

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BIG STONE COUNTY BOARD
October 6, 2015

The Big Stone County Board of Commissioners met in the Commissioners' Room at 8:30 AM on Tuesday, October 6, 2015. Chairman Sandberg called the meeting to order with Commissioners Athey, Backer, Berning and Olson 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 Olson, seconded by Backer and carried to approve the minutes of the September 15th regular meeting and the September 12th special meeting.

Motion by Berning, seconded by Backer and carried to approve the agenda.

Commissioners reported on the following committees:

Olson – Personnel; Insurance; RDC

Sandberg – MSI; ESB; Museum; Property

Athey – Personnel; Prairie 5; Fair Board; Toqua Park

Backer – Bois de Sioux; Toqua Park; PIC

Discussion was held on the letter drafted by Commissioner Olson to be sent to township officials regarding the problems with visibility at intersections because of crops. A suggestion was made to include the desired action the Board is looking for from townships. Commissioner Olson will revise the letter accordingly.

Commissioner Athey reported that there were issues when trying to straighten the shelter at Toqua Park. The Park Committee is recommending that the shelter be rebuilt instead at an estimated cost of \$14,000. Following discussion, motion by Backer, seconded by Athey and carried to authorize the building of a new shelter.

Attorney Watson presented agreements regarding the purchase and removal of borrow on the Highway 35 project. Motion by Olson, seconded by Backer and carried to execute the agreements with Ray and Irene Hamann and Evan and Wanda Holker as presented.

Attorney Watson also presented a slope easement agreement for the Highway 35 project. Motion by Olson, seconded by Athey and carried to execute the agreement with Arthur and Mary Arndt and Minnwest Bank as presented.

Discussion was held on the recent shoreland exemption request. Consensus was that the County should develop guidelines for considering these requests.

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

4-H Program Coordinator Suzanne Souza, Environmental Officer Darren Wilke and Bonanza representatives Joel Stattelmann and Don Sherman were present for a discussion on Extension's proposal to provide aquatic invasive species (AIS) education at Bonanza. Souza presented information on the services they could provide along with a budget proposal. Stattelmann stated that in addition to Extension's proposal, there is need for an additional amount to be used for Bonanza staffing and transportation for additional educational events to be held. Environmental Officer Wilke stated that a plan for how the AIS money will be spent will need to be submitted to the DNR. Motion by Berning, seconded by Athey and carried to proceed with submitting a plan.

Bill Moberg and Gary Haugen were present to continue the discussion on their request for a shoreland exemption. Following discussion, motion by Backer and

seconded by Athey to grant the exemption request. Following further discussion, the motion was rescinded to allow time for Attorney Watson to prepare findings with all the submitted information and to bring to the next meeting for approval.

Motion by Berning, seconded by Backer and carried to execute the Natural Resources Block Grant Agreement as presented by Environmental Officer Wilke.

Emergency Management Director Jim Hasslen was present to request a public hearing to take public comment on the All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Motion by Olson, seconded by Athey and carried to set the public hearing for November 3rd at 9:30 AM.

US Fish & Wildlife representative Blake Knisley was present to request certification of acquisition of land for a habitat easement in Otre Township. Representatives Bruce Freske and Danielle Kepford were also present. Motion by Olson, seconded by Berning and carried to certify for acquisition the following described property: T122N, R45W, 5th P.M., Section 27, part of Government Lot 5; Section 28, part of Government Lots 6, 7; Section 33, N1/2NE1/4, all to be determined by a survey.

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

(7) St. Peter RTC-472	\$ 8,216.00
Big Stone Area Growth	8,750.00
Big Stone SWCD	15,000.00
Bituminous Paving	3,395.83
Eagle Concrete Contracting	3,295.00
Edney Distributing	2,630.96
Hancock Concrete Products	43,241.76
J&J Earthworks	45,880.00
MAAC	4,940.00
Milbank Communications	2,341.45
Pioneerland Library System	16,888.75
Ratwick Roszak & Maloney	13,352.07
Regents of the U of MN	12,661.89
Ridgeview Excavating	5,280.00
Ronglien & Sons Excavating	35,991.25
Traverse County Sheriff	2,035.00
TrueNorth Steel	8,048.24
William Watson	4,413.00
West Con	9,721.00
50 Payments Less Than \$2,000	<u>17,645.85</u>
Total	\$263,728.05

Auditor Knutson reported that the funds have been transferred to Federated Telephone for the fiber broadband project.

Auditor Knutson reported that she will be emailing a new report for the year-to-date financial information following the meeting for the Board's review.

HR Director Dawn Gregoire and Deputy Auditor Sharon Finke arrived at the meeting.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Backer and carried to designate Nexben as our agent of record for the County employees' health insurance policies as recommended by HR Director Gregoire.

Discussion was held on the possible penalties that may be assessed to the County if an employee purchases their coverage through the exchange and receives a subsidy. Motion by Olson, seconded by Athey and carried to postpone setting a policy until more information is available.

HR Director Gregoire asked that the department head evaluation forms be completed and returned to her prior to conducting the evaluations, which will be scheduled in November.

Chairman Sandberg adjourned the meeting at 10:18 AM.

Roger Sandberg, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Michelle R. Knutson, Auditor