

WATONWAN COUNTY BOARD
MAY 5, 2020
9:00 A.M.

The Watonwan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on May 5, 2020 at 9:00 A.M. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Courthouse, City of St. James. Chairman Gustafson and Commissioner Miller were present and the following Board members were present by teleconference: Jim Branstad, Raymond Gustafson, Bill Miller, Bob Rinne and Kathleen Svalland. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Miller moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the Agenda as amended.

Svalland moved, Rinne seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the minutes of the April 21 regular meeting.

Solid Waste Program Manager Kyla Schlomann was present by phone and reviewed a call from the City of Madelia regarding the Recycling Shed. The door keeps breaking and City has been fixing it. Also there is situation with a well close to the current location which may result in the need to relocate. The City has two possible parcels that a new shed could be placed on. Site visits would be done and Schlomann would check into the cost of building a new shed.

Branstad moved, Gustafson seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve payment of bills as audited and filed in the County Auditor/Treasurer's Office as follows by fund: General Fund—\$100,635.23; Solid Waste Fund—\$19.45; Ditch Fund—\$15,569.52; and the Road and Bridge Fund—\$307,412.27.

County Auditor/Treasurer Kelly Pauling reviewed two Next Generation Compliant 9-1-1 Grants. \$8,750.00 were awarded

for work that Mike True is performing on the GIS for 911, and \$55,365.50 for new call handling equipment.

Miller moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to adopt the following resolutions:

RESOLUTION
911 GIS GRANT

WHEREAS, a GIS grant in the amount of \$8,750 has been allocated to Watonwan County from the State of Minnesota, ECN Division.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Watonwan County Board of Commissioners agrees to accept the GIS grant, to be used according to the terms and conditions outlined therein.

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING
911 CALL HANDLING EQUIPMENT GRANT

WHEREAS, a 911 Call Handling Equipment grant in the amount of \$55,365.50 has been allocated to Watonwan County from the State of Minnesota, ECN Division, for the period through March 31, 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Watonwan County Board of Commissioners agrees to accept the 911 Call Handling Equipment grant, to be used according to the terms and conditions outlined therein.

Rinne moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve naming GBERBA as the administrator of the Watonwan River Watershed 1W1P Implementation Grant.

The Board acknowledged a \$500 donation from Fidlar Technologies to be given to a local charity of the Recorder's Office choice. It was given to Sertoma for distribution.

Discussion was held regarding property tax relief. County Auditor/Treasurer Pauling reviewed the following options: no tax relief; reduce the penalty rate from 2% to 1% from May 15 to July 15; abate all penalties during that time; offer a simple abatement application to be completed by business owners that had to close, or individuals who were laid off and unemployment hadn't covered all lost wages. Then if not paid by July 15, the penalties would be retroactive to May 15.

Branstad moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to adopt the following:

RESOLUTION OF WATONWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REQUESTING THAT THE WATONWAN COUNTY TREASURER ABATE THE PENALTY
ON LATE PAYMENT OF CERTAIN
PROPERTY TAXES FOR TAXES PAYABLE IN 2020

WHEREAS, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz has issued a series of Emergency Executive Orders which include, among many others, a "Stay at Home" order which temporarily requires non-critical workers to stay safe at home, and several orders that require the temporary closure of certain non-critical businesses, all of which are significant, but necessary, community mitigation strategies to slow the transmission of COVID-19, reduce illness and deaths, and limit the economic impacts of the outbreak; and

WHEREAS, Watonwan 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, the due date for payment of the first one-half of property taxes (May 15, 2020) may not be changed locally; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minn. Stat. §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 adhering to the statutory due date for payment of the first one-half of property taxes may result in additional negative impact and be unjust and unreasonable; and

WHEREAS, the County Board finds that temporary payment relief through abatement of the penalty for a time period may provide flexibility for affected owners; and

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

WHEREAS, not all individuals and business property owners are experiencing financial hardship in Watonwan County due to COVID-19, and those who can, should, pay their property taxes in a timely manner. Certain individuals and business property owners who utilize escrow payments must continue to pay as scheduled. Certain individuals and business property owners who are excluded from this temporary payment relief must continue to pay as scheduled; and

WHEREAS, counties collect and disburse property taxes not only for counties, but also for all cities, townships, school districts, and special taxing districts and the state of Minnesota. Cash flow and operations of all local government is set around the collection dates for property taxes. The County Board acknowledges the seriousness of any delay of collection of property taxes and will work to minimize this impact; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, fair and efficient administration of temporary payment relief through abatement of the penalty for a time period would be facilitated by a short application to be completed by individuals and business property owners. The County Treasurer is directed to implement this application and undertake such actions and require such assistance as needed to accomplish this Resolution action to the extent practicable and allowed by law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Watonwan County Board of Commissioners as follows:

1. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 279.01, subd. 2, the County Board hereby delegates to the Watonwan County Treasurer the power to abate the penalty provided in Minn. Stat. §279.01 for the late payment of property taxes payable in 2020, to the extent provided for in this Resolution.
2. For taxes paid May 16, 2020 through July 15, 2020: a penalty of 0% of the unpaid tax otherwise due and owing.

3. The following property classes and circumstances are excluded from the temporary payment relief provided in this Resolution and tax due and owing on the following must be paid as imposed by law:
 - a. Any parcel that has its property taxes escrowed.
 - b. Any public utility class and railroad class property (parcels where market values are determined or recommended by the State of Minnesota).
4. The County Treasurer will undertake such actions to create a simple application as required by this Resolution, and such application must be completed for penalty to be abated.
5. This Resolution does not limit the authority of the County Board or the Treasurer to abate taxes or property values, taxes, penalty, or interest as otherwise provided by law.

Public Works Director Teal Spellman was present by phone and reviewed the following quotes from the State bid list for replacement of the 2001 Chevy ½-ton pick-up, which would go into the pool:

<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Karl Chevrolet	\$28,878.14
Midway Ford Commercial	\$31,041.59

Rinne moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve accepting the quote of Karl Chevrolet in the amount of \$28,878.14 for the purchase of

Spellman reviewed quotes received for a new dump truck. Both quotes included the addition of plow equipment from Towmaster in the amount of \$111,303.00. Spellman noted that they preferred the Mack Truck due to past experience with vehicle quality:

<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>TRADE-IN</u>
Nuss Truck and Equipment	\$112,313.00 (Mack Truck)	\$15,000.00
Harrison Truck Centers	\$110,258.00 (Freightliner)	\$13,000.00

Miller moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve accepting the quote of Nuss Truck and Equipment in the amount of \$112,313.00 for the purchase of a 2019 Mack AF Granite 64FR, less trade-in allowance of \$15,000; and the quote of Towmaster in the amount of \$111,303.00 for the purchase of plow equipment, for a final cost of \$208,616.00.

Spellman reported that most projects would be underway by mid-May. She noted that the campgrounds were closed but the parks were open. The bathrooms were not yet open due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They were waiting to see what the next orders would be from the Governor.

Branstad moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the revised South Central Workforce Development Area Joint Powers Agreement with the Counties of Blue

Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley and Waseca for oversight of local workforce development services through June 30, 2024.

Branstad moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the annual pay step increase of Michael True.

Rinne moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve a step increase for the satisfactory completion of probation period for Nicholas Kielas.

The following quotes were received for a replacement camera for a squad car. The Sheriff's Department preferred the Watch Guard product due to quality:

<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Watch Guard	\$4,845.00
Digital Ally	\$4,795.00

Branstad moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve accepting the quote of Watch Guard in the amount of \$4,845.00 for the purchase of a 4RE In-Car DVR Camera System with options for a Sheriff's Department squad car.

It was acknowledged that Kate Christenson made and donated 40 cloth facemasks for use by County employees.

It was questioned how filing for office would be held starting on May 19. Auditor/Treasurer Pauling stated that they were waiting on action by the legislature as to whether it could be done online, otherwise it would most likely be done by appointment.

Rinne moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 9:50.

Raymond Gustafson, Chairman
Watonwan County Board

Lisa Schumann, Deputy Clerk
Watonwan County Board

ATTEST: Kelly Pauling
Watonwan County Auditor/Treasurer