

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BIG STONE COUNTY BOARD**  
**November 15, 2016**

The Big Stone County Board of Commissioners met in the Commissioners' Room at 8:30 AM on Tuesday, November 15, 2016. Chairman Athey called the meeting to order with Commissioners Backer, Berning, and Olson present. Commissioner Sandberg was absent. Also present were Mike Swenson of the Ortonville Independent, County Attorney Bill Watson and County Deputy Auditor Sharon Finke. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Motion by Berning, seconded by Backer and carried to approve the minutes of the November 1<sup>st</sup> regular meeting.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Backer and carried to approve the agenda with noted additions.

Commissioners reported on the following committees:

Olson – PrimeWest; BSAG  
Athey – Fair Board; Personnel  
Backer – BSAG; Personnel  
Berning – AMC District Meeting; Supporting Hands

Attorney Watson reported that advertising will begin for the Legal Assistant position.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Backer and carried to authorize payment of the following claims as presented by Deputy Auditor Finke:

Computer Professionals Unlimited	\$ 4,456.00
GovConnection	3,300.24
Kandiyohi County Sheriff	62,734.95
Larson's LLC	7,354.00
Nelson Electric	3,817.68
Ortonville Independent	5,453.99
Waste Management	9,844.58
54 Payments Less Than \$2,000	<u>12,802.80</u>
Total	\$109,764.04

Motion by Berning, seconded by Backer and carried to authorize the following internal transactions:

General to Highway	\$ 1,722.00
Family Services to Highway	\$ 169.10
Ditch to Highway	\$ 2,446.58
Joint Ditch 4	\$ 294.81
County Ditch 12	\$2,046.14
County Ditch 20	\$ 105.63

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

Discussion was held on the request from Prairie Waters for the appointment of a representative from Big Stone County to begin to serve as a board member. Commissioner Olson volunteered to complete the current year and then an official appointment will be made for 2017 at the first meeting in January.

Deputy Auditor Finke reported that the County's 2016 MCIT dividend will be \$49,829 and is allocated as follows: Workers' Compensation \$24,831 and Property/Casualty \$24,998.

HR Director Dawn Gregoire arrived at the meeting. Upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee, motion by Backer, seconded by Olson and carried to end Big Stone County's employment relationship with Highway Maintenance Worker Mark Thompson.

Commissioner Berning stated that he will try to attend the legislative round table in Morris on Thursday.

SWCD representatives Blayne Johnson and Mike Jorgenson, Environmental Officer Darren Wilke and Upper MN River Watershed District representative Vanessa Meyer were present to update the Board on the buffer program. Because the national cap on CRP acres has been reached, the SWCD is having to advise land owners that the buffer acres are not going to qualify for CRP payments. A decision must be made by 3/31/2017 as to which local agency is going to enforce the buffer zone law. Environmental Officer Wilke will continue to meet with the affected agencies and a letter will be drafted to be sent to local legislators regarding the CRP issue.

County Highway Engineer Nick Anderson, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife representatives Scott Simmons and Maria Fosado arrived at the meeting. Motion by Olson, seconded by Berning and carried to adopt the following resolution as presented by County Engineer Nick Anderson:

**2016-30**

WHEREAS, County SAP 006-599-010 has 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 authorize final payment to Riley Brothers Construction, Inc. in the amount shown on final pay estimate.

Discussion was held regarding the re-marking of right-of-ways (ROW). Motion by Olson, seconded by Berning and carried to charge property owners \$50 per sign that must be replaced on their property.

Engineer Anderson reported that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been developed between the County, City of Ortonville, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for proposed work on the Minnesota River Headwaters Trail. Following discussion, it was decided to table action on the MOU until the December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting to allow more input from all involved parties.

Engineer Anderson presented information regarding elevation issues for a portion of the proposed trail work. Motion by Olson, seconded by Backer and carried not to build the new bike trail connection to the auto tour route above flood plain elevation of 1,059 feet because of the negative impact to wetlands and prairie within the Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge, but to build the connection at the current grade elevation of approximately 1,058 feet.

Chairman Athey adjourned the meeting at 9:27 AM.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Wade Athey, Chairman

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sharon Finke, Deputy Auditor