

**Board of Commissioners**

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*“In cooperation with our citizens, we improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities by fostering a healthy economy and environment.”*

*“Looking Forward with Purpose”*

**COUNTY BOARD JOINT SPECIAL BOARD MEETING / WORK SESSION  
PROPOSED AGENDA  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 2021, 8:30 A.M.  
NOBLES COUNTY BOARD ROOM**

Zoom Information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87213168729?pwd=dEg5OThkc1BMYm9wc0diTlE2dTBadz09>

Call in Number: 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 872 1316 8729

Password: 683084

**1.0 Call to Order**

**2.0 Pledge of Allegiance**

**3.0 Approval of Agenda** *(Action)*

Pg. 2 **4.0 Ditch Update** *(Information)*

Pg. 2 **5.0 Recorder’s Office – Document Increases** *(Information)*

Pg. -- **6.0 Short Term Engineer Agreement** *(Action)*

Pg. 7 **7.0 2022 Minnesota Management & Budget Request – Reading Sanitary Sewer** *(Information)*

Pg. 12 **8.0 2022 Budget Process** *(Information)*

Pg. -- **9.0 County Projects Overview** *(Information)*

**10.0 Other / Future Business**

Board Meeting – Nobles County Board Room  
Tuesday July 06, 2021 9:00 a.m.

**11.0 Adjournment** *(Action)*

## Recorded Metrics Results

### Settings

Document Type: Combined

Start Date: 01/01/2017

End Date: 12/31/2017

Metric	Count
Paper documents recorded	3070
Paper documents voided	29
Electronic documents recorded	455
Electronic documents rejected	81
Total documents recorded	3525

## Recorded Metrics Results

Settings

Document Type: Combined  
Start Date: 01/01/2018  
End Date: 12/31/2018

Metric	Count
Paper documents recorded	3303
Paper documents voided	37
Electronic documents recorded	568
Electronic documents rejected	145
Total documents recorded	3871

## Recorded Metrics Results

### Settings

Document Type: Combined

Start Date: 01/01/2019

End Date: 12/31/2019

Metric	Count
Paper documents recorded	2461
Paper documents voided	38
Electronic documents recorded	918
Electronic documents rejected	150
Total documents recorded	3379

## Recorded Metrics Results

Settings

Document Type: Combined

Start Date: 01/01/2020

End Date: 12/31/2020

Metric	Count
Paper documents recorded	2547
Paper documents voided	32
Electronic documents recorded	1268
Electronic documents rejected	252
Total documents recorded	3815

## Recorded Metrics Results

### Settings

Document Type: Combined

Start Date: 01/01/2021

End Date: 06/24/2021

Metric	Count
Paper documents recorded	1489
Paper documents voided	16
Electronic documents recorded	980
Electronic documents rejected	219
Total documents recorded	2469

## CBS Project Overview Template for Narrative Fields

### **Project Summary:**

*[Summarize the request in two sentences. Example: “\$10 million in state funds is requested to acquire land, predesign, design, construct, furnish and equip a new building for the department of X to be located in X.”]*

\$5.9 million in state funds is requested to construct a new gravity sewer collection system and stabilization pond system to provide wastewater treatment in Reading, Minnesota which would replace noncompliant individual sewage treatment systems (ISTS). Existing wastewater infrastructure consists of septic tanks connected to a community collection tile system that conveys untreated sewage to the Impaired Water Kanaranzi Creek. This tile system is over 75 years old, and over 98 percent of the ISTS are currently classified as an Imminent Threat to Public Health and Safety.

### **Project Description:**

*[Describe the project in detail, including: scope, total cost, key funding sources, etc. For new projects, identify the new square footage planned. For remodeling, renovation or expansion projects, identify the total square footage of current facilities, the square footage to be renovated, and/or the new square footage to be added.]*

Reading is an unincorporated community in Nobles County in southwestern Minnesota. Reading is unsewered, and wastewater service is provided primarily by a network of subsurface tile lines that ultimately discharge sewage to a nearby receiving surface water, a county ditch that discharges into Kanaranzi Creek. Residents are served by individual subsurface sewage treatment systems (ISTS) including septic tanks with surface water discharge via a tile line, a mound system, and in-ground drain fields.

Nobles County commissioned a Community Assessment Report (CAR) to assess existing conditions in Reading. The overall condition of existing sewer infrastructure is poor. It is estimated the community tile is over 75 years old. Of the 55 properties, 52 were evaluated and 51 are estimated to be in noncompliance, including 49 imminent threats to public health and safety (ITPHS) and two failure to protect groundwater (FTPG).

A Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) was prepared to evaluate options for wastewater collection and treatment. The PER evaluated two collection systems and four wastewater treatment alternatives and concluded that a gravity sewer collection system accompanied with a stabilization pond system would have the lowest life cycle cost and least labor and operations and maintenance cost.

The proposed project would abandon the existing ISTS but leave the community tile line in place to convey stormwater. A gravity sewer system and approximately 5,000 feet of 8-inch diameter sewer main and approximately 8,000 feet of 4-inch diameter forcemain would be installed within existing roadways with sewer laterals extending from the main to serve each property. Raw wastewater would be routed from the common collection system to a lift station located at the Reading park and ball field. The lift station would convey sewage to the pond site. The pond would discharge to County Ditch 5 via

approximately 2,500 feet of gravity line. The proposed project would serve all 55 connections in the service area.

A Nobles County resolution formally created a subordinate service district (Reading Sewer Service District) for sanitary sewer service for Reading. The district includes all properties within Reading and services will include the construction and administration of a sanitary sewer system to serve the 55 connections. Upon securing funding, Nobles County will prepare a sewer ordinance that establishes use and rate regulations for the Reading Sewer Service District pursuant to Minnesota Statute 444.075. This sewer ordinance would establish the requirements of connecting to the sanitary system.

*Cost and Funding.* The estimated cost to design and construct the proposed system is \$5.89 million. This includes the estimated cost of construction; a construction contingency; permitting; design and construction engineering services; and general/administrative costs. The selected alternative represented the lowest 20-year lifecycle cost of those considered and required the least ongoing maintenance and operations labor and annual expense.

Construction	\$4,630,000	
Construction		\$4,210,000
Construction contingency		420,000
Pre-design (preparation of PER)		
Property acquisition	60,000	
Design fees	1,080,000	
Design		870,000
Construction management		210,000
Project management (non-state)	110,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,880,000</b>	

That estimated construction cost is about \$107,000 per parcel for each of the 55 parcels connected to the system. The USDA affordability criteria for monthly residential sewer service fees is set at less than 1.5% of the median household income. Based on a 2019 income survey conducted within Reading, the amount of revenue/sewer fees per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) would be limited to \$697.50 per year or approximately \$58 per month. Potential debt service based on anticipated construction and annual operations and maintenance costs would require monthly sewer fees for Reading that would greatly exceed the USDA affordability criteria. The goal for this project is to obtain grant funding sufficient to finance 100% of the construction cost to avoid debt service. To that end, the County and City are investigating and pursuing where appropriate funding from the following sources:

- USDA Rural Development
- Water Infrastructure Fund Program
- DEED Small Cities Grant Program
- State of Minnesota Bonding Bill
- Point Source Implementation Grant

**Project Rationale:**



*[Why is this project needed? Justify the request.]*

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency recognizes that the discharge of untreated sewage from small systems and communities into waters of the state (“straight pipes”) is a water quality issue and a concern for public health and safety. In 2008 the MPCA completed a “Small Community Wastewater Needs in Minnesota” assessment and established its Small Community Wastewater Strategy to eliminate the discharge of raw or partially settled sewage into surface waters or onto the ground surface. Reading was one of the communities identified in the report with wastewater needs.

The CAR and PER evaluated existing wastewater infrastructure in Reading and evaluated future collection and treatment alternatives to serve the community. Findings include:

- The condition of existing wastewater treatment infrastructure is poor and in need of upgrade. Most ISTS do not have a permit on file with Nobles County and their ages are unknown. Some could not be located in the field during site investigations and according to homeowners’ surveys, many ISTS receive little to no maintenance or servicing. 98% of existing ISTS are noncompliant, including 49 imminent threats to public health and safety and two failure to protect groundwater.
- An aged community tile line estimated to be over 75 years old collects and discharges sewage to a drainage ditch creating an imminent threat to public health and safety.
- Sewage discharge contributes to the *E. coli* impairment in the Kanaranzi River. The Missouri River Basin TMDL for the Lower Big Sioux River, Little Sioux River, and Rock River watersheds requires a 75% to 99% *E. coli* load reduction in the Kanaranzi River depending on flow conditions. Upgrading noncompliant ISTS is a TMDL implementation activity.
- Providing reliable and cost-effective conveyance of wastewater can best be accomplished by constructing a gravity sewer system.
- Providing reliable and cost-effective wastewater treatment can best be accomplished by construction of wastewater stabilization pond system.
- Both the collection and treatment systems recommended are well-known with a proven track record for functionality, success, and cost effectiveness.

**Project Timeline:**

*Describe the sequence of the project by month/year (predesign, engineering, design, construction etc.). Summarize other influencing factors or interactions (ex: coordinating the request with other projects).*

As the project goal is to secure outside funding for 100% of the construction cost, this project would not proceed until that funding is secured. At that time there will be several steps to be coordinated before this project can proceed to final design and construction. Several permits are required, including: an NPDES/SDS permit for surface discharge & antidegradation review; county zoning/conditional use permit approval; plans and specification review/approval by USDA-RD and MPCA; and utility right of way permitting (county and township). In addition, the PER identified several potential pond system locations and highlighted a preferred location based on various considerations. It is unknown if the existing

landowner for the preferred location is willing to explore the possibility of selling the land. Continued land acquisition efforts would be needed as the project moves forward.

The project schedule is estimated to be:

Activity	Estimated Timeframe
USDA Rural Development PER and Environmental Assessment review, comment, and approval	2021
Secure funding sources	2021-2022
Purchase agreement with landowner	2022
Preparation of design plans and specifications	Summer, fall, & winter 2022
Secure project funding	2022
Project bidding and contractor selection	Spring 2023
Construction	Summer 2023 – 2024
Initiation of operation	Fall 2024

**Other Considerations:**

*[Is there anything else that decision makers should know about this project?]*

Nobles County has been assisting Reading for eight years to come up with a viable solution. The MN Pollution Control Agency has drawn a hard line on alternatives that still protect the environment but require flexibility in rule interpretation that would be less expensive. The county and Reading need a solution as property owners cannot sell their homes.

**Who will own the project?:**

Reading Sewer Service District Created by the Nobles County Board of Commissioners

**Who will operate the project?:**

Reading Sewer Service District Created by the Nobles County Board of Commissioners

**Who will use or occupy the project?:**

Property owners, residents, patrons, and employees at the 47 residences, one church, three businesses and one community center.

**Public Purpose:**

This project would have a long-term benefit to the environment, as the project would eliminate raw sewage from being discharged to nearby waters of the state.

**Impact on Operating Budget or Impact on State Operating Subsidies:**

*[Required under M.S. 16A.11, subd. 5. For state agencies, summarize the project’s impact on the agency’s operating budget over the upcoming six-year period. For local units of government, identify any*

*new or additional state operating dollars that will be requested for this project. This section should provide a brief narrative only, since specific costs per year are identified on the Project Costs screen.]*

This project will have no impact on state agency or state operating dollars.

**Description of Previous State Appropriations:**

None known.

**Statutory Program Citation:**

*For state agencies requesting funds for a program established in statute, enter the legal citation.*

**TIMELINE**  
**2022 BUDGET PREPARATION & ADOPTION**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Board status</b>
1.	Preliminary discussions with the county board-set budget guidelines	June 30, 2021	Work Session
2.	Budget letters sent to department heads with guidance from the county board, budget sheets, CIP requests, and salary information	July 12, 2021	
3.	Deadline for department heads to turn in their budget proposals	July 23, 2021	
4.	Budget Discussion	July 28, 2021	Work Session
5.	Budget presentations by department heads to the budget committee	August 16-20, 2021	
6.	Overall budget presentation and in-depth review by the full county board.	August 31, 2021	Work Session
7.	Follow up budget discussion and meeting between the county board and department heads as requested	September 1-2, 2021	
8.	Final direction from board for preliminary levy	September 7, 2021	Board Meeting
9.	Set the preliminary tax levy (NTE)	September 21, 2021	Board Meeting
10	Set Salaries for Elected Officials	November 2, 2021	Board Meeting
11	Public Meeting to discuss the 2022 budget	December 9, 2021, 6:00 p.m.	
12	Adopt final 2022 County Budget Tax Levy	December 21, 2021	Board Meeting