

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 21, 2019

The Benton County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on May 21, 2019 in the Benton County Board Room in Foley, MN with Commissioners Warren Peschl, Ed Popp, Steve Heinen, Spencer Buerkle and Jake Bauerly present. Call to order by Chair Bauerly was at 9:00 AM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Popp/Peschl unanimous to approve the amended agenda—add items: 1) CEDS priorities; and 2) authorize Commissioner travel to Washington, D.C. for Transportation Alliance/Highway 23 Coalition trip.

No one was present to speak under Open Forum.

Heinen/Buerkle unanimous to approve the Consent Agenda: 1) approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 7, 2019 as written; 2) accept and file Committee of the Whole Minutes of May 6, 2019 as written; 3) approve Resolution 2019-#12, supporting DNR grant application by the Benton County Snowmobile Club, and authorize the Chair to sign; 4) approve updated Data Practices resolution (Resolution 2019-#13) and policies for officeholder changes and county reorganizations, and authorize the Chair to sign; 5) accept and file VSO quarterly report; 6) approve Purchase Money Security Agreement for S.C.O.R.E. Grant—*City of Foley*—for one 72" Virnig V50 Skeleton Tine Grapple, and authorize the Chair to sign; 7) approve Applications for MN Lawful Gambling, with resolution (Resolution 2019-#14), for *Sauk Rapids Sportsmen's Club* to hold a raffle and to sell pull-tabs at the Benton County Fairgrounds, 1410 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South, Sauk Rapids, on the consecutive days of July 30, 2019 through August 4, 2019, and authorize the Chair to sign; 8) approve renewal applications for County Combination On-Sale, Off-Sale & Sunday Sale Liquor Licenses for the period July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020—*Jack & Jim's Inc., Rumors Bar & Grill Inc., Rolli's LLC, and Wapicada Golf Course*; approve renewal application for County Combination On-Sale & Sunday Sale Liquor License for the period July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020—*Henry's Catering*, and authorize the Chair to sign; 9) approve renewal application for County Combination On-Sale, Off-Sale & Sunday Sale Liquor License for the period June 1, 2019-May 31, 2020—*Goodfella's Bar & Grill*—and authorize the Chair to sign; 10) approve addendum to Joint Powers Agreement with Sherburne County for the Regional Criminal Tracking and Analysis Group—RCTAG—and authorize the Chair to sign; and 11) approve 3.2 beer license for *St. Lawrence Church* for the annual church bazaar—July 4, 2019.

A public hearing to consider a local option sales tax for transportation was opened at 9:06 AM. Chris Byrd, County Engineer, reported that the Board has discussed this issue at multiple meetings; public open houses were held in Sauk Rapids and Foley, with about six members of the public attending each event. Byrd noted that Benton County would need an additional \$6 million a year, for the next ten years, to address all the needs for the county's 450 miles of roadway (county roads and state aid roads). He explained that a University of MN Extension study estimated that the sales tax for transportation could generate about \$1.9 million each year; the study also showed that 30% of that revenue would be generated by non-residents of the county. No one from the public was present to address the County Board on this issue; the public hearing was closed at 9:10 AM. Buerkle commented "...I feel there is enough good things in here...we should go ahead with this...other counties are doing this...you're paying it when you go across county lines anyway...perhaps we can get some levy reduction...I'm hoping some day we can see a little bit of reduction in the wheelage tax or something too..." Peschl spoke of the

need to invest in local road projects. Byrd pointed out that about one-half of the counties in the state have adopted the sales tax. He presented a proposed resolution which, if adopted, would establish a one-half percent tax applied to taxable sales collected by the state and distributed to the county; the resolution identifies specific projects that the tax would be used for. Byrd indicated that nearly \$35 million of road construction projects have been identified; the sales tax stays in place until all identified projects have been funded. Peschl/Popp to adopt Resolution 2019-#15, a resolution to establish a local option sales tax of one-half percent, to be used on the listed road construction projects, and authorize the Chair to sign. Byrd stated that the next step will be Board discussion on a five-year capital improvement plan, identifying what years these projects are to be constructed. Monty Headley, County Administrator, noted that the soonest the tax could be implemented would be October 1<sup>st</sup>. Peschl amended his motion to include implementation of the tax, effective October 1, 2019. Popp stated his agreement with the amended motion. The amended motion carried unanimously. Popp suggested that future discussions include the possibility of bonding for projects.

Engineer's Report: 1) back to full staff in engineering department; 2) CSAH 8 coming out of St. Cloud by the transfer station—concerns if pavement will last until 2021 when Federal funds are available, may need to do some interim minor patching; 3) request for Committee of the Whole to discuss two policies—cost participation policy and road ditch maintenance policy; and 4) Little Rock Lake drawdown going forward—plans are in place to build up the roadway during the August drawdown.

The Regular County Board meeting was recessed at 9:24 AM to conduct a Human Services Board meeting.

The Regular County Board meeting was reconvened at 9:44 AM.

Bob Cornelius, Human Services Director, requested Board approval to request an evaluation of the Human Services Office Support Specialist position for possible reclassification. He outlined a number of changes to the position since the last class and comp study which was completed in 2008. Buerkle commented "...we have the class and comp study as an agenda item just a little bit later...perhaps wait for that discussion...we don't want a piecemeal thing..." Cornelius stated his agreement to tabling this item to the Board meeting in June if allowable. Buerkle/Heinen unanimous to table this item until after the class and comp discussion on today's agenda.

Administrator Headley reported that Mark Hanson, the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) Coordinator for Central MN Jobs and Training, has asked the four-member counties to identify their top four CEDS priorities from the listing of eleven priority areas identified in the CEDS; this prioritization will help the CEDS Board determine where to focus its efforts. Board consensus on the top four CEDS priorities of Labor Force, Business Growth, Broadband and Transportation.

Headley presented the draft 2020 budget calendar and budget development guidelines; formal approval of these documents will be requested at the June 4<sup>th</sup> County Board meeting. He noted that the budget process for 2020 will follow the same process used in past years (i.e. base budget development, policy issue requests, adoption of proposed 2020 budget/levy, Truth in Taxation hearing, and final 2020 budget/levy adoption). Buerkle commented "...when we go into these budget deliberations...we've added a one-half percent sales tax...we've added wheelage tax...we've added extra staff...first year buildup at East Gate...probably going to do a class and comp study...the total of that is about \$1.6 million...if that was all on the levy, it would be about an 8% levy...keep that in mind...don't let it get out of hand...it's still out of the pockets of Benton County residents..."

Buerkle/Peschl unanimous to conduct a closed meeting of the County Board (at 9:58 AM), pursuant to MN Statutes §13D.03, Subdivision 1, to consider strategy for labor negotiations.

The Regular County Board meeting was reconvened at 10:50 AM.

The next item on the agenda was Board consideration of authorizing a classification and compensation study. Headley noted that David Drown & Associates is a very competent, experienced provider of these kinds of services; the request would be to complete the study sometime during 2020, with potential implementation in 2021. Headley stated that the study cost proposed by David Drown & Associates is \$63,200; this includes a full study and rewriting of all job descriptions. Bauerly asked if the price includes a benefits study as well as pay. Tessia Melvin from David Drown & Associates clarified that benefits would be included in the cost; however, they will ask that the study be limited to specific benefits. Motion by Popp to move forward with a class and comp study by David Drown & Associates in the year 2020. Second by Heinen for discussion. Heinen inquired about setting a date when the study should be complete. Headley stated that, ideally, the study would be done in time for 2021 budget decisions (done by the end of August 2020). Heinen asked if the motion maker was agreeable to including this language in his motion. Popp stated he does not favor including a deadline as he would not want to start the study until labor negotiations are done. The motion on the floor carried unanimously.

Board members reported on recent meetings they attended on behalf of the county.

Under Commissioner Concerns, Peschl/Popp unanimous to authorize out-of-state travel for Commissioner Bauerly to Washington, D.C. for the Transportation Alliance and Highway 23 Coalition Trip in June.

Buerkle/Peschl unanimous to set Committees of the Whole: June 5, Highway Issues/Boundary Line Commission Issues.

Chair Bauerly adjourned the meeting at 11:22 AM.

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A Jake Bauerly, Chair  
Benton County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

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Montgomery Headley  
Benton County Administrator