

WATONWAN COUNTY BOARD  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2020  
9:00 A.M.

The Watonwan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on September 1, 2020 at 9:00 A.M. in the Community Room of the Human Services Building, City of St. James. The following Board members were present: Jim Branstad, Bill Miller, Bob Rinne and Kathleen Svalland. Absent: Raymond Gustafson. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, with Vice-Chair Svalland presiding in the absence of Chair Gustafson.

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

Branstad moved, Rinne seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the minutes of the September 1 regular meeting.

Rinne moved, Branstad 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—\$26,874.06; Solid Waste Fund—\$7,766.86; Ditch Fund—\$22,898.27; Road and Bridge Fund—\$179,595.89; to pay the following credit cards: General Fund—\$3,412.36; Road and Bridge Fund—\$623.14; Library Fund—\$109.98; to ratify September 2 payment of the following credit cards: General Fund—\$9,290.80; Road and Bridge Fund—\$664.65; and Soil & Water Conservation—\$28.04; and to ratify payment of the August Disbursements as listed.

Public Works Director Teal Spellman was present and requested adoption of the Local Road Improvement Program Grant Resolution for \$500,000.00.

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

GRANT AGREEMENT TO STATE TRANSPORTATION FUND  
LOCAL ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
GRANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS  
SAP 083-621-007/SP 083-070-012

WHEREAS, Watonwan County has applied to the Commissioner of Transportation for a grant from the Minnesota State Transportation Fund for Local Road Improvement; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Transportation has given notice that funding for this project is available; and

WHEREAS, the amount of the grant has been determined to be \$500,000 by reason of the lowest responsible bid;

NOW, THEREFOR, BE IT RESOLVED, that Watonwan County does hereby agree to the terms and conditions of the grant consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 174.52 and will pay any additional amount by which the cost exceeds the estimate, and will return to the

Minnesota State Transportation Fund any amount appropriated for the project by not required. The proper county officers are authorized to execute a grant agreement and any amendments thereto with the Commissioner of Transportation concerning the above-referenced grant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that whereas federal-aid funds are being used to participate in the cost of the project, the Minnesota State Transportation Fund grant shall be deposited directly into the federal-aid agency account and that the records of the County shall so state.

Miller moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve final payment to Midwest Contracting for bridge replacement on CSAH 19 and to adopt the following:

#### RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Contract 9011 has in all things been completed, and the County Board being fully advised in the premises;

NOW, THEN, BE IT RESOLVED, that we do hereby accept said completed project for and in behalf of the Watonwan County Public Works and authorize final payment as specified herein.

Branstad moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed 3 to 0 with Commissioner Svalland abstaining as a relative, to approve Matt Svalland's request for leave under the Leave Without Pay Program from September 21 to October 9.

Discussion was held regarding enforcement of farming of right-of-ways. Spellman noted that she plans to develop a policy and then educate landowners.

Commissioner Branstad reported on the Fair Board meeting. They approved using \$15,000 toward construction of the retaining wall at the Fairgrounds.

Correspondence was reviewed from Northland Securities regarding issuance of General Obligation Capital Improvement Plan Refunding Bonds. The 2013 Bonds that financed the Human Services Building renovation, and other projects would be refunded at an average savings of \$13,200 per year.

Branstad moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve proceeding with issuance of \$1,050,000 General Obligation Capital Improvement Plan Refunding Bonds, Series 2020A (based upon preliminary interest rates).

Red Rock Rural Water bought the Butterfield water tower, and requested removal of the old, unused antenna equipment. Alpha Wireless Communications quoted \$3,500.00 to perform the work.

Miller moved, Rinne seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve accepting the quote of the quote Alpha Wireless Communications in the amount of \$3,500.00 to remove the equipment. Branstad moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to adopt the following:

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SOUTHERN MINNESOTA RTCC  
PHASE 2 IMPLEMENTATION EFFORT

WHEREAS; the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Office of Transit and Active Transportation and the Minnesota Council On Access (MCOTA) seek to formalize and increase coordination between transportation providers that will result in better connections between providers, identification and elimination of transportation service gaps, identification and elimination of system redundancies, and development of a more efficient system of transportation, and easier customer access to providers that meet their travel needs; and

WHEREAS; MnDOT is providing the financial and technical support for the creation of a statewide network of Regional Transportation Coordination Councils (RTCCs) throughout Greater Minnesota to meet those goals; and

WHEREAS; the Mankato/North Mankato Area planning Organization (MAPO) administered an RTCC Phase 1 planning grant and led the coordination of transportation stakeholders in South-Central Minnesota to create an Operational Implementation Plan for the Southern Minnesota RTCC; and

WHEREAS; Watonwan County is a transportation stakeholder in South-Central Minnesota that seeks to ensure an efficient and cost-effective transportation system that improves the mobility of “transportation-disadvantaged” individuals, such as older adults, individuals with disabilities, individuals with low incomes, and/or military veterans; and

WHEREAS; Watonwan County understands that the RTCC Phase 2 implementation effort will include (but not necessarily be limited to):

- Organizing the RTCC membership, board, and staff to implement the RTCC Work Plan tasks
- Implementing Work Plan tasks such as coordinating transportation services and resources; providing communication, training, and organizational support; and implementing mobility strategies.
- Working towards statewide coordination emphasis areas such as a Transportation Management Coordination Center (TMCC) and volunteer driver programs

NOW BE IT NOW RESOLVED; that Watonwan County supports the Southern Minnesota RTCC to apply for Phase 2 implementation funding from MnDOT; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; that Watonwan County commits to working in good faith with the Southern Minnesota RTCC and other regional transportation stakeholders through the RTCC Phase 2 implementation effort, which will include providing staff time to assist the RTCC board and staff with input and feedback at critical decision-making stages.

Branstad moved, Rinne seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the reappointment of Scott Sanders to the South Central MN Multi-County HRA Board, providing he is still interested.

Miller moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the use of Value Payment Systems, LLC for electronic payments to Human Services.

County Auditor/Treasurer Kelly Pauling reported on CARES Act Committee's request to allocate an additional \$150,000 for Small Business Grants and \$5,000 more for Community Resiliency.

Branstad moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the additional CARES Act funding allocations.

Discussion was held regarding the preliminary budget and levy for 2021. Auditor/Treasurer Pauling reported on proposed budget adjustments including: General Fund 7.3% increase to provide for the Tax & CAMA system upgrades; Road and Bridge 10.3% increase for equipment and staff; Library fund 2.8% increase; Debt Service 64.4% reduction; and Human Services 9.6% decrease due to revenue increases. A 2% increase in the levy was discussed, but 3% would provide for possible relocation or remodeling of Land Management.

Branstad moved, Rinne seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve setting the proposed 2021 levy at \$10,635,687 reflecting a 3% increase.

The Truth in Taxation Public Hearing was scheduled for December 1 at 6:00 P.M.

Branstad moved, Svalland seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the appointment of Kathy Guyer to the Library Board, as nominated by Chairman Gustafson.

Miller moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve annual pay step increases for Melissa Haseman and Alexandra Davis.

Miller moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve participating in the AMC Human Resources Technical Assistance Program through David Drown and Associates at \$4,900.00 per year.

Branstad moved, Rinne seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the use of the Fairgrounds in December by the Sharing Tree.

A Public Hearing was convened at 10:00 for review of the Draft Watonwan River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Land Management Director David Haler and Assistant Director Chad Hildebrand were present, along with SWCD Supervisors Noren Durheim and Rich Enger. Haler reported that the Department of Ag had addressed several issues for the record. Keith Brekken was present and noted that tree snags and beaver damns weren't included in the plan. He also stated that Lake Hanska would be a good outlet to reduce flooding in the spring. Haler noted that the door was left open in the plan to provide for conversation about this, but the DNR won't

commit. Supervisor Enger stated that if there were some issues that the Board wanted to see included, it needed to be done soon.

The public hearing was closed at 10:35.

Branstad moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve submitting the final draft Watonwan River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan and all comments received to plan review authorities for final review, pending approval to submit by the Watonwan Watershed Planning Partnership Policy Committee.

Rinne moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to adjourn at 10:40.

Kathleen Svalland, Vice-Chair  
Watonwan County Board

Lisa Schumann, Deputy Clerk  
Watonwan County Board

ATTEST: Kelly Pauling  
Watonwan County Auditor/Treasurer