

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BIG STONE COUNTY BOARD
November 1, 2011

The Big Stone County Board of Commissioners met in the Commissioner's Room at 8:30 AM on Tuesday, November 1, 2011. Chairman Athey called the meeting to order with Commissioners Berning, Olson, Sandberg and Wulff present. Also present were Mike Swenson of the Ortonville Independent, County Attorney Bill Watson and County Auditor Michelle Knutson. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Olson and carried to approve the minutes of the October 18th regular meeting.

Motion by Berning, seconded by Wulff and carried to approve the agenda with noted additions.

Commissioners reported on the following committees:

Olson – Pioneerland; RDC

Sandberg – Food Shelf; Property; MSI

Athey – Prairie 5

Wulff – Toqua Park

Motion by Olson, seconded by Berning and carried to execute the West Central S.W.A.T. Team Agreement as presented and reviewed by Attorney Watson.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Wulff and carried to authorize payment of the following claims as presented by Auditor Knutson:

Contech Construction Products	\$10,002.17
Ronglien & Sons Excavating	2,015.00
Traffic Marking Service	2,352.67
William Watson	4,109.88
50 Payments Less Than \$2,000	<u>21,173.76</u>
Total	\$39,653.48

Motion by Olson, seconded by Sandberg and carried to execute the 6-month lease agreement for storage at Big 12 Storage.

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Wulff and carried to authorize payment of \$155 to BSLA Hockey Association as an Auditor Warrant.

Discussion was held on the expiration of the lease with FSA. Commissioner Sandberg and Auditor Knutson reported on their conversations with Morrell Jordan, the federal leasing contact. He indicated that the newly prepared lease requires that a new building be constructed in 90 days so they are requesting an additional 90 days before moving out of the existing space. Motion by Olson, seconded by Berning and carried to charge \$15,000 for the 90 days using updated current rental rates. Mr. Jordan was made aware that an additional amount may be assessed after that time and was reminded that they have had 2 years to plan for new space.

Commissioner Sandberg provided an update on the Whetstone Project meeting. Discussion was held on the possible funding options for the study that will be needed. The matter was tabled until the next meeting.

VSO Dan Meyer provided information on his office's activities during the past month for the Board's review.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Sandberg and carried to appoint Jill Hennessey, Jim Teske, Paul Treinen and Tami Lundberg as representatives for the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon committee.

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Wulff and carried to adopt the following resolution as presented by County Engineer Nick Anderson:

2011-42

WHEREAS, County SAP 006-613-007 & SAP 006-610-023 have in all things been completed and the County Board being fully advised in the premises.

NOW THEN BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby accepts said completed project for and on behalf of the County of Big Stone, and authorizes final payment to Bituminous Paving, Inc. in the amount shown on final pay estimate.

Engineer Anderson provided an update on the Highway 12 tile project. Discussion was held on the possibility of the County borrowing the funds to the Watershed to do the project. The matter was tabled until the availability of the tile has been confirmed.

Engineer Anderson reported that the overflow has been put in on County Ditch 30 and \$6,000 has been spent on cleaning the ditch. Engineer Anderson requested an additional \$2,000 to remove more silt. Motion by Wulff, seconded by Olson and carried to approve the additional amount.

Engineer Anderson reported on MNDOT projects that will be done in the County per District 4's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). One of the projects that is on the list for 2013 is Highway 75 from Cenex to the junction of Highway 7-75.

Discussion was held on some issues related to trail right-of-way.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Wulff and carried to adopt the following resolution:

2011-43

WHEREAS, it appears that the original benefits or damages determined in Big Stone County Ditch 30 do not reflect reasonable present day land values; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the present day lands benefitted or damaged have changed. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the drainage authority hereby ordains that a Redetermination of Benefits and Damages pursuant to M.S. §103E.351 is appropriate and that the same shall be carried out.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that John Cunningham, Martin Heck and Eldon Knutson are appointed as viewers to redetermine and report the benefits and damages and the benefitted and damaged areas to the drainage authority as provided by law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the redetermined benefits and damages and benefitted and damaged areas shall hereafter be used in place of the original benefits and damages and benefitted and damaged areas in all subsequent proceedings relating to the aforementioned drainage system.

Included in the motion for the resolution was that the viewers would be paid \$30/hour plus mileage.

Discussion was held on getting an additional viewer trained that is computer savvy to assist with the administrative areas of the viewing process.

Discussion was held on upgrading tractors and mowers. Motion by Olson, seconded by Wulff and carried to authorize the Highway Department to trade-in two John Deere tractors and to spend an additional \$2,000 for the purchase of two new

ones from Schuneman Equipment and to trade-in two older tractor-mower combinations for new mowers and swing arms from Titan. Two additional tractors will be rented under a new government sales program offered by Titan.

Engineer Anderson updated the Board on the permit to clean Wiley Wetland Project.

Engineer Anderson reported that the outhouses at Toqua Park can be removed and will be taken care of this year.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Wulff and carried to authorize the Engineer to begin the process for soliciting bids for the sale of 2 acres of an old gravel pit by County Road 64.

Following a break, the scheduled public hearing on the economic development tax abatement was moved to the courtroom to accommodate those present.

Chairman Athey called the hearing to order and turned it over to Philip Deal of the Wheaton-Dumont Coop Elevator. Mr. Deal presented information explaining why they were requesting the abatement including the economic benefits that would be gained. Following comments from the floor and discussion, the hearing was closed at 10:35 AM and the meeting returned to the Commissioners' Room.

Motion by Olson and seconded by Berning to adopt the following resolution:

2011-44

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Big Stone County, Minnesota (the "County"), held a public hearing on the proposed economic development tax abatement, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 469.1812 through and including 469.1815, to reimburse a portion of the costs incurred to construct an agribusiness facility (grain elevator and agronomy plant) in Graceville Township, near Graceville, Minnesota by the Wheaton-Dumont Coop Elevator (the "Applicant"); and

WHEREAS, the County has proposed to abate a portion of the County's share of property taxes on the following parcel for a period of ten (10) years:

Parcel ID 07-0007-010 described as SE1/4 (Ex RY & Hwy) & S 900.08' of NE1/4 of Section 2, Township 124N, Range 46W

WHEREAS, the County finds that the proposed abatement and benefit to the Applicant is in the best interest of the County and its businesses and residents, and that the benefits are at least equal to the amount of the abatement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County as follows:

1. Abatement The County Board hereby authorizes the abatement of the County's share of property taxes assessed to any improvements of the aforementioned parcel in the form of a rebate. The amount of the abatement shall not exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) per year, or in any event the abatement shall not exceed the County's tax rate multiplied by the total net tax capacity of the aforementioned parcel. The abatement period shall be for ten (10) years, commencing with taxes payable in 2014.
2. Purpose The Abatement will be provided to the Applicant to reimburse a portion of the costs incurred for the construction of the facility.

3. Public Benefit The proposed abatement will benefit the public by:
- a) providing new employment opportunities within Big Stone County.
 - b) expanding the property tax base of the County by constructing taxable structures.

Following discussion, motion carried with Commissioner Athey voting Nay. The Board was thanked by Elevator representatives for their support.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Berning and carried to grant a 3-month unpaid leave request from Barb Maas as presented by HR Director Sue Schultz.

Motion by Wulff, seconded by Sandberg and carried to authorize moving Liane Rausch to Clerk 2 Step 2 to compensate her for additional responsibilities as presented by HR Director Schultz.

Motion by Olson and seconded by Sandberg to authorize HR Director Schultz to contact Deb Berning and reactivate her as an Extension Office clerical fill-in. Motion carried with Commissioner Berning abstaining.

Extension representatives Suzanne Souza, Heidi Torgerson and Bob Byrnes provided additional information on staffing hours to cover the leave.

County Treasurer Cindy Nelson was present to request assessed values for the tax forfeited property that will be on the upcoming sale. Motion by Olson, seconded by Sandberg and carried to establish the assessed values at 10% of market value as presented by Treasurer Nelson.

Motion by Wulff, seconded by Berning and carried to adopt the following resolution:

2011-45

BE IT RESOLVED, that all parcels of tax-forfeited land listed on the List of Tax-Forfeited Land #11-1 be classified as non-conservation land; that the basic sale price of each parcel on the List of Tax-Forfeited Land #11-1, that is on file with the Clerk of the County Board, be approved and authorization for a public sale of this land be granted, pursuant to M.S. 282.01; that the sale will be held at 9:00 AM, Monday, November 28, 2011, by the Big Stone County Treasurer at the Big Stone County Courthouse, for not less than the basic sale price; and that full payment is required at the time of the sale.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Wulff and carried to authorize Building Maintenance Supervisor Jim Hasslen to hire Snortum's to assist with snow removal as needed at the multiple locations for \$195 per time.

Motion by Wulff and seconded by Sandberg to hire Main Street Industries to assist with cleaning bathrooms and entrances due to the previous resignation of the part-time custodian. Motion carried with Commissioner Olson abstaining.

Motion by Berning, seconded by Wulff and carried to close the meeting at 11:12 AM to discuss labor negotiation strategy. Motion by Wulff, seconded by Sandberg and carried to reopen the meeting at 11:49 AM.

Chairman Athey adjourned the meeting at 11:49 AM.

Wade Athey, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Michelle R. Knutson, Auditor