

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MARTIN
COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2005
@ 9:00 A.M.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Dan Schmidtke. Commissioners present were Steve Donnelly, Jack Potter, and Gerald Boler. Commissioner Steve Pierce was absent. Also present were Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, Kevin Peyman, County Highway Engineer, James Forshee, County Auditor/Treasurer, Christine Rupp, Fairmont Sentinel, Rod Halverson, KSUM/KFMC, Jerry Voyles, SWCD, Julie Walters, Administrative Assistant, members of the public.

Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Potter to approve the Agenda with the following addition: 5. (b) Jerry Voyles – Office Update, SWCD.

Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Boler to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2005 Board of Commissioners meeting. Carried unanimously.

Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, presented the following Personnel Consent Agenda Items for approval: Approve hire of Family Preservation Social Worker for Martin County – Probation Department, effective May 16, 2005; contingent upon satisfactory reference checks and criminal and required other background checks; and is eligible for benefits per the County Personnel Policies as it applies to this position. Continuation of the position is contingent upon grant funding by the Faribault and Martin County Human Services Collaborative; and, Consider Step Increase for Highway Personnel.

Motion was made by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Potter, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, upon the recommendation of the County Coordinator, approve the hire of a Family Preservation Social Worker for Martin County, at Grade 11, Step 1, \$14.24/hour, effective May 16, 2005; and eligible for full-time benefits per the County Personnel Policy; contingent upon the county's acceptance of the results of the reference and criminal background checks, continuation of the position is contingent upon availability of grant funding. Carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Boler, seconded by Commissioner Potter, upon the recommendation of Kevin Peyman, County Engineer, approves and authorize step increase for Dustin Splinter, Maintenance Specialist I from Grade 10 Step 5 \$14.77/hour to Grade 10, \$15.11/hour, effective April 1, 2005; and, to approve and authorize step increase for Brent Moeller, Maintenance Specialist II from Grade 11, Step 6 \$16.20/hour to Grade 11 Step 7 at \$16.69/hour, effective April 1, 2005. Carried unanimously.

Peyman announced that the new Official County Highway Maps have been printed. The maps are available at the Highway Department and the Coordinator's Office. Peyman stated that there are also unfolded copies, suitable for hanging, available at the County Highway offices.

Peyman informed the Board that he has been asked to sit in on both the Steering and Technical Committees for the Highway 15 Coalition. He further stated that the committee is expected to only meet a few times a year. Peyman stated that he agreed to the appointment.

Peyman also reported that the overlay projects will begin shortly after the road weight restrictions are lifted. Peyman stated there may be some complaints when the Hwy. Department begins the overlay on the portion of County Rd. 12 that runs through East Chain. Houses along that stretch are situated very close to the road and there are no ditches for drainage and some porches on the homes may fill with water and debris from the overlay project. Peyman stated that the residents along this stretch of road may call the Commissioners and want to know why the county is overlaying that stretch of highway instead of fixing the drainage problem. The drainage problem can't be fixed without a total regrade, curb and gutter, which would be a multi-million dollar project and that there is not funding for the project at the present time. The overlay will at least allow the road to be functional for approximately 10 more years.

Commissioner Boler asked Peyman if Blue Earth County had contacted him regarding blacktopping a portion of County Road #51 in Martin County that connects to Blue Earth County Road #24. Peyman stated that he knew of what Blue Earth County is trying to accomplish. He stated that they are placing a cold mix blacktop on some of their gravel roads to get them more like a blacktop road. The cold mix blacktop is cheaper than regular blacktop and helps with dust control and maintenance. Peyman indicated the one mile stretch of road in Martin County has one of the lowest traffic counts in the county with no more than 30 vehicles a day. To blacktop this one mile stretch of road would cost approximately \$90,000 per mile and the current low volume does not warrant the costs involved. Commissioner Boler pointed out that the road may have more traffic if the one mile stretch was redone along with the three miles of County Road #24 in Blue Earth County. Peyman agreed to research prices and traffic counts and look at the project more closely.

With no further Highway business. Chairman Schmidtke thanked Peyman for his report.

Higgins presented for Board approval amendments to the By-Laws of the South Central Minnesota Emergency Medical Services Joint Powers Board (JPB) allowing for an alternate to be appointed to the JPB.

Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Boler, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, approve the amendments to the By-Laws of the South Central Minnesota Emergency Medical Services Joint Powers Board, allowing for an alternate to be appointed to the Joint Powers Board. Carried unanimously.

Higgins continued that it is requested that each County Board of Commissioners of the nine member counties shall appoint one Commissioner and one alternate to serve on the South Central Minnesota EMS Joint Powers Board. Commissioner Donnelly is the current delegate and stated that an alternate needed to be appointed.

Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Boler, Be it Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, approve the appointment of Commissioner Dan Schmidtke to serve as alternate for Martin County on the South Central Minnesota EMS Joint Powers Board. Carried unanimously.

Higgins next reported on the request for replacing air conditioning units for the Security Building. The two units located on the top of the Security Building are over 30 years old and have met their useful life. In the last few years, we have had to replace the leaking Freon and seals in the compressor units. Metal fatigue on both units is very apparent and has needed continuous repair over the years. In addition, these units are not high-energy efficient units. I & S Engineers and Architects, Inc., of Mankato has provided cost estimates and specifications on what can be done now to increase reduction in energy use. Replacement costs of the two air conditioning units and air volume adjustments are estimated at \$65,646. After discussion,

Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Potter, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, upon the recommendation of the County Coordinator, approve advertisement for bids for the replacement and upgrades to the HVAC system for the Security Building to include the replacement of two air conditioning units and the necessary work need to complete air volume adjustments. Carried unanimously.

Jerry Voyles, Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), presented an office update. Voyles reported that 22,000 trees were received in today. Tree pick up days will be this Thursday, Friday and Saturday with planting beginning early next week. Last year a record 58,000 trees were picked up vs. 22,000 historically. On Arbor Day, Friday, April 29th, each 1st grader in Martin County will be given one spruce tree with planting instructions. The Martin County Bankers Association pays for the trees and the SWCD distributes them. The SWCD also will provide County churches with bulletin covers for Stewardship Week, April 24th through May 1st. Voyles also reported on wetlands restoration and the Conservation Security Program. Voyles continued that for the last five or six years, he has provided weekly crop and weather/rain gauge information for Martin County to the state climatologists. There are 23 rain gauges strategically placed around the County for a rain gauge network. First rain and/or storm information is recorded and sent to state climatologists on a monthly basis.

Voyles indicated it may be appropriate to have another joint meeting between the SWCD and County Board of Commissioners in June. Voyles stated that the SWCD would like to provide a tour to the Board of the projects the SWCD has completed or is in process on various wetland restoration projects and that potentially will be showcased on a national level. Voyles stated that the Tour would be sometime after July 4th and before the start of the Martin County Fair. Voyles informed the Board that one of the projects the SWCD has been working on has created a newly formed lake, approximately 100 acres, and eight feet deep near the Trimont Area.

Commissioner Boler inquired whether or not the SWCD could provide services to seed grass buffer strips along open county drainage ditches. Voyles stated there is a program available for those who want to do something on their own to seed the required thirty three to sixty feet minimums. He also pointed out that if the County mandated such grass buffer strip, there may be a need to offer enough incentives to get landowners to take these acres out of production. Voyles stated that there may be Federal programs that would allow for incentives. Commissioner Potter asked of these programs can be harvested for hay. Voyles stated not if the acres are in the Federal Government Programs.

Chairman Schmidtke thanked Voyles for his report.

The Board recessed at 9:45 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 9:55 a.m.

Mel Sukalski, Martin County Maintenance Supervisor, and Scott Higgins presented the need to purchase a replacement truck for the Maintenance Department. It is deemed necessary the Maintenance Department has a vehicle of their own for daily use without having to rely on another department's loaner vehicles that have to some degree met their useful mechanical life and are not always in the best running condition. Higgins stated that the Building and Purchasing committee discussed the request and recommended to proceed by getting quotes for trucks from local dealerships and present the request for consideration at the next Board meeting.

Consensus of the Board was to route the request back to the Building/Purchasing Committee for further discussion at their next meeting on April 27th, 2005.

Linda Meschke, Blue Earth River Basin Initiative (BERBI) and Rural Advantage, was present to give a 3rd Crop Efforts Update. Meschke handed out information packets on BERBI and Third Crop initiatives. Meschke reported that BERBI will dissolve when current funded projects are complete by the end of 2006, but the newly formed Rural Advantage will continue to advance the 3rd Crop Initiative as BERBI is phased out.

Meschke touched on two specific 3rd Crop alternatives. Meschke first reported on Hazelnuts (also known as filberts). Hazelnuts are a promising third crop as they are high in protein and are nutritious, being an excellent source of vitamins E and B6. These nuts are high in oil content and are 3 times the oil content of soybeans. Hazelnut oil is valued for its lightness and flavor and is an excellent cooking oil with a long shelf life. It is said that anything that can be done with a soybean can be done with a hazelnut. Hazelnuts are low maintenance compared to annual crops once they are established.

Meschke continued her 3rd Crop report and shared information about the benefits of Flax. Minnesota is among the top four flaxseed producing states, along with North Dakota, Montana, and South Dakota. Flax crops are experiencing resurgence in popularity due to its healthful characteristics for humans as well as animals. Flax is one of the richest plant sources of Omega-3 fatty acids, high in dietary fiber and the richest plant source of lignans, without the mercury concerns. Eggs with enriched levels of Omega-3 fatty acids are produced from poultry fed flaxseed. Omega-3 levels can also be increased in the meat of poultry fed flaxseed. The market for Omega-3 enriched meat, poultry, and livestock products is growing and expected to increase especially as consumers become more educated about the value of Omega-3 fatty acids in their diet. , due to the higher value of Omega eggs. Meschke further stated that she is working with Interstate Flax Growers on writing a \$50,000 grant proposal to aid in conducting feasibility study, business plan and focus on agricultural production in growing flax. Along with area interest in Omega egg production, there is also interest in processing the flax into oil and meal for the health food industry. To supplement the grant proposal, Meschke stated that the grant requires a dollar for dollar match and requested that the county assist in acquiring the match of \$5,000. Meschke further stated that the initial proposal is due by May 5th. Once grant is awarded, work would start October, 2005 through September, 2006. Meschke stated that it is expected that the grant will be awarded this summer. After discussion,

Motion by Commissioner Boler, seconded by Commissioner Donnelly, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners approve \$5,000 to be expended from the Economic Development Fund, toward the grant being submitted by the Blue Earth River Basin Initiative (BERBI) to aid in the value added agricultural production of flax; and to authorize the Chair to send a letter of support for BERBI in the application of the grant. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented the final draft for Board approval for County's Classification/Compensation Policy. The proposed policy provides general guidelines concerning wage and salary administration, annual review and maintenance of the classification and rate structure, adding new classifications, job reclassification, temporary reclassifications, hiring rates, promotional increases, lateral transfers and demotions. Higgins further stated that the proposed policy also establishes a Compensation Advisory Committee (CAC) which will be a five member committee which would include the Coordinator, 2 Commissioners, the Auditor/Treasurer and a Department Director. The intent of the plan is to formalize the current generic policy for a compensation plan. Higgins stated that the proposed plan provides more detail in the administration of the Classification/Compensation Plan than the current policy.

Chairman Schmidtke suggested that the proposed policy be reviewed by the Personnel Committee for more of an in-depth reading and review before any action is taken. After discussion,

Motion by Commissioner Potter, seconded by Commissioner Donnelly, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners table the consideration of the proposed Classification/Compensation policy and to refer the proposed policy to the County Personnel Committee for review and recommendation for Board consideration at a future meeting. Carried unanimously.

Higgins next presented the amended portion of Contract #87578 between the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN/DOT) and Martin County for purchase and renovation of an existing building to be used a transit garage. The amended portion states: In Article II. Responsibilities of Recipient, paragraph A., delete “construct a new transit facility” and insert “purchase a facility to be used for public transit purposes,” and delete “Exhibit I” and insert “Exhibit 1A.”

Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Boler, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners, approve the Amendment#1 as follows, Article II- Responsibilities of Recipient, paragraph A., to delete “construct a new transit facility” and insert “purchase a facility to be used for public transit purposes,” and delete “Exhibit I” and insert “Exhibit 1A.” to the Contract Agreement #87578 between the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN/DOT) and Martin County, MN. Carried unanimously.

Higgins concluded his presentation with information regarding the Annual Visioning and Strategic Planning Session tentatively set for June 24, 2005. Higgins stated that after discussion with Department Directors, they have again recommended a half-day session and lunch. Higgins stated that this annual meeting session provides a good opportunity for reviewing the five (5) priority areas established last year during the Visioning and Strategic planning session, and future long range/strategic planning. Higgins stated that it is a good opportunity for the County Board, elected officials, and Department Directors to discuss planning as a group. Higgins stated that some options for the session would include a short facilitated session and speaker(s). Higgins stated that these sessions have been a positive thing for the county. After discussion,

Consensus of the Martin County Board of Commissioners is to hold the Annual Visioning and Strategic Planning Session on June 24, 2005 at the Courthouse as a general session with no outside speaker and lunch on-site. All committees will report on progress made with their respective priority areas.

Higgins requested approval of the bills with two (2) additional bills: \$2,000.00 for payment to Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA) and \$7,300.00 for payment to the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for 2004 feedlot inspections.

Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Potter, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners approve the bills for April 19, 2005 as presented by the Auditor/Treasurer and to include payment to GBERBA in the amount of \$2,000.00 and the Martin County SWCD in the amount of \$7,300.00.

Warrants received and paid 4-19-05 are registered on file in the Auditor/Treasurers Office as follows:

| | | |
|---|-------------|--------------------|
| Revenue Fund – Warrants Approved 4-19-05 | Totaled | \$194,192.51 |
| Solid Waste Management Fund | | \$ 29,189.06 |
| Law Library Fund | | \$ 408.52 |
| Martin County Transit Fund | | \$ 34,716.35 |
| Building-CIP Fund | | \$ 1,677.69 |
| Bank Building Fund | | \$ 2,495.75 |
| Debt Service-Prairieland Fund | | \$ 5,955.82 |
| Recreation and Safety Fund | | \$ <u>3,390.45</u> |
| | GRAND TOTAL | \$272,026.15 |
| Martin County Ditch Fund – Warrants Totaled | | \$ 13,348.50 |
| Road and Bridge Fund – Warrants Totaled | | \$138,746.73 |

Higgins presented information received from AmberField Place, Martin County Preservation Association, 2005 Interlaken Heritage Days Parade Entry Notice, Martin County Express-Fair Lakes Cinema Movie Theatre Ads, Small Business Resource Fair, 1st Quarter County Budget Report, and Minnesota Senior Federation-26th Annual Convention.

Motion by Commissioner Potter, seconded by Commissioner Donnelly, Be It Resolved that the Martin County Board of Commissioners approve and authorize per diems and expenses to attend Small Business Administrations (SBA) “Small Business Resource Fair” on April 27, 2005, in Mankato, MN; and the Minnesota Senior Federation’s “South Central Region’s 26th Annual Convention” on May 9, 2005, in North Mankato, MN. Carried unanimously.

Higgins reviewed 1st Quarter budget report with the Board. Higgins stated that overall it appears that all departments are within budget for the first quarter.

The Board gave their reports and reviewed their calendars of previous and upcoming meetings and activities.

The next regular meeting of the Martin County Board of Commissioners will be Tuesday, May 3rd, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. in the Martin County Commissioners Room.

With no further business to wit, Motion by Commissioner Donnelly, seconded by Commissioner Boler to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MARTIN COUNTY, MN

Dan Schmidtke, Chair

ATTEST: _____
Scott Higgins, County Coordinator