,192.00
Titan Machinery	20,174.00
Trueman-Welters	5,017.99
Ward Construction	2,600.00
Watchguard	5,020.00
West Con	9,945.00
Yellow Medicine County Jail	2,273.58
29 Payments Less Than \$2,000	<u>11,669.85</u>
Total	\$58,892.42

Motion by Backer, seconded by Klepel and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to authorize the following internal transactions:

General to Highway	\$ 1,462.61
Ditch to Highway	\$ 2,807.22
Joint Ditch 4	\$ 89.37
County Ditch 8	\$ 281.87
County Ditch 13	\$ 390.00
County Ditch 20	\$2,045.98

Auditor Knutson asked for questions and/or comments on the year-to-date financial information provided for the Board’s review.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Sandberg and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that Big Stone County act as the legal sponsor for an application for funding to the State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for Maintenance of snowmobile trails managed by Big Stone Lake Sno Riders.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon approval of its application by the state, Big Stone County may enter into an agreement with the State of Minnesota for the above referenced project and that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in the agreement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair of the Big Stone County Commissioners is authorized to sign such an agreement with the Department of Natural Resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Auditor is authorized to serve as the fiscal agent for the above-mentioned project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Big Stone County act as legal sponsor for 32 miles of snowmobile trails in Traverse County beginning north of Graceville and extending north through Wheaton to the White Rock Dam.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Big Stone County act as legal sponsor for 2 miles of snowmobile trails in Traverse County beginning west of Beardsley and extending west to Browns Valley.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Klepel and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to execute the contract with Bituminous Paving for seal coat projects CP 006-001-020, CP 006-002-020 and CP 006-003-020.

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Olson and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to execute the contract with Central Specialties for mill and overlay projects SAP 006-605-001, SAP 006-610-025, SAP 006-612-013, SAP 006-621-029, SAP 006-628-004 and SAP 006-635-008.

Auditor Knutson re-presented dilapidated structure applications from John Green for assistance to demo parcels 19-0183-000 and 19-0250-000. In addition, an application from Terresa Huselid was also presented for assistance to demo parcel 17-0131-000. Following discussion, motion by Olson, seconded by Backer and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to approve \$3,000 per project contingent on the Environmental Director approval of the demo and disposal plans upon completion.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Backer and carried via roll call vote 5-0 to approve the amendment to the Flex Spending Plan to incorporate changes from the CARES Act.

Discussion was held on the County's current work from home plans and when the buildings should be reopened. Consensus was to follow the Governor's lead at this time.

Motion by Backer to follow Jim Mulder's recommendation and for reasons of data privacy, to move payroll review from the Auditor's Office to Human Resources.

Following 2 calls for a second, Chairman Athey seconded the motion. Discussion was held. Auditor Knutson requested time to have a conversation on the payroll process as this was not discussed with her prior to bringing it to the meeting. Commissioner Olson also expressed his concerns that no discussion has happened with the affected departments and would like to see that happen before any action is taken.

Commissioners Sandberg and Klepel agreed that discussion is important and should happen first. Attorney Glasrud and Commissioner Backer stated that discussion is happening now. Following further discussion, Commissioner Backer called the question. The motion failed via roll call vote 2-3 with Commissioners Backer and Athey voting Aye and Commissioners Olson, Sandberg and Klepel voting Nay.

County Treasurer Cindy Nelson reported that she would recommend waiting on implementing any changes to tax collections at this time. She feels that second half may be a bigger issue for taxpayers. Following discussion, motion by Backer and seconded by Athey to adopt the following resolution:

2020-17

WHEREAS, Big Stone County desires to provide temporary relief to its residents and businesses within the County that have been directly or indirectly impacted by the economic pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Big Stone County recognizes that because of unemployment, lost or reduced wages and the loss of business income, the timely payment of property taxes will be a major economic pressure for many county property owners and businesses this year; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to M.S. §279.01, subd. 2, the County Board may, with the concurrence of the County Treasurer, abate the penalty for late payment of property taxes; and

WHEREAS, the County Board finds that imposing the full penalty for late payment of property taxes in 2020 would be unjust and unreasonable, and further finds that partially abating the penalties associated with the late payment of property taxes in 2020 furthers the economic interests of the County and its residents and business owners; and

WHEREAS, the Big Stone County Treasurer has indicated that she concurs with the Board's findings and its desire to partially abate the penalty for late payment of taxes in 2020.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Big Stone County Board of Commissioners as follows:

1. Pursuant to M.S. §279.01, subd. 2, the County Board hereby delegates to the Big Stone County Treasurer the power to abate the penalty provided in M.S. §279.01 for the late payment of property taxes payable in 2020, to the extent provided for in this Resolution.

2. The County Board further requests that the Big Stone County Treasurer impose the following modified penalties for late payment of property taxes due and payable in 2020 for all applicable property classifications:

- a. For taxes paid between May 16, 2020 and June 30, 2020: a penalty of 1% of the unpaid tax otherwise due and owing.
- b. For taxes paid between July 1, 2020 and July 31, 2020: a penalty of 2% of the unpaid tax otherwise due and owing.
- c. For taxes paid on or after August 1, 2020: the penalty otherwise imposed by law.

3. This Resolution does not limit the authority of the County Board or the Treasurer to abate taxes or property values as otherwise provided by law.

Following further discussion on the motion, motion carried via roll call vote 5-0.

Chairman Athey adjourned the meeting at 9:51 AM.

Wade Athey, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Michelle R. Knutson, Auditor