

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD OF NOBLES COUNTY, MINNESOTA

The County Board of Nobles County met in regular session this 18th day of April, 2017, in the Board of Commissioners Room, at the Nobles County Government Center, Worthington, Minnesota. The following Commissioners were in attendance: Justin Ahlers, Gene Metz, Matt Widboom, Robert Demuth Jr. and Donald Linssen.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Matt Widboom, it was duly passed to approve the agenda as presented.

Kathy Henderschiedt, Environmental Specialist in Public Works, was recognized for 25 years of service and Thelma Yager, Collections Officer in Community Services, was recognized for 15 years of service.

On a motion by Gene Metz and seconded by Robert Demuth Jr., it was duly passed to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- 5.1 April 4, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes
- 5.2 April 4, 2017 Public Hearing Minutes on Consolidated JD #1
- 5.3 Professional Service Agreement
- 5.4 Meetings & Conferences – Travel Expenses
- 5.5 Auditor's and Commissioner's Warrants

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Matt Widboom, it was duly passed to open the public hearing to review, discuss and consider the proposed property tax abatement request for V & O Properties, Inc.

Abraham Algadi, Worthington Regional Economic Development Corporation, reviewed the proposal for tax abatement for construction of a duplex.

No public comments were received.

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Gene Metz, it was duly passed to close the hearing.

On a motion by Gene Metz and seconded by Justin Ahlers, it was duly passed to adopt the following resolution number 201726:

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statute 469.1813 gives authority to the County of Nobles to grant an abatement of property taxes imposed by the County if certain criteria are met; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the statutory requirements, Nobles County has adopted the Nobles Home Initiative guidelines which must be met before an abatement of taxes will be granted for residential development; and

WHEREAS, V & O Properties, Inc. is the owner of certain property within Nobles County, legally described as follows:

Parcel ID: 31-3997-060; Sec. 28 Twp 102 Rang 40, 1.516 Acre Tract in NE ¼ SE ¼; 1078 and 1088 South Crailsheim Road, Worthington MN 56187

WHEREAS, V & O Properties, Inc. has made application to Nobles County for the abatement of taxes as to the above-described parcel; and

WHEREAS, V & O Properties, Inc. has met the statutory requirements outlined under Minnesota Statute 469.1813 Subdivision 1(1) and Subdivision 2(i) as well as the County's Nobles Home Initiative guidelines for tax abatement;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF NOBLES COUNTY, MINNESOTA:

1. The Nobles County does, hereby grant an abatement of Nobles County share of real estate taxes upon the above-described parcel for the construction of a new single family home.
2. The tax abatement will be for no more than five years commencing on the first year of taxes payable for the assessed value(s) related to the capital improvements outlined in Paragraph 1.

3. The County shall provide the awarded abatement payment following payment of due real estate taxes annually. One single payment shall be made to the owner of record by December 30th of that calendar year.
4. The tax abatement shall be for the residential capital improvements only. Land values and the current base value are not eligible and will not be abated.
5. The abatement shall be null and void if construction is not commenced within 6 months of the approval of this resolution or if real estate taxes are not paid on or before the respective payment deadlines annually.

Mr. Algadi informed the Commissioners he anticipates an additional 3 applications for the Nobles Home Initiative in the coming weeks.

Wayne Smith, Environmental Services Director, presented the Board with information and recommendations in the areas of the 2016 Annual Feedlot Report & Performance Credit Report, the 2017 Feedlot Program Delegation Agreement, a One Watershed One Plan Grant Agreement and an agreement for legal services for the Reading MN Sewer Project.

On a motion by Robert Demuth and seconded by Justin Ahlers, it was duly passed to approve the 2016 Annual County Feedlot Officer Report and Performance Credit Report.

On a motion by Gene Metz and seconded by Robert Demuth Jr., it was duly passed to designate the MPCA County Feedlot Program to Kathy Henderschiedt; and further, to authorize the County Board Chair to sign the 2017 Feedlot Program Delegation Agreement. A copy of the Agreement was before the Board and is made part of this resolution by reference.

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Matt Widboom, it was duly passed to authorize the County Administrator to sign, on behalf of Nobles County, the One Watershed One Plan Grant Agreement in the amount of \$231,028.00. A copy of the Grant Agreement was before the Board and is made a part of this resolution by reference.

Commissioner Metz added that the purpose of the grant money is to hire a consultant to put the plan together.

On a motion by Matt Widboom and seconded by Donald Linszen, it was to duly passed to approve hiring Rinke Noonan to provide the county with legal services for the Reading Sewer Project. A copy of the Agreement for Legal Services was before the Board and is made a part of this resolution by reference.

Stephen Schnieder, Public Works Director/County Engineer, presented the Board with the 2016 Annual report and a brief overview of the activities from the past year. Mr. Schnieder thanked Cheryl Thiner, Office Manager/Accountant, for gathering the information throughout the year to create the report. Mr. Schnieder also spoke of the transition in management at Public Works over the last few years due to retirements.

Mr. Schnieder addressed questions of the Board regarding money coming from the State on road projects that is waiting on bonding from legislature, the status of the School Zone Speed Study request at the Worthington Middle School which is being performed later this week, pothole patching/crack filling and the 911 address signs.

Tom Johnson, County Administrator, presented the Board with information and recommendations in the areas of Capital Improvement Plan bond projects, a hut for Lismore Telephone Company on County property, a citizen appointment, a comment request from the MN Board of Water & Soil Resources and collaborative planning.

Mr. Johnson advised the Board that proposals were received by two firms for design services for the Government Center foundation water intrusion repair and a revision was received from one of the firms April 13th since the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership was hired for the project management.

The Board asked Mr. Johnson if Falls Architecture had seen INSPEC's quote and Mr. Johnson confirmed they had not and that it was unsolicited. The Board held discussion if the entire proposal process should be started over to receive a fair bid and reviewed the timeline that the work needed to be completed in order to accommodate use of the Government Center grounds for the International Festival and Turkey Day celebration. The consensus of the Board was to direct the Administrator to have both firms requote the project.

On a motion by Robert Demuth Jr. and seconded by Matt Widboom, it was duly passed to approve amending the current INSPEC agreement for the Prairie Justice Center roof repair by approving items 1, 2 and 3 as presented.

Stan Townsend, Finley Engineering, addressed the Board with a request to allow a fiber splice/electronics hut be placed on the Adrian Public Works property. They have had difficulty finding a suitable location in the Adrian area.

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Robert Demuth Jr., it was duly passed to allow Lismore Telephone Company to put a hut on the Adrian Public Works property as negotiated by Tom Johnson and Stephen Schnieder; and further, to allow the easement for the cable.

In Favor: Justin Ahlers, Matt Widboom, Robert Demuth Jr., Donald Linssen

Opposed: None

Abstain: Gene Metz

Commissioner Metz abstained as he is on the Board for Lismore Telephone Company.

On a motion by Donald Linssen and seconded by Robert Demuth Jr., it was duly passed to appoint Travis Burnham, Worthington, to the Planning Advisory Commission for District V.

The Board discussed the Model County Buffer Ordinance and the request for comment from the MN Board of Water & Soil Resources on Policy 9/APO Plan for Implementing the Buffer Law by May 3rd. County Attorney, Kathleen Kusz, brought to the Commissioners' attention that the model ordinance was not a draft of yes or no, but that there were options available to pick options A, B, or C. Ms. Kusz explained that she would like to be involved at a work session where this is reviewed further.

County Administrator, Tom Johnson, advised the Board that after the Library Director, Clint Wolthuizen, had brought forward the library building project timeline in 2016 that was not adopted, the Campbell's Soup site came up as an option for a multi-function facility when meeting with Steve Robinson and John Landgaard. The Mayor has also come forward as this is a high priority and good collaboration opportunity. Other agencies that are compatible are also interested. To move forward, a concept design is needed from an Architect.

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Gene Metz, it was duly passed to recess the meeting at 9:59 a.m. for the Judicial Ditch #12 Authority's discussion of setting a date for a meeting in regard to the revised work plan.

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Robert Demuth Jr., it was duly passed to reopen the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

The Board resumed discussion on the collaborative planning for a multi-function facility. Commissioner Demuth invited Library Director, Clint Wolthuizen, to provide comments.

Mr. Wolthuizen advised he has spoken with the County Administrator, Library Board and community advocates regarding the Campbell's Soup site and expressed the need to collaborate to work toward a common goal and better services. This may be the best collaborative project opportunity yet. It would be positive for the downtown area and includes a lot of shared spaces and shared expenses which would open up grant opportunities. Questions will come up undoubtedly about the railroad but things can be done onsite to mitigate sound and safety concerns. Mr. Wolthuizen advised this could be a good site and likes what it would do for Worthington and Nobles County and confirmed that the Library Board does endorse the concept.

Tom Johnson, County Administrator, advised a good share of this site has to be used for a public purpose. Commissioner Ahlers stated he supports the collaboration of the City, County and School but cautioned the Board that they have authorized the Historical Society to apply for a \$350,000 grant, which has fallen through this year, but could be given again next year. If both the Library and Historical projects move forward, where does that put things? Commissioner Metz questioned if it is necessary for the County to be taking the lead on the multifunction facility or should the City or School take the lead and the County remain a participant.

Chairperson Linssen stated he agreed with Commissioner Ahlers on collaboration but if this moves forward, we all need to be all in to spend the money on the concept. Commissioner Widboom questioned if to start the process we really need to designate a lead entity or if there should be any stipulation on the City, County and School on funding limits. Those discussions will eventually happen. Commissioner Metz questioned if more information can be obtained on who can collaborate for the concept before we have an architect design the

concept. Realistically, can we complete a study on the need for space or wait for the concept design once we know of square footage needs? Commissioner Widboom advised that the Library knows their needs and we would rely on the other entities. Administrator Johnson stated that an architectural design is not yet needed, just a concept.

Commissioner Ahlers stated the County has spent 6.8 million on C.I.P. bonds and 10 million on road bonds, which was all done with no impact to the levy. That money is spent but how much more can we do without impacting the levy? We have relied on the wind energy money but there is no guarantee of that continuance.

Library Director, Clint Wolthuizen, stated there has to be a start to the process. There has been none in the 2 years that he has been here and it does not change the needs of the Library. The population is projected to grow and the Library plays a large part of education for the growing population. There is \$15,000 set aside for this purpose. He further stated that as far as Nobles County being the lead entity to start this, it would put Nobles County in the driver's seat.

Administrator Johnson stated that the collaborative planning concept will be on the School Board agenda later today and the City Council agenda next week. The commitment from the School Board is good with a fair split but the same commitment has not been received from the City. Commissioner Demuth stated that back in 2011-2012, the Board looked at a stand-alone Library and now we have the opportunity of a free site and 2 partners interested. If we miss this opportunity, we may not have this again. This location had also been considered previously.

On a motion by Matt Widboom and seconded by Robert Demuth Jr., it was duly passed to approve the hiring of a consulting firm and cost sharing the development of a concept plan and cost model for a collaborative multi-function facility.

In Favor: Gene Metz, Matt Widboom, Robert Demuth Jr., Donald Linssen
Opposed: Justin Ahlers

Committee and Board reports were received from the following:

- District I-Commissioner Ahlers had no report.
- District II-Commissioner Metz reported on the Bio Conference and One Watershed One Plan meeting.
- District III-Commissioner Widboom had no report.
- District IV-Commissioner Demuth presented Chairperson Linssen with a Certificate of Appreciation awarded to the Nobles County Commissioners "for the generous contribution towards the purchase of our walk-in cooler/freezer" at the Manna Food Pantry.
- District V-Commissioner Linssen reported on Emergency Management Planning Advisory Committee (EMPAC) and severe weather awareness week.
- Management Team – Kathleen Kusz had no report.
- County Administrator-Tom Johnson reported on the Buffalo Ridge Regional Rail Authority (BRRRA), Association of Minnesota Counties Leadership Summit training, project updates, Lion's Club and Library Board meetings.

On a motion by Justin Ahlers and seconded by Gene Metz, it was duly passed to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Attest:


Chairperson


County Administrator