

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BIG STONE COUNTY BOARD
September 24, 2015

The Big Stone County Board of Commissioners met in the Courtroom at 10:00 AM on Thursday, September 24, 2015, to discuss a potential County Ditch 12 improvement project, the new buffer strip law and shoreland exemptions for man-made ditches. Vice Chairman Athey called the meeting to order with Commissioners Berning and Backer present. Commissioner Sandberg arrived during the meeting and Commissioner Olson was absent. Also present were Martin Heck, John Cunningham, Craig Danielson, Eldon Knutson, Gary Haugen, Glen Danielson, Gloria Danielson, Ryan Danielson, Bruce Wellendorf, Dianne Radermacher, Vanessa Meyer, Russell Swenson, Engineers Bill Helget and Duane Hansel from Bolton & Menk, Ditch Attorney Kurt Deter from Rinke Noonan, County Engineer Nick Anderson and County Auditor Michelle Knutson. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Engineer Anderson reviewed the existing condition of County Ditch 12 and the proposed repair or improvement options. Engineer Anderson stated that the tile cannot be replaced or improved with the current amount of benefits assessed. Mr. Hansel provided a report of tile capacity computations. The existing tile is designed with a coefficient of 1/16"/day. The preliminary cost estimate to increase this to at least 1/2"/day is \$536,183. Discussion followed. Mr. Deter re-stated that a redetermination will need to be completed if either a repair or an improvement is done. He then explained the process for an improvement to the ditch system. If a petition for an improvement is submitted, but the improvement isn't feasible, the redetermination will be allocated to all of the new benefited parcels and landowners. Following further discussion, it was decided that Attorney Deter will draft an improvement petition for Engineer Anderson to distribute to the landowners. It will be up to them to carry the petition.

Attorney Deter reviewed the 2015 buffer legislation with those present. Mr. Deter stressed that landowners of property adjacent to a water body are responsible for installing the buffers. Buffers are required to be in place by November 1, 2017, for public waters and by November 1, 2018 for public drainage systems. Mr. Deter stated that there are still many unanswered questions regarding this law.

Discussion was held on the request from Gary Haugen, Dan Morrill and Bill Moberg for an exemption from the Shoreland Ordinance. The Ordinance states that the County Board may approve an exemption for man-made waterways created upland. A letter from DNR Hydrologist Skip Wright expressing his concerns with the request was distributed. There was some discussion and question over whether the Ordinance would need to be amended if an exemption was granted as stated by Mr. Wright. Mr. Deter commented that at some point, someone is going to have to define the exemption. Discussion was held on the number of man-made waterways there are vs. natural streams that are on the protected waters inventory list. Attorney Deter will share Mr. Wright's letter with Attorney Kale Van Bruggen, who is the attorney that the requestors are working with.

Motion by Athey, seconded by Backer and carried to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Sandberg declared the meeting adjourned at 11:48 AM.

Roger Sandberg, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Michelle R. Knutson, Auditor