

WATONWAN COUNTY BOARD
AUGUST 15, 2023
9:00 A.M.

The Watonwan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on August 15, 2023 at 9:00 A.M. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Courthouse, City of St. James. The following Board members were present: Jim Branstad, Dillon Melheim, Bill Miller, Jim Pettersen and Scott Westman. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Representatives from MnDOT were present to review the District 7 Capital Highway Investment Plan. Zachary Tess and Angie Piltaver reviewed the status of State highways in the area. Highway 4 north and south of St. James was scheduled for 2024 and would be brought to 10-ton capacity.

Public Works Director Darrell Pettis was present and noted that the 2023 projects were completed, and final payment requests were forthcoming. He reviewed upcoming projects. A proposal was received from ISG for the Watline Trail Stage II design. The Bike Trail project was approved for federal funding at \$1.31 million and bids needed to be let by April 2025.

Branstad moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed 4 to 1 with Melheim opposed, to approve the Professional Design Services Proposal of ISG for Watline Trail State II, in the amount of \$132,100.00 for design, permitting, construction documents and bidding services for the bike trail expansion.

Pettis met with the Nelson Township Board and they wanted to proceed with the Bridge L-8033 project. He reviewed an Agreement with Erickson Engineering for design services. The County would be reimbursed for the costs from the State and Township.

Melheim moved, Pettersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the Engineering Services Agreement with Erickson Engineering in the amount of \$55,540.00 survey and design of the project to replace Bridge L8033 on 710th Avenue over the North Fork Watonwan River in Nelson Township.

Commissioner Branstad noted that there was no handicapped accessibility by the Veteran's Memorial at Memorial Park in St. James. Pettis would check into it.

Base 1 Stabilization quotes were due in the coming days. Due to the three-week gap before the next County Board meeting, Pettis requested to begin the project at the estimated cost of \$50,000.

Pettersen moved, Melheim seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve proceeding with the Base I projects at the estimated cost of \$50,000.

Pettis presented the 2022 Road and Bridge Annual Report as required by statute. He would review it with the Board at a meeting in September.

A proposal was received from ISG to create a master plan for Kansas Lake County Park.

Branstad moved, Melheim seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the Professional Design Services Proposal for Kansas Lake Park Master Plan ISG in the amount of \$16,200 for data collection, preliminary concepts, the master plan and grant application for upgrades to the park.

Pettis inquired whether he should pursue membership in the Minnesota Transportation Alliance. By general consensus, the Board asked him to inquire on the cost of joining.

Pettis discussed maintenance and repair of existing driveway and field entrance culverts. There is an existing driveway on a paved road and the culvert is shot. He inquired whether it was the intent that the landowner pay for this. All of the County's supply of culverts were sold a few years back. Pettis gave his opinion that the County should have a supply, and should take care of culverts of existing driveways in the County's right-of-way.

Melheim moved, Pettersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve paying for culverts under existing driveways in the right-of-way.

Pettis noted that the roof was leaking at the St. James shop. The Board's consensus was to have it checked into.

One quote was received from the State bid list for road salt. No other contractor responded to the request for bids.

Miller moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve accepting the quote of Blackstrap, Inc. for the purchase of approximately 400 tons of bulk road salt in the amount of \$92.22 per ton.

MCIT Risk Management Consultant Tom Suppes was present to review the 2023 MCIT Report. The Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust is a Joint Powers risk sharing pool comprised of 81 counties plus affiliated entities. He noted that new for 2023 was the cyber-coverage being handled in-house.

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

Branstad moved, Westman 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—\$59,042.68; Solid Waste Fund—\$18,654.54; Building/Equipment Fund—\$13,295.00; Ditch Fund—\$5,806.25; and the Road and Bridge Fund—\$210,937.72; to pay the following credit cards: General Fund—\$4,452.49; Solid Waste Fund—\$728.17; Road and Bridge Fund—\$190.00; Library Fund—\$62.99; Soil & Water Conservation—\$289.06; and the Building/ Equipment Fund—1,114.95; and to approve the July Disbursements listing as presented.

Melheim moved, Pettersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve Fairgrounds Lease Agreements with C & B Operations for September 6 at a fee of \$150.00, and the Watonwan County Relay for Life Committee from September 6 to 10 at a fee of \$1.00 to conduct the annual Relay for Life event, both with proof of liability insurance required.

Branstad moved, Melheim seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve issuing a Solid Waste Hauler's License to the Picker-Uppers.

Pettersen moved, Branstad seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the request for a credit card for Chief Deputy Sheriff Mark Slater.

Pettersen moved, Miller seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve increases to the Assessment Per Parcel Fee Schedule charged to the cities and townships, as proposed at 5% for the 2024 Assessment, 5% for 2025 and 3% for 2026.

Miller moved, Melheim seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the Training Request submitted by Ryan Visser.

Branstad moved, Melheim seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the reclassification of Jody Anderson to Technical Specialist B21 plus her annual pay step increase.

Branstad moved, Pettersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the appointment of Jill Fast to the position of License Center Clerk.

Branstad moved, Melheim seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to approve the appointment of Jesus Sarmiento as a 911 Dispatcher, dependent on satisfactory background check.

Branstad moved, Pettersen seconded and the motion passed unanimously, to adjourn at 11:20.

Jim Pettersen, Chairman
Watonwan County Board

Lisa Schumann, Deputy Clerk
Watonwan County Board

ATTEST: Kelly Pauling
Watonwan County Auditor/Treasurer