

# ROSEAU COUNTY COORDINATOR

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February. 28, 2006

RE: **Roseau County Board of Commissioners Meeting**

Contact: County Coordinator Trish Harren, 463-4248

The Roseau County Board of Commissioners met in regular session today. Commissioners Russ Walker and Alan Johnston reported on the designation of motorized vehicle trails in the Beltrami State Forest area. County and DNR officials are working in cooperation to assign trails for both motorized and non-motorized usage. Over 3100 trail segments are being considered. Currently under review is the trail below Bemis Hill. An open house to view the proposals is scheduled for March 6, 2006, from 12 to 8 p.m at the Public Safety Building in Warroad. A map of the trail system will be displayed.

A resolution to order new voting equipment for Roseau County was approved. County Auditor Anne Grantiz presented a memo that outlined the equipment to be purchased. Updating voting technology is in response to a federal Help America Vote Act. Through this legislation, local units of government responsible for election functions receive federal funding to purchase voting equipment.

A public hearing was held on a proposed Roseau County ordinance for clean up of clandestine drug lab sites. Sheriff Jule Hanson commented on his support of the ordinance. Included in the ordinance is the removal and safe-keeping of children until a drug manufacturing site is cleaned up. Also included is the responsibility of property owners of uninhabited buildings such as cabins, or who own rental properties, to monitor activity and to assume clean up costs should drug manufacturing occur on these properties. Roseau County is one of three counties in the state that does not currently have a clandestine drug lab site clean up ordinance. A vote by the Board on the ordinance will be put on the next Board meeting agenda.

A public hearing was also held on a proposed Roseau County ordinance to allow ATVs public right of way on designated county roads where wetlands or impassable ditch conditions prevent travel. Currently a Minnesota statute makes it unlawful for any person to operate an ATV on the roadway, shoulder, or inside bank or slope of any county State Aid Highway or county road. State and county roads permitting ATV travel defined within the ordinance were discussed by the Board, Assistant County Attorney Lisa Hanson, and County Engineer Brian Ketring. The public hearing was closed by Chairman Orris Rasmussen. Commissioner Russ Walker made a motion to approve the ordinance, which was passed with full Board approval.

The Board met with Carolyn Drude and Jerry Shannon of Ehlers & Associates to discuss the sale of 6.1 million dollars in bonds to finance the acquisition and construction of the county jail facility. The date for presenting bid proposals to the Board is March 28, 2006, at 12 p.m.

County Extension Agent Nathan Johnson presented upgraded bovine TB federal eradication requirements for the state requiring the testing of cattle, bison, and captive cervids (deer, elk, etc.) within ten miles of each infected operation and deer. This test must be repeated again in 12 months. Bovine TB was recently discovered in five northwest Minnesota cattle herds and one infected free-ranging deer. The U.S. Department has downgraded Minnesota's status from TB-Free to Modified Accredited Advanced (MAA). In order to regain status as a TB-Free state, Minnesota's cattle farms must remain free of bovine TB for two years after the last infected herd is depopulated. Johnson also introduced the addition of a Local Extension Educator for canola and grass seed production. This position will be funded in full the first year by a collaboration between the Minnesota Canola Council and the Northern Minnesota Forage, Turf, Grass Seed Advisory Council. This will be a local position housed in the Regional Extension Office and will have a narrow scope of responsibilities specific to research and work with these agricultural crops in the northwest Minnesota region.