

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BIG STONE COUNTY BOARD
February 21, 2023

The Big Stone County Board of Commissioners met in the Commissioners' Room at 8:30 AM on Tuesday, February 21, 2023. Chairman Olson called the meeting to order with Commissioners Sandberg, Klages, Zimmel and Athey present. Also present was Coordinator Pam Rud. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Motion by Athey, seconded by Sandberg and carried to approve the agenda with the addition of County Coroner appointment.

Motion by Klages, seconded by Zimmel and carried to approve the minutes of the February 7th regular meeting.

Commissioners reported on the following committees:

Athey – Law Library, SWCD, Park

Sandberg – Woodland

Zimmel – RDC

Klages – EBS, EM Trng, PW, AMC, PW, PdTJPB, Park, UMRDC

Olson – Countryside, Pioneerland

Motion by Athey, seconded by Sandberg and carried to authorize payment of claims as presented by Auditor-Treasurer Michelle Knutson. Vendors, excluding Family Services, receiving payments in excess of \$2,000 are as follows:

Big Stone Lake Sno Riders	\$ 8,207.59
CPT	6,538.00
DDA Human Resources	13,250.00
Kandiyohi County Sheriff Dept	2,621.47
Lac qui Parle Sheriff	5,181.25
Neu Real Estate	3,500.00
Pro West & Associates	2,635.63
Schwieters Automotive	2,533.45
West Con	30,990.49
39 Payments Less Than \$2,000	<u>15,219.94</u>
Total	\$90,677.82

Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Zimmel and carried to authorize the following internal transactions:

General to Highway \$ 3,222.76

Family Services to Highway \$ 104.27

Rud introduced Deputy Gordon LeClair to the Board. Gordon started with Big Stone County on February 13th.

Rud discussed having the Board write a letter of support to the Legislature to support a statutory appropriation for SWCD Aid at the amount of \$22 million per year.

Motion by Athey, seconded by Zimmel and carried to write a letter of support for the increase in statutory appropriation to the SWCDs.

Emergency Management Director, Dona Greiner presented information on the ARMER bills currently in the legislature to provide funding to ARMER radios to all levels of emergency response. Greiner request that the Board approve both a Resolution to support the bills and to write letter of support to he committees. Motion by Sandberg,

seconded by Klages and carried to adopt the following resolution and to submit letters of support:

2023-04

WHEREAS, The County of Big Stone is writing in support of this important public safety initiative, HF1075 / SF1576.

WHEREAS, Effective radios are the backbone of public safety in the State of Minnesota. Our first responders, firefighters, and law enforcement personnel depend upon this ARMER system to effectively perform their jobs. Radios save lives and serve every constituent of the State of Minnesota.

WHEREAS, Radios that serve the ARMER system are outdated in many jurisdictions. They are costly to maintain and replace. In local government units, where budgets are tight, it is very difficult to plan for the costly process of replacing this critical infrastructure. Local government units would urge the state to fund a grant program that allows for the critical upgrade of radios. We would also encourage sustainable funding to support ongoing replacement costs.

WHEREAS, The cost to replace the aging radios is a direct impact of our local taxpayers. ARMER radios are critical to deploying resources, protecting property and life, and protecting our workers. However, they often get overlooked for replacement because there is no existing funding source.

WHEREAS, In Big Stone County, there are 240 radios on the statewide ARMER system. Most of these radios are used by our small rural emergency departments. The emergency service departments who serve Big Stone County rely on this interoperability. The radios allow for communication between all emergency service departments.

WHEREAS, Big Stone County has aging radios on the ARMER system that are no longer supported. It is extremely difficult to find radio parts or used parts to fix or maintain the equipment. Our emergency responders rely on the ARMER radio system to provide the interoperability between the departments at the local, regional, State, and Federal levels. The replacement cost for the radios that are at the end of their life expectancy ranges from \$2,500 to \$5,500 each. This expense does not include the radio programming, additional equipment, or supplies required to add the radio onto the Statewide radio system. The additional cost is approximately \$400 per radio.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Big Stone County supports the HF1075 / SF1576 and urges the importance of public safety initiative.

Rud presented information about the latest Opioid Settlement with Teva, Allergan, CVS, Walgreens and Wal-Mart and discussed option to opt into the settlement. Motion by Klages, seconded by Sandberg and carried to opt into the Opioid settlement with the above-named companies.

Motion by Athey, seconded by Zimmel and carried to appoint Quinn Strobel as the County Coroner until December 2026.

Social Service Supervisor, Amy Weir presented an updated Mental Health Consortium fiscal host contract. Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Klages and carried to approve the amended contract pending Attorney Kluver's approval.

Environmental Director Darren Wilke shared information from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency regarding the old landfill. When the MPCA purchased the

landfill, some documents were inaccurately completed and the MPCA is requesting that the documents be corrected. County Attorney Kluver reviewed the information and is ok with the changes being corrected. Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Athey and carried to correct the documents as requested by MPCA.

Wilke introduced Connie Rausch-Jurgens to the Board. Connie is the new Environmental Office Manager and started February 21st.

Bruce Freske and Blake Knisley with the US Fish and Wildlife were present to request certification by the County Board for acquisition of lands as presented by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Motion by Sandberg, seconded by Athey and carried to certify the acquisitions as presented.

Work session included information on the Legislative Conference cancelling their in-person conference and going all virtual as well as a reminder of the work session on Friday, February 24th.

Chairman Olson adjourned the meeting at 9:09 AM.

Brent Olson, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Pam Rud, Coordinator