

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROSEAU COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

December 16, 2008

The Board of Commissioners of Roseau County, Minnesota met in the Courthouse in the City of Roseau, Minnesota on Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 8:30 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by County Board Chairman Jack Swanson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Commissioners present were Jack Swanson, Alan Johnston, Orris Rasmussen, Russell Walker and Mark Foldesi

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Benefit payout to Chad Maurstad, Certification of Trail Completion for the Pelan and BISF Section 1 Trails, approval of the Joint Powers Agreement between the State of Minnesota and Roseau County, and approval of a Forthwith Payment to Dave Grafstrom were added to the Consent Agenda. Acknowledgement of Phil Kotta and establishment of a Sheriff Deputy Interview panel were added to discussion. A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen and carried unanimously to adopt the revised agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion to adopt the consent agenda was made by Commissioner Johnston, seconded by Commissioner Foldesi and carried unanimously.

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, approved the Roseau River Trails Phase III Resolution accepting responsibility as the Sponsoring Agency.

The Board, by adoption of its Consent Agenda, re-appointed Jule Hanson to the Northwestern Minnesota Juvenile Center Board.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved the Real Vision Software, Inc., Annual Software Support renewal agreement for one year.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved the IBM 3995 C42 Optical Drive contract for one year.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved publication of the 2007 Financial Summary.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved a benefit payout to Chad Maurstad in the amount of \$17,948.89.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved the Certification of Trail Completion 1st Benchmark for the BISF Section 1 Trail in the amount of \$8,073.60.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved the Certification of Trail Completion 1st Benchmark for the Pelan Trail in the amount of \$40,368.00.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved a Joint Powers Agreement between the State of Minnesota, acting through its Office of the Secretary of State and the County Auditor for the provision of contract services to provide absentee ballot review services for previously rejected absentee ballot envelopes in the Minnesota Senate race.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved a Forthwith payment to Dave Grafstrom in the amount of \$593.57 for Bovine TB contract work.

The Board, by adoption of its consent agenda, approved payment of bills as follows:

WARRANTS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT 11/26/2008

AMOUNT	VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT	VENDOR NAME
61004.25	HOLTHUSEN CONSTRUCTION INC	1377.32	HUMANA DENTAL
1502.00	KB BOBCAT SERVICE	74228.91	KNIFE RIVER MATERIALS
1350.23	MN ENERGY RESOURCES	20000.00	NW MN MENTORING PROGRAM
54615.00	NW MN SERV COOP-BLUE CROSS BLU	637.02	ROSEAU ELECTRIC COOP INC
43176.14	WRIGHT CONSTRUCTION CO INC		

4 PAYMENTS LESS THAN \$300 717.83
****** FINAL TOTAL..... \$258,608.70 ******

WARRANTS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT 12/04/2008

AMOUNT	VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT	VENDOR NAME
312.72	AMERITAS LIFE INSURANCE CORP	2080.70	CAPITAL GUARDIAN TRUST CO
357.49	CELLULAR 2000-UNICEL	3343.14	CENTURYTEL
497.50	MARK HAUGEN PHD LP	672.15	LAW ENFORCEMENT LABOR SERVICES
7151.25	MII LIFE-VEBA	811.22	MN CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENT CENTE
1053.00	MN DEPT OF FINANCE-TREAS	2977.87	NATIONWIDE RETIREMENT SOLUTION
48533.65	RJ ZAVORAL & SONS INC		

10 PAYMENTS LESS THAN \$300 777.18
****** FINAL TOTAL..... \$68,567.87 ******

WARRANTS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT 12/04/2008

AMOUNT	VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT	VENDOR NAME
3085.39	BADGER CITY	4181.19	GREENBUSH CITY
3420.60	NW REGIONAL DEV COMM	383.95	ROOSEVELT CITY
41040.15	ROSEAU CITY	76370.83	ROSEAU RIVER WATERSHED DIST
2943.38	SCHOOL DIST 2358	48519.37	SCHOOL DIST 2683
1034.00	SCHOOL DIST 447	48643.81	SCHOOL DIST 676
232016.22	SCHOOL DIST 682	68100.39	SCHOOL DIST 690
5740.16	TOWN OF BARNETT	9054.94	TOWN OF BARTO
331.61	TOWN OF BEAVER	3844.87	TOWN OF CEDARBEND
2978.33	TOWN OF DEER	3848.84	TOWN OF DEWEY
4498.81	TOWN OF DIETER	3899.83	TOWN OF ENSTROM
7579.60	TOWN OF FALUN	2749.91	TOWN OF GOLDEN VALLEY
7013.02	TOWN OF GRIMSTAD	5737.09	TOWN OF HEREIM
3189.95	TOWN OF HUSS	5265.62	TOWN OF JADIS
7773.12	TOWN OF LAKE	4314.08	TOWN OF LAONA
3641.15	TOWN OF LIND	3301.90	TOWN OF MALUNG
4201.48	TOWN OF MICKINOCK	3521.12	TOWN OF MOOSE
4737.50	TOWN OF MORANVILLE	4359.12	TOWN OF NERESON
891.56	TOWN OF PALMVILLE	816.86	TOWN OF POHLITZ
7922.19	TOWN OF POLONIA	2003.70	TOWN OF POPLAR GROVE
2871.43	TOWN OF REINE	3269.56	TOWN OF ROSS
5125.28	TOWN OF SKAGEN	3023.89	TOWN OF SOLER
3016.03	TOWN OF SPRUCE	6787.56	TOWN OF STAFFORD
4913.38	TOWN OF STOKES	30743.09	TWO RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT
2459.67	WARROAD CITY	18849.79	WARROAD PORT AUTHORITY

STEVE BUTLER – FAR NORTH TRANSIT

Steve Butler from Far North Transit met with the Board to discuss bus replacement costs. Roseau County appropriates \$3000 annually to fund the county's portion of the bus replacement 80-20% cost share with MN-DOT. The cost to purchase a bus is approximately \$62,000. The county's portion of that cost is \$12,400. The Roseau bus will need to be replaced in 2009. After discussion the Board agreed to keep the 2009 appropriation at the Board approved amount and appropriate the remaining county share at the time of purchase. Mr. Butler thanked the Board for their support of rural transit and the appointment of excellent committee members. The three recent appointments include Glenda Phillippe, Rachel Green, and Jim Hallan.

DISCUSSION

The Board discussed the ideas generated at the joint Committee of the Whole Department Head meeting held on December 15, 2008 regarding the potential reduction in county program aid. The Board asked Coordinator Klein to organize the ideas and send them to the Department Head to rank. Coordinator Klein suggested that the Board begin by implementing voluntary budget reduction ideas such as Unpaid Time Off, Leaves of Absence, reduced work week schedules, early retirement, and voluntary freezes in wages. Ms. Klein noted that elected officials could individually agree to wage freezes, but that for non-elected employees a pay freeze would have to be an all or nothing implementation otherwise compensation would be skewed and the county's pay equity could be negatively impacted. The Board asked Coordinator Klein to request Department Heads to poll their employees about a possible 2008 wage freeze and survey employees regarding top priorities. The Board agreed to have the Budget as a standing item on future board agendas.

Commissioner Walker expressed concern regarding county employees receiving a 3.5% increase stating that it will not be well received by the public. Walker suggested that elected officials decline the 2009 wage increase. Commissioner Johnston stated that most county employees are not paid by local levy dollars, noting that Highway Department employees are funded by county state aid dollars and that Social Service employees are funded by a reimbursement of state and federal tax dollars based on services provided in Roseau County. Johnston stated that it is the revenue fund where expenditures for wages impact the local levy including the Sheriff's Office and all courthouse offices. Walker stated that while some employee wages are reimbursable, the amount is not dependent on the actual wage paid and that a wage increase would impact the local levy. Johnston noted that government employment is different than private sector employment such as Marvin Windows, Polaris Industries, and Central Broiler in that when these businesses have a good year, employees receive a bonus. When the economy is good, nothing changes for government employees; there are no bonuses or employee incentives of any type. Commissioner Swanson stated that the county has already signed contracts with three labor groups and promised to hold employees harmless in 2009 and stated that he is not comfortable going back on his word. Swanson reminded the Board that employees agreed to a modest wage increase in 2008 (2%) as part of a three year contract agreement with the Highway Department Employee Associations. Swanson also noted that other local units of government in Roseau County including the Roseau School District and the City of Roseau intend to honor the labor agreements that they have ratified which include a 4% and 3.5% increase respectively. Commissioner Foldesi stated that because the county spends conservatively and in most budget cycles has a positive budget to actual at the end of the year, the county has been able to build a reserve for a rainy

day. Foldesi added that it is now raining and the responsible thing to do is utilize those cash reserves.

Chair Swanson was excused at 9:50. Vice-chair Johnston assumed responsibility as Chair.

Commissioner Foldesi asked the Board if they are concerned with making an impression on tax payers with their decisions or if they were going to do what they believe is right for the county. Foldesi added that sometimes decisions are based on perception versus what is really the right thing to do. Foldesi polled each commissioner individually on this question.

Commissioner Johnston's stated that while public perception is important, the Board needs to make decisions based on the big picture. Commissioner Walker stated that it needs to be a balance. Commissioner Rasmussen stated that he has always believed that if you can satisfy 51% of the constituents you are doing your job. Rasmussen noted that you need to weigh in perception with the long term benefits for the county. Rasmussen added that the Board is responsible for the welfare of the general public and the Commissioners have been given the responsibility to do that.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Engineer Ketring advised the Board that the Highway Department has already submitted five economic stimulus projects to the District Office. Ketring informed the Board that to be approved projects must be ready to go in 90 days and not already be scheduled. Ketring stated that the projects of choice are overlays. Ketring stated that the District Engineers will attempt to distribute economic stimulus funding equitably throughout their districts. Ketring noted that there are a number of construction projects already on-line for 2009 and if any or all of these economic stimulus projects are approved, his staff will be stretched very thin.

Commissioner Rasmussen asked if there are any projects that can be researched similar to the New Deal WPA projects. Rasmussen noted that water retention projects would be excellent economic stimulus projects and provide great benefit to our county. Ketring stated that the Roseau River Watershed is planning a number of projects. Ketring added that the Flood Task Force would be a good place to have that discussion.

Engineer Ketring asked the Board if they would like to renew their membership in the Transportation Alliance. Commissioner Johnston noted that they are an effective lobbying arm for transportation and was instrumental in helping get a transportation bill approved last session. Johnston noted that while rural counties did not benefit greatly from the transportation bill, that it was not the fault of legislation, and the Transportation Alliance but rather a problem with the transportation funding formula. Johnston stated that it is important that the rural voice continue to be heard and that the Transportation Alliance is another place to deliver that message. Johnston recommended the county continue its membership. Engineer Ketring requested the Board approve a resolution supporting the AMC Transportation Alliance in an effort to receive a portion of a 3/8 cents sales tax to help defer rising costs of complying with environmental regulations on local road authority projects. A motion was made by Commissioner Rasmussen, seconded by Commissioner Foldesi and carried unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

2008-12-10

WHEREAS, the costs of obtaining a permit and being in compliance with the requirements of a storm water control, NPDES/SDS (National & State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) for road and bridge construction projects have become a financial burden to local road authorities.

WHEREAS, construction costs have risen rapidly and the high cost of storm water control measures limits the number and size of projects that a local road authority can deliver on an annual basis.

WHEREAS, the recent approval of a 3/8 cent sales tax to protect the environment of the State of Minnesota provides for a new source of funding, which may be distributed to local governments to help protect the environment.

THEREFORE, Roseau County supports that a portion of these new funds shall be used to reimburse local road authorities for all expenses incurred to implement and be in compliance with the NPDES/SDS and all other permits for road and bridge construction activity.

Engineer Ketring requested final payout on two FEMA projects. A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen and carried unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

2008-12-11

WHEREAS, FEMA PW 271 – Project #3 on County Ditch #9 – Lateral 5 with Beito Repair, has in all things been completed, and the County Board fully advised in the premises;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Board does hereby accept said completed project for and on behalf of the Roseau County Highway Department, and authorizes final payment in the amount \$5,346.54.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen and carried unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

2008-12-12

WHEREAS, FEMA PW 271 – Project #5 on County Ditch #20 with Goulet Construction has in all things been completed, and the County Board fully advised in the premises,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Board does hereby accept said completed project for and on behalf of the Roseau County Highway Department, and authorizes final payment in the amount \$6,531.23.

Engineer Ketring addressed the Board regarding “Watch for Children” signs. Mr. Ketring confirmed that it is the county’s policy not to install signs of this nature. Mr. Ketring advised the Board that placement of this type of sign provides a false sense of security to parents and children, noted they are not enforceable by law, and that research indicates that they are not effective. Mr. Ketring informed the Board that for these reasons it is the current policy to decline placement of these signs in Roseau County and that the Highway Department is removing previously installed signs through attrition. The Board concurred that this is a good policy and will relay the underlying reasons to their constituents when asked.

Commissioner Swanson re-entered the meeting at 10:45 am.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Swanson reported on the following committee meetings: Roseau River Watershed Board, 12/3/08: Discussed levy authority of non-elected boards and the proposed AMC policy platform that includes legislative action requiring watershed board directors to be elected. Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board, 12/4/08: Approved a proposed wetland banking cooperative; discussed Lessard Council opposition; Heard presentation on MN statewide conservation and preservation plan; resolved to oppose any changes to W.C.A. rules which require landowners to report exempt activities. Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus, 12/7/08: Discussed how County Commissioners should take greater ownership role in lobbying efforts on behalf of MRCC. Association of Minnesota counties annual conference, 12-8:10, 2008: Attended workshop sessions including technology, open meeting law, dealing with difficult constituents, county innovations and efficiencies, the Minnesota Redesign Project; met with MN Association of Professional County Economic Developers. Bovine TB Stakeholder Group Planning Session, 12/12/08: Met with Dave Grafstrom to plan first Bovine TB stakeholders group meeting. Roseau County Committee on Aging, 12/15/08: Discussed bus replacement program, ridership trends and adopted amended bi-laws. Committee of the Whole Department Head Meeting, 12/15/08: Discussed ideas for responding to the potential loss of county program aid.

Commissioner Johnston was excused at 11:00 am and deferred committee reports to the December 30, 2008 Board meeting.

Orris Rasmussen had no meetings to report.

Russell Walker reported on the following committee meetings: Minnesota Rural County Caucus, 12/7/08: Discussed possible election of Watershed officers and EPA's possible methane gas tax on cattle owners. Association of Minnesota Counties, 12/8/08: Attended Natural resources legislative platform session and a session on a six step program designed to reduce sexual violence in Minnesota. Board of Animal Health and USDA meetings, 12/10/08: Discussed Bovine TB eradication program, enhancing controls on importation of cattle from Mexico and their movement in the United States. Wildlife Depredation Meeting, 12/11/08: Discussed improvements to the program including adding elk under its own category.

Mark Foldesi reported on the following committee meetings: KaMar Board: 12/15/08: Discussed purchase of new bailer. Roseau County Soil and Water Conservation District meeting: 12/16/08: Discussed budget and request to voucher for the \$5000 appropriated.

The Board discussed the Roseau County Soil and Water Conservation District request to voucher for the \$5000 capital appropriation earmarked for the purchase of a different vehicle for the Ag inspector Program. SWCD plans to purchase the vehicle in mid-winter when other funding becomes available. SWCD is concerned that they will lose the funding. The Board requested Coordinator Klein contact SWCD Director Scott Johnson and tell him to request the \$5000 capital appropriation as part of their November and December voucher.

The Board discussed a request from Crime Stoppers to proclaim January Crimestoppers Month. A motion was made by Commissioner Walker, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen and unanimously carried to proclaim January Crimestoppers Month.

County Attorney Lisa Hanson clarified questions regarding open-meeting law. Ms. Hanson stated that the intent of the open meeting law is to aid transparency but not to hamper county business. Ms. Hanson advised the Board to discontinue the practice of amending non-emergency items onto the agenda and suggested that a copy of the Board packet and any materials provided to the Board during the meeting be made available to the public. Coordinator Klein informed the Ms. Hanson that an electronic board packet is in development and should be available early in 2009. The public will then be able to view both the agenda and all support materials through the agenda that is emailed out or by viewing the agenda on the county web site.

Upon motion carried the board adjourned at 12:35 pm. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for December 30, 2008 at 8:30 am.

Attest:

Date: _____

Teresa Klein, County Coordinator
Roseau County, Minnesota

Jack Swanson, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners
Roseau County, Minnesota