

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: Tuesday, January 8, 2019

9:00 a.m.

Place: Commissioners Room, Courthouse, Caledonia, MN

Members Present: Jack Miller, Eric Johnson, Teresa Walter and Fred Arnold.

Others Present: Administrator Babinski; Reporter Moorhead; Finance Director Lapham; Auditor/Treasurer Donna Trehus, Ted Hansen, Yvonne Krogstad, Assessor Cresswell, Robert Burns, Personnel Director Arrick-Kruger, Betts Reedy and John Beckman.

Presiding: Administrator Babinski, Chairperson pro tem

Call to order.

Administrator Babinski requested nominations for Chairperson for the year 2019. Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to nominate Commissioner Walter, seconded by Commissioner Miller and carried unanimously.

Chairperson Walter requested nominations for Vice-Chairperson for the year 2019. Motion was made by Commissioner Walter to nominate Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Miller and carried unanimously.

Chairperson Walter asked for motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Miller asked for a motion to remove and table the second item on the Agenda, Health Educator position, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and approved unanimously. Commissioner Miller stated that as a member of the personnel committee, he is not comfortable with approving at this time.

Motion was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and approved unanimously to approve the remaining consent agenda.

File No. 1 - Motion was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and unanimously carried to approve payment of the license center and Human Services disbursements and the following claims:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 94,251.14
Road & Bridge Fund	\$24,080.96

Total	\$118,332.10
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Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the December 26, 2018 meeting.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Walter asked for approval of Action Items being as follows:

- 1) File No. 2 - Approve conditional Use Permit for Earl and Nancy Emerick.

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and approved unanimously.

- 2) Approve Annual Minimum Salary for Officials Elected in 2019.

Auditor/Treasurer	\$5,000.00
Recorder	\$5,000.00
Sheriff	\$5,000.00
Attorney	\$5,000.00
Commissioner	\$5,000.00

Motion by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and approved unanimously.

- 3) File No 3. - Adopt Resolution 19-01 To Use Alternative Method to Disseminate Bids and Requests.

Motion by Commissioner Arnold, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and approved unanimously.

- 4) File No 4. - Adopt Resolution 19-02 To Authorize Professional Association Memberships and Defray Expenses.

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and approved unanimously.

- 5) File No. 5 - Adopt Resolution 19-03 To Appoint County Medical Examiner.

Motion by Commissioner Arnold, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and carried unanimously.

- 6) File No 6. - Approve 2019 Appropriations.

SE Minnesota Initiative Fund	\$3,400.00
SEMAAA	\$2,000.00
SELCO	\$157,190.00
Emergency Medical Service	\$10,000.00
SEMCAC – Transportation Program	\$1,500.00
SEMCAC - Senior & Caregiver Advocacy	\$1,500.00
SEMCAC - Senior Nutrition	\$2,000.00
Historical Society	\$37,500.00
Historical Society - Matching Funds	5,000.00
Southern MN Tourism/Historic Bluff Co	\$952.00
Ag Society	\$20,000.00
Ag Society-Prior Yr Financials Additional	\$ 4,000.00
Bluff Country HRA	\$5,000.00
RRSWCD	\$129,000.00

Discussion was held regarding the appropriations. Commissioner Johnson had received a call from Dave Walters from Soil and Water Department. Mr. Walters indicated that he needed to know by January 14th whether or not this was going to be approved due to receiving matching funds from the State. Commissioner Arnold expressed some discomfort approving the entire amount and questioned the \$14,400. Commissioner Arnold questioned if we may be paying double for that.

Motion by Commissioner Arnold, seconded by Commissioner Miller to approve the appropriations without the \$14,400.00 for the Feedlot. Motion carried unanimously.

- 7) File No. 7 - Approve 2018 Budget Amendments.

Motion by Commissioner Arnold, seconded by Commissioner Miller and carried unanimously.

- 8) File No. 8 - Approve 2019 Board Meeting Schedule.

A motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and carried unanimously to approve the meeting dates for the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month with strategic planning and workshops in between the scheduled board meetings with 7 days prior notice. Commissioner Arnold also requested that it be listed as an agenda item for consideration.

A motion was later rescinded and approved by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Miller to correct the regular scheduled board meeting dates to be held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month.

- 9) File No. 9 - Approve 2019 Committee Appointments

Commissioner Johnson offered to assume the roles held by previous Commissioner Zmyewski to simplify the process. Administrator Babinski updated appointment replacement.

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and approved unanimously.

Commissioner Johnson requested that he reduce his current County Commissioner salary of \$19,016.34 to be reduced to \$7,200.00. He felt that with higher administrative costs and with the increased levy, it would make sense. Commissioner Johnson indicated that he is fully supportive of Administrator Babinski and feels confident he will find savings within the County. Commissioner Johnson stated that with the decrease in commissioner's salary, it would save the county approximately \$59,000.00 and feels that Administrator Babinski is improving the moral with the County employees.

Finance Director Lapham informed the board that per State Statute 375.055 that a single commissioner cannot accept a salary unlike another.

Commissioner Miller commented that he did not choose to do the job based on pay, however based on other counties, we are one of the lowest paid commissioners. Commissioner Miller felt that based on his education and private business ownership, he has much to contribute to the board. Commissioner Miller reiterated that he was in no way disparaging Commissioner Johnson's request but stated he would not choose to reduce his salary. Commissioner Miller stated that each year that he has served as commissioner, the salary has not increased.

Commissioner Arnold stated that he did not take on the job based on what it was paid, however logically speaking it comes out to be about \$15-17 per hr. not including time spent driving, etc.

Commissioner Walter felt the salary was sufficient based on the amount of time spent reviewing and preparation.

File No. 10 – The printing bid for calendar year 2019 filed pursuant to advertisement, was opened and read. It was noted that this is a joint bid for the Spring Grove Herald and the Caledonia Argus.

<u>Official Newspaper for 2019-JOINT BID</u> Spring Grove Herald & Caledonia Argus)	\$6.50 per column inch
<u>Miscellaneous Notices-8.20</u>	No Bid

First Printing of 2018 Financial Statement

Caledonia Argus

\$6.30 per column inch

Second Printing of 2018 Financial Statement

Spring Grove Herald

\$5.00 per column inch

Publication of Delinquent Tax List

Joint bid Spring Grove Herald/Caledonia Argus

\$9.00 per column inch

Motion was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Arnold, and unanimously carried to accept the bid as presented.

Committee Reports:

Commissioner Arnold met with EDA Director Allison Wagner proposing alternative ways to broaden the base for agricultural based businesses. This is a project that has been ongoing for some time. Due to decreasing Ag income, this has become necessary to try and keep the younger generation to stay on the family farm or bring members back to the community.

Commissioner Miller expounded on EDA Director Allison Wagner, who has been working diligently doing internships within the communities to engage young people with a preview of the ins and outs of various businesses.

Commissioner Johnson expressed that we need to be careful not to condemn our modern Ag producers. Fertilizer input is expensive and is needed to feed crops and improve soil. Modern Ag guys are under attack and he encouraged the board to realize that most farmers are good stewards of the land and are not careless with their current operations.

Commissioner Miller is meeting with Hiawatha Valley Mental Health. They are searching for a new director and have come up with three viable candidates. They are to schedule a review and will make a decision.

Commissioner Walter did a walk thru Botcher Park and reported that it is beautiful and the scouts have done a remarkable job. The Caledonia workforce agency is working on internships and there is a meeting coming up with more information to come.

Commissioner Miller shared a letter from La Crescent City and the City Council addressing concerns and processes they would like regarding market values, tax statements and meeting schedules. Commissioner's Miller and Walter along with Assessor Cresswell have both met with the Council Mayor, City Administrator and Finance Director. Assessor Cresswell was present to remind the board that the tax statements will not be mailed until the last week of March by the Auditor/Treasurer. Due to the decrease in the County Levy from 6.94% to 2%, the tax amounts based on the proposed will more than likely decrease. The meeting dates that will be listed on the Valuation Notice that comes with the statement will give the taxpayers the date of

the “Board of Appeal” meeting. This is the scheduled time where a taxpayer may dispute the Adjusted Market shown on the statement. The “Proposed Taxes” received in November is only the tax amount calculated using the “Proposed Levy” set by the County Board. The meeting dates on the Proposed Statements are primarily for the public to attend the meeting in which they can review the budgets of various departments with the County. Department Heads are available for questions at that time.

Assessor Cresswell stated she offered alternatives to taxpayers with large adjustments to their statements such as tax court, and tax rebates depending on qualifications. Assessor Cresswell stated that to say she would notify everyone of changes in values would be a “stretch”. Everyone will have an opportunity to attend the scheduled “Board of Appeal” meeting.

Commissioner Johnson felt that the process is confusing and frustrating to many taxpayers and felt the best approach is to explain the process by educating and thoroughly explaining the process.

Commissioner Arnold talked about looking back at last year and looking ahead. The past year has brought the retirement of several key people within the county, restructuring of departments looking to gain efficiencies and the new County Administrator position. Commissioner Arnold felt the changes should free up the county board to pay more attention to detail, in particular, focusing on the Highway Building project and the Historic Jail.

Commissioner Johnson agrees that the one of the board’s goals should be to move forward with plans to build the Highway Building. Commissioner Johnson would like to see a scaled back version being completed in phases to complete the project.

Public Comment:

Jim Rozovics presented concerns in regard to the previous seats that were open for the Board of Adjustments which had been filled on December 26, 2018. Back in November he had applied as an applicant but not heard anything back. There was some question as to the process of how they were filled. Commissioner Walter explained that the county board uses a process approved by the board (ref: File #12, Jan 16 2018: Houston County Planning Commission Vacancies, adopted 5/16/17) where applications are requested, consolidated by the County Staff and forwarded to the Board members, who each rank order the candidates. The top two candidates are forwarded to the full board for a vote and appointment. Administrator Babinski reported that he will put a procedure in place to inform the applicants to explain the process and properly inform those not selected.

Public Comment:

Yvonne Krogstad was present to explain how she viewed the process of interviews and the hiring process for the Board of Adjustments. Commissioner Arnold explained the process

was cumbersome and felt it necessary to simplify the process so some changes were made since she served on the board. It was explained that the board does not appoint the commission members.

There being no further business and the time being 11:10 a.m., motion was made by Commissioner Arnold, seconded by Commissioner Miller and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting, the next advertised meeting being Tuesday, January 22, 2019.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Teresa Walter, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Jeffrey Babinski, County Administrator

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Date: Tuesday, January 22, 2019

9:30 a.m.

Place: Commissioners Room, Courthouse, Caledonia, MN

Members Present: Eric Johnson, Teresa Walter and Fred Arnold

Members Not Present: Jack Miller

Others Present: Administrator Babinski; Reporter Moorhead; Finance Director Lapham; Auditor-Treasurer Trehus, EDA Coordinator Allison Wager, Robert Burns, John Pugleasa, Julie Amundson, Maintenance Foreman Pat Burns, Shane McCabe and Barry Colsch.

Call to order.

Commissioner Arnold made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Arnold made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2019 board meeting and January 15, 2019 Workgroup session.

File No. 1 - Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve payment of the license center and Human Services disbursements and the following claims:

County Revenue Fund	\$ 266,740.49
Road & Bridge Fund	104,275.90

Total	\$370,986.39
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Public Comment:

None

Economic Development Director Allison Wagner presented the annual report for Houston County Economic Development Authority. The Houston County EDA welcomed 2018 with the launch of two foundational projects: 1) A rebranding process complete with a new logo and a functional new website, and 2) the expansion of the Bluff Country Collaborative program, which

has grown into a strong partnership program with eight schools, over 50 businesses, and several organizational partners.

The new website, <https://houstoncountymn.com/>, contains tips on starting a new business and tourism. The Bluff Country Collaborative works to inform and prepare students for future job opportunities. The Collaborative is preparing for “Senior Day” on March 15th in Winona, Mn. Where local entrepreneurs and several business professionals have the opportunity to hold mock interviews and talk to students. The EDA established another goal for 2019 - to work with the U of M Extension and WDI (Workforce Development Inc) to help local farmers looking to find new opportunities on or off the farm. The EDA is also currently working with WDI to find solutions for the shortage of childcare in Houston County. Ms. Wager will be available Tuesdays and Wednesday during regular business hours. Her office is located in the Historic Court House Building in Room 211.

Commissioner Walter asked for approval of the following Consent and Action Items:

- 1) File No 2 – 1 Watershed, 1 Plan letter from AMC

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 2) File No 3 - Annual Ethics Review, Code of Ethics & Statements

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 3) File No 4 – Approve low bid for SAP 028-599-085, SAP 028-604-036 Bridge Projects on Old Indian Trail Road and CSAH 4 near Spring Grove, MN. Maintenance Foreman Burns recommended approval and indicated the cost factors were all legitimate, despite being slightly above the department’s estimate of \$566,390.50.

Minnowa Construction Inc. Harmony, MN 55939	\$604,321.61
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Zenke Inc La Crescent, MN 55947	\$627,646.40
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Icon Constructors, LLC Mabel, MN 55954	\$634,870.90
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Generation X Construction LLC Rushford, MN 55971	\$677,268.70
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Midwest Contracting, LLC Marshall, MN 56258	\$685,744.00
Landwehr Construction, Inc. St. Cloud, MN 56302	\$728,079.35
Alcon Construction Rochester, MN 55904	\$752,937.73
A-1 Excavating Inc. Bloomer, WI 54724	\$770,549.20
Carl Bolander & Sons St. Paul, MN 55107	\$863,706.01

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and unanimously carried, to approve the low bid of \$604,321.61 submitted by Minnowa Construction.

- 4) File No 5 – Approve Highway Department Budgeted Equipment Purchases- Maintenance Foreman Burns presented the equipment purchases, which included downsizing the number of trailers and rollers needed, with purchase of a used roller that significantly increased capability over the two current rollers, which would be sold. Mr. Burns explained the potential price difference on the plow truck, with the option of a tarp system preinstalled. The Board saw the merit in purchasing it now, with the potential mandate for it in the future as well as improved safety for county residents. Despite price variations on some of the equipment, Maintenance Foreman Burns felt the department would still come in under budget with the purchases requested. Administrator Babinski expressed that the highway department’s plow trucks are in a decent rotation schedule and explained we have the right balance if we keep up with replacing one a year, which puts them on a 12-year replacement cycle.

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

Administrator Babinski and Maintenance Forman Burns requested one addition to the approved equipment list, which they left off the original request as the Highway Department was still researching purchase options at the time the list was prepared. The draft 2019 budget included \$90,000 for a new loader for the Hokah satellite shop. The final, approved budget included only \$68,000 for a used rather than a new loader. The intended used loader is no longer available for purchase. Administrator Babinski

requested that the County board authorize up to a \$70,000 cap, as Mr. Burns was able to find two other loaders for sale, but would need to act quickly to secure one for purchase. Commissioner Johnson recommended that the board move forward ahead of the February 12th meeting to put a cap of \$70,000 to secure the purchase of the used loader.

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

5) File No 6 – Wildcat Agreement 2019

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

6) File No 7 – Extension Committee Appointment-Alstad/Feldmeier/Myhre

Commissioner Arnold, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

7) File No 8 – Resolution 19-04 Eitzen State Bank Authorized Signers

Commissioner Arnold move, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 19-04

WHEREAS, Donna Trehus holds the elected office of Houston County Auditor/Treasurer.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Donna Trehus, Houston County Auditor/Treasurer, is granted the following powers: Open any deposit or share accounts(s) with Eitzen State Bank in the name of Houston County;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Donna Trehus, County Auditor/Treasurer, Jeffrey Babinski, County Administrator, and Teresa Walter, Chairperson of the Houston County Board, are hereby granted the following powers: Endorse checks and orders for the payment of money or otherwise withdraw or transfer funds on deposit with Eitzen State Bank;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the above mentioned powers are granted effective Retroactive to January 8, 2019.

8) File No 9 – 2018 EDA Annual Report

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 9) File No 10 – Haulers License Fee – set at \$50/year for 2019

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 10) File No 11 – Guardianship Contracts- Staggemeyer/Burg

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 11) File No 12 – MFIP/DWP Contract with WDI (Workforce Development)

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 12) Action to appoint Administrator Babinski as the board’s representative for stage 3 grievances.

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 13) Approve the Classification/Banding of the Solid Waste Coordinator, B-25 (AFSME) - Realignment of solid waste under Aaron Lacher, lead supervision over employees and keeping job sites coordinated.

Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and unanimously carried, to approve.

- 14) Approve the position fill of Solid Waste Coordinator, B25; reappointing Julie Amundson, Environmental Services Clerk, B22, to probationary status, Solid Waste Coordinator, B-25, Step 2, at an hourly rate of \$20.78 (2018 retro) and \$21.40 (2019), effective October 13, 2018.

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and unanimously carried, to approve.

15) Approve classification and pay change of Deputy Treasurer, Julie Schleich to Deputy Auditor-Treasurer, B-22, Step-5, at a rate of \$19.60 effective January 7, 2019.

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and unanimously carried, to approve.

Commissioner Arnold reported that it had been 6 months since we hired Administrator Babinski and wanted to hold an evaluation process. Commissioner Walter suggested getting an evaluation form from Gary Weiers. Commissioner Arnold will contact him and will request as an agenda item for the work group session scheduled for Tuesday, February 5th. Commissioner Arnold had no meetings this month.

Commissioner Johnson reported his meeting with SEMCAC was cancelled.

Public Comment:

Mr. Barry Colsch was present to inform the commissioners that he had an interest if there was a need for a contractor to help repair the East Entrance steps in the Historic Courthouse or install guardrails within the County. The commissioners were appreciative of his interests.

There being no further business and the time being 10:20 a.m., Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Arnold and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting. The next advertised full board meeting being Tuesday, February 12, 2019.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HOUSTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

By: _____
Teresa Walter, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Jeffrey Babinski, County Administrator